

GREEN BUSINESS QUARTERLY

FALL 2009

CONSUMER PERCEPTION STUDY

Sustainability remains priority to purchasers; businesses have opportunity to increase brand value

GREEN FRANCHISING

Redefining the traditional general store

Greening Your Office

Creating a healthy, productive,
and efficient workspace for employees

PLUS

CITY TO WATCH: BRADDOCK, PA,
TRANSFORMING A CITY HIT
HARD BY ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Sustainability on display

LEED standards and sustainable initiatives allow for an efficient and healthy workplace

JPRA ARCHITECTS

BY ASHLEY MORRIS

A MEMBER OF THE USGBC, JPRA ARCHITECTS DOES MORE THAN stand by its belief in sustainable design: the architectural and environmental design firm practices it everyday because of its new LEED Silver certified office building in Novi, Michigan.

In fact, JPRA also set the standard last year in Novi by constructing the first structure of this LEED caliber in the town.

Outside of its walls, JPRA Architects—a firm founded more than 30 years ago—practices and promotes sustainable design through its clients that mostly reside in the retail and entertainment, mixed-use development, and commercial office

realms. “Retail is just now understanding the importance of [sustainable design]...because of market demand,” says principal Fred McCoy, LEED AP. “We need to show them that it makes sense financially through operating costs, which helps in tenants and maintenance, and through increasing the value of their property to resell it, finance it, and lease it. For many solid business reasons, it makes a lot of sense. They’ll own a dinosaur if they don’t do it.”

“We have a small percentage of clients who just aren’t interested [in sustainable design],” adds Bill Beitz, president and COO. “But that doesn’t mean we don’t implement features

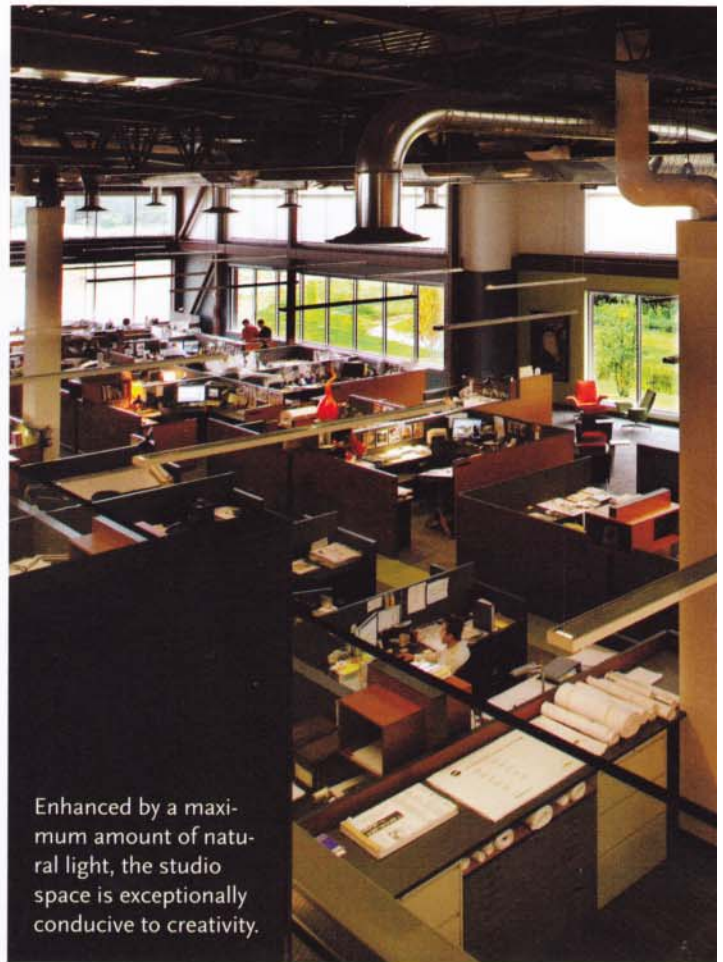
JPRA’s new 30,000-square-foot office building is set on a 2.3-acre wooded site, and is the first LEED Silver-certified new construction in Novi, MI.



JPRA's new LEED Platinum office space is designed with multi-purpose areas to improve the overall health and reduce employee stress, while creating a space that is welcoming to work in.



Colors and stripes brighten up the kitchenette as part of the upstairs multi-purpose room.



Enhanced by a maximum amount of natural light, the studio space is exceptionally conducive to creativity.

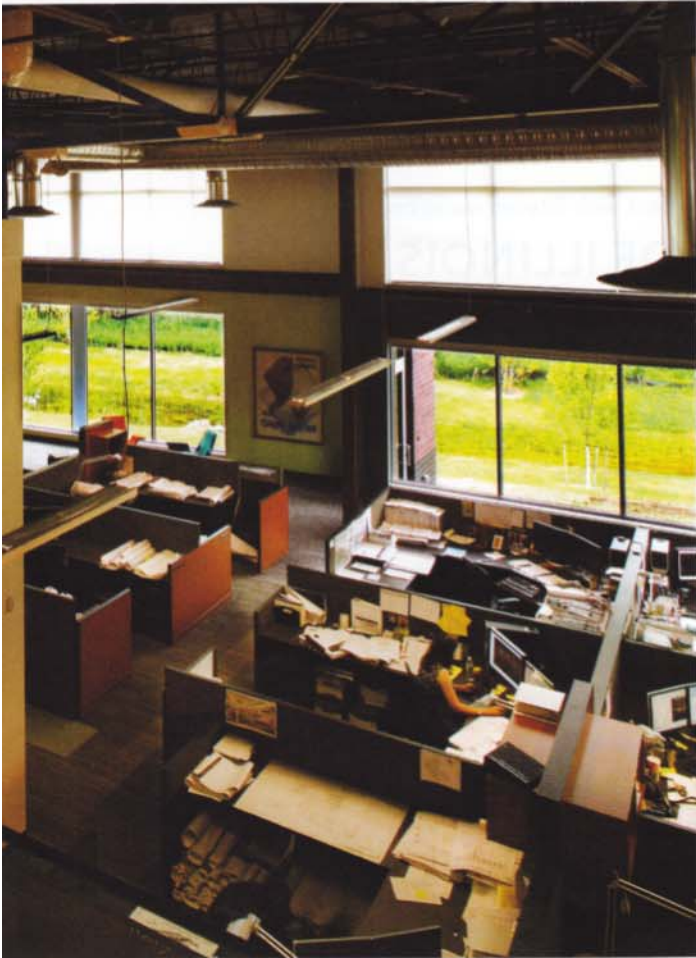
“For many solid business reasons, [sustainable design] makes a lot of sense. [Retail owners] will own a dinosaur if they don’t do it.”

FRED MCCOY, PRINCIPAL & LEED AP

like low-VOC paints. It’s not always important that they’re LEED certified. Often, clients are asking us to investigate sustainable materials and systems, including energy efficiency, HVAC systems, and lighting. These things still make sense even though we may not get LEED certification.”

With its membership in the USGBC, JPRA is not only reputable for innovative architecture design but also environmental graphics throughout the United States and into Canada, the Middle East, and Latin America via its JPRA International sub-network. “We’re trying to increase the number of clients worldwide,” Beitz says.

But JPRA is also trying to concentrate on strengthening the home front, where challenges continue to seep out of a deflated economy. “We’re probably facing a slowdown of work, just like every firm in the country,” Beitz says. “And we don’t know how that will affect the whole LEED issue. Bidding



JPRA'S 30,000-SQUARE-FOOT NOVI, MICHIGAN OFFICE BUILDING FEATURES:

- two stories of studio space, including a second-floor loft, that create a haven for natural light, complete with proper window orientation that gains very low heat;
- energy-efficient indoor lighting with smart shut-off sensors based on body movement;
- an air-ventilation system that senses when there's a need for outside air circulation;
- waterless urinals that increase water conservation;
- a 2.3-acre wooded site;
- recycled cubicles and furniture that were used in JPRA's previous office building;
- a completely un-irrigated landscape, with plant species native to the area;
- bicycle racks to encourage the use of alternative transportation;
- an in-house wellness committee to organize outdoor lunch activities on nearby walking trails as well as Pilates, yoga, and tai chi classes.

may be very competitive, so LEED elements may be more economical."

The strength of JPRA rests in its 30-year tenure, and Beitz hopes to only further solidify that powerful foundation. "We're going to take advantage of [the slowdown] to strengthen our firm's capabilities in sustainable design and computer technology," he says. "BIM [building information modeling] takes computer drafting to a whole new level, so you can integrate mechanical and electrical systems and the effects of environmental efficiencies into design in a whole new way."

"And we're probably still going to focus on long-term goals," McCoy adds. "In general, our firm has been successful through our great expertise in design. We offer a level that you can only find in a small group of design firms. So because of that, we've developed a high level of clientele, and we've proven that we can work with them as a business partner." GBQ

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