

## By Cole Schnorf and Alex Kopicki, Manekin

# Manekin's Green Corporate Headquarters

**H**ow much do green buildings really cost? How much time will the process add to the project schedule? Will it really save on operational costs and if so then how much? Will a "Green Building" really lead to increased worker productivity? Will it attract tenants?

In 2005, Manekin started answering these questions when we began to develop our new corporate headquarters. Our goals were to be at the cutting edge of the Green Building movement; to provide a healthy work environment for our employees; to be socially and environmentally responsible, and to receive tax credits and operating expense savings.

The additional soft costs required to achieve LEED Silver certification totaled approximately \$2.00 psf for our 53,000 s/f building. Many of these were fixed costs, so the costs per s/f vary by building size. Additional hard costs to achieve LEED Silver certification totaled approximately \$5.00 per s/f. These hard costs are scaleable, so costs per s/f diminish incrementally with larger projects.

Throughout the design process, there was increased interaction (therefore in-

creased design timeframes of approximately one month) among the development team to insure we would achieve LEED Silver certification and qualify for the tax credits.

Our design was modified several times and run through an energy model each time until the 35% savings required to earn the tax credit was achieved with the following energy saving features: more efficient HVAC system; white roof; tinted, low-e glass; additional insulation on the roof, walls, and spandrel glass; and automatic dimming ballasts. Initial data suggests a \$.75 per s/f savings on utility costs.

Other innovative features included water-saving plumbing fixtures, recycled and environmentally responsible building materials, and expanded landscaping.

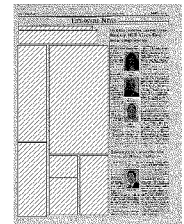
During construction, we established an indoor air quality program to assure the delivery of a healthy work environment upon completion. We sealed all ductwork to prevent dust and debris collection, thereby limiting allergens upon building occupancy.

Since moving to our new headquarters building in January 2007, we have continued to be environmen-

tally-conscious. For example, nearly every employee participates in a recycling program which allows employees to mix all recyclable materials in one bin in their own office. Additionally, our janitorial contractor follows stringent guidelines with their cleaning supplies so as not to contain environmentally harmful chemicals.

Now comfortably settled into our new green surroundings, there is still much work to be done as we tabulate actual data (versus the projected data) on the building's performance, occupancy comfort and worker productivity. As for attracting tenants... well, we are not quite 100 percent leased so if you'd like some green digs of your own then give us a call.

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