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Gilbane completes Genzyme Cell Culture Manufacturing expansion and begins Biologics Support Facility

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Genzyme Corporation, one of the world's leading biotechnology companies, partnered with Gilbane Building Co., to construct a combined Cell Culture expansion and Biologics Support Facility on Genzyme's biotechnology manufacturing campus. Construction has recently completed on the Cell Culture Manufacturing facility, designed by Hart Design Group of Cumberland, R.I. The projects consist of overlapping phases, all being completed in the midst of a heavily congested and fully operational manufacturing campus.

The Cell Culture Manufacturing expansion began in April 2008, with site/demolition preparation. Installation of temporary utilities, shoring and separation walls was followed by demolition of portions of an existing operational building. Demolition of the roof and walls of the north and east sides of a section of the existing facility, which housed warehousing and distribution, QC laboratories, science laboratories, and biologics clinical production and manufacturing operations, required careful planning and execution to complete safely.

"Extensive pre-planning, detailed logistics plans, and constant communication ensured that the operational portion of the building was protected and ongoing operations were maintained without disruption," said Bob Manocchia, vice president, Gilbane.

Demolition was followed by construction of a 59,000 s/f new addition, attached to the existing facility, to house production facilities. The new 2-story manufacturing structure includes production areas finished to cGMP standards in cleanrooms. Upon completion of the commissioning and validation phases, the cGMP facility will produce Fabrazyme, the only treatment option approved in the U.S. for patients suffering from Fabry Disease.

The Cell Culture Manufacturing expansion project team maintained a constant focus on safety and schedule. To meet Genzyme's anticipated construction completion date of September, the project employed an average of 160 trades people, and at peak as many as 300 trades people were on the site. With portions of the project operating in 3 shifts, 7 days a week, attention to safety was of the highest priority. Gilbane's team provided numerous safety incentives, and celebrated 449,000 safe man hours with a luncheon honoring all the trades' commitment to safety.

"We have greatly enjoyed the cooperative attitude between Genzyme, Hart, the unions, all trade contractors, and the local building department," said Manocchia. "The success to date could not have been achieved without all parties working together."

Gilbane's team commenced construction of the second phase of the project, a new 186,000 s/f Biologics Support Facility in August. This laboratory and office building construction project is anticipated to employ an average of 150 trades people throughout the project, and to peak at approximately 200. Completion of the facility is scheduled for mid-2011.

