



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

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A.W. Perry, Turner and Margulies Perruzzi Architects collaborate to build the first LEED Silver Certified building on the south shore

July 28, 2009 - Green Buildings

Margulies Perruzzi Architects designed the Blue Cross Blue Shield member services building in Hingham, Mass. to accommodate 1,400 people and provide training facilities, a conference center, in-house daycare, a cafeteria/multipurpose room, and parking with an all-weather connection.

The building is the first LEED® Silver certified building on the South Shore and for this client. High efficiency energy systems save 25% on annual energy costs and 20% water savings per year over a traditional office building. With an emphasis on indoor air quality to ensure the best possible interior environment upon move-in, an extensive two-week 100% outside air "flush out" was completed. To minimize solar heat gain, metal sunshades protect the punched window openings on the second and third levels. A ribbon of windows on the fourth floor is also shaded by deep overhangs, while a white roof reduces heat gain. Wood certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is used throughout the building. Blast granite from the site was used to create a retaining wall around the facility; the remaining rock was crushed and used as structural fill under the building's foundation. During the construction phase, 80% of construction waste was diverted to recycling centers.

The building was designed to draw strong connections to, and exist in harmony with, its surrounding natural environment. This was achieved using natural and locally-sourced materials, organic design themes, native plantings, and thoughtful energy and water efficiencies. Designing with a concept of "Bringing the Outside In," Vermont granite starts outside in the visitor parking spaces and on the entry bridge, and continues into the lobby. The same granite is used at the patio outside the building's multipurpose room (that combines dining and meeting space) and again inside, bringing natural materials from the outside, in. As you continue through the lobby and into multi-purpose room located at the center of the building, three-story piers of FSC-certified hardwood paneling mimic the tall beech trees from the surrounding landscape, bringing the trees inside. Situated to maximize the view, the 120-degree view from the multi-purpose room is the best on the site. Continuing the theme of connecting to nature, glass pendant lights designed specifically for this room feature an organic design intended to represent wind chimes. Trees in planters in the multi-purpose room continue from interior to exterior, cascading outside to connect with nature, separated only by a piece of glass. Throughout the building, an abundance of glass and windows provide natural light and views to the outdoors from 95% of the building's work and meeting spaces. To give the appearance that the facility is nestled in the surrounding environment and enhance the outdoor views for associates, an effort was made to preserve the maximum amount of original plantings from the building's site. All plantings and landscaping on the site are native to the local environment. The resulting positive, healthy environment supports employees' well-being, helps to increase productivity and improves the quality of customer service for the company overall.

