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Project of the Month: BKA Architects and Haynes Group build 1,784 s/f New Leaf cannabis dispensary in Fall River

November 25, 2022 - Retail



Fall River, MA Construction has wrapped on New Leaf, a modern adult-use cannabis dispensary.

Peter Fernandes, founder and CEO, combined his passion for flipping properties, with Evan Darmody and Kaitlin Cahill's expertise of cannabis products and knowledge of state laws and regulations, creating their new company New Leaf.

The adult use dispensary, designed by BKA Architects, Inc. and built by Haynes Group, is a 1,784 s/f ground-up construction project featuring office spaces, a breakroom, an inventory/packaging room, and retail floor. The dispensary is situated on the Massachusetts/Rhode Island border and has access to two major highways.

"The location was exactly what we were looking for. It is easy access and an attraction for customers on the road and on the border," said Evan Darmody, chief compliance officer. "We are confident that our location choice plays a key role in our future success."

New Leaf has a unique, open atmosphere inspired by brands such as Cookies and Apple. The open floor concept features custom millwork, state-of-the-art sound systems, wall decals, and advanced LED light systems.

"The LED lighting is the feature that sets New Leaf apart from its competition. It is unique and a

feature that not many dispensaries have to offer. The lights synchronize to the music on the interior and exterior of the store,” said Darmody.

Another unique feature of the space is the Borac walls on the interior of the retail space and lobby with their wave-like appearance allowing light to bounce off the surface giving the impression of flowing water.

“The decorative PVC wave-like wall paneling were provided by the client and installed by us,” said Jeff Benevides, project executive at Haynes Group. “It is a design element unlike any other.”

Unlike typical retail builds, dispensaries pose their own set of obstacles and challenges.

“Though we did not encounter many challenges regarding the dispensary building, we had to make certain we paid close attention to the HVAC systems, as well as the security and access controls to ensure state laws and regulations were being followed in the construction process,” said Benevides.

Lead times continue to be a challenge on construction projects, but Haynes Group was able to maintain schedule by coordinating labor and time accordingly.

“One of the main obstacles we faced was getting certain materials,” said Jarrod Tronti, site superintendent at Haynes Group, Inc. “One item had a lead time of several months, in the interim we completed other installations and interior punch list items to maintain schedule.”

The project’s success is the result of a communicative and committed project team.

“Working with New Leaf and BKA was a real pleasure and a true collaborative effort that kept the project moving through the challenges we encountered,” said Benevides. “This team has been nothing but hardworking and dedicated to getting the project completed efficiently, while also making certain our clients are satisfied.”

“The most important thing is to have a great relationship with the city. Making sure that they are pleased and well informed with your plan plays a key role in a smooth construction process,” said Tronti. “Working with the Fall River Building Department was a pleasant experience. It was a team effort. Top to bottom, office and field, GC and ownership, trades, and labor. It was an experience that was new and rewarding.”

New Leaf will be welcoming patrons this coming fall.

“We are looking forward to opening our store and creating long-lasting relationships with future customers,” said Peter Fernandes, owner of New Leaf. “We are committed to ensuring that customers are satisfied with our products, as well as our customer service. Working with the Haynes Group has been nothing but a pleasure. Jeff, Jarrod, and Bryan are at the pinnacle of what they do

and have done nothing but positively impact the future of our company.”

Project Team included:

BKA Architects, Inc. - Architect

Haynes Group - Construction manager

Cotti-Johnson - Design Build HVAC

JT Mechanical Inc. - Plumbing

TMC Concrete - Concrete Coatings & Finishes

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