

Certification
LEED Gold

MID-OHIO FOODBANK
GROVE CITY, OH

**BUILDERS
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Feeding the multitudes

Repurposing an old mattress factory enables
the facility to extend its service in a time of need

BY NIKI SWANK

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROGERS KRAJNAK ARCHITECTS, INC./FEINKNOPF



The exterior of the Foodbank shows part of its green sensibility.

The Mid-Ohio Foodbank's goal of "no one goes hungry" is in easier reach since the opening of its new facility in the fall of 2009. When visitors arrive at the Grove City facility, they are greeted with a food garden adjacent to the main entry and a 25-ft high, curved glass curtainwall located inside the lobby that displays the food storage area.

"Upon entering the facility, a visitor is immediately focused on a view into the dry storage pallet rack area. This dramatic gesture immediately gives one a sense of the magnitude of hunger in the community and showcases the mission of the Mid-Ohio Foodbank," says Darryl Rogers, AIA, LEED AP and principal at Rogers Krajnak Architects, Inc.

The \$9 million transformation of the existing 190,000-sf, 20-year-old pre-engineered metal building, formerly used as a mattress factory and distribution center, turned it into a state-of-the-art, sustainable foodbank. The project received a Building Design and Construction Magazine Platinum Reconstruction Award in 2010 and achieved LEED-NC Gold Certification as part of the United States Green Building Council.

The new facility has allowed the 30-year-old foodbank to not only dramatically increase its distribution to about 76,000 meals a day, covering 20 counties through a network of over 520 agencies in Central and Southeastern Ohio, but it has also tripled its volunteer base to over 14,000 individuals donating over 40,000 hours last year.

"The reason the volunteers are key is that they do the majority of the inspection, sorting and packing of all the donated products; as well as many of our government subsidized programs," says Dave Phillips, operations manager at



The foodbank's storage area is big, well lit.

the Mid-Ohio Foodbank. "The new facility also has a lot of meeting space that we allow outside groups to use, which in turn educates the public about who the foodbank is and what we do." For example, The Center for Hunger and Nutrition Education hosts many events that promote healthy lifestyle and food choices.

The foodbank now has 125,000-sf of dry storage, refrigerated and frozen storage, along with distribution space. There are also areas for sorting, packing, recycling, and volunteers. Office, administration, and meeting space was created for the foodbank's staff.

Some of the sustainability features are reflected in the design. The mezzanine was expanded by 14,000 sf, so the building now provides 205,000-sf of space, including room for offices. Some of their partitions are made of recycled solid wall panels from the front entry and façade instead of drywall. Also included is a staff lunch area that features

a roof terrace created by adding a second floor notch to the building; it also serves as a source of natural light. The remainder of the space was designed to allow for future growth.

Other sustainable features include the following: 95% of building's existing envelope was re-used, the building exceeds ASHRAE Standard 90.1 for energy consumption by 21%, and new windows have integrated sun controls to reduce glare and heat gain. The building also features daylighting, energy-efficient lighting controls and mechanical equipment, low and no VOC paints and coatings, FSC certified wood, recycled content materials, native/adapted plant species requiring no irrigation, bicycle storage and preferred parking for fuel efficient vehicles.

How it all began

When site selection and planning began in 2006, it was important to the foodbank that the building

be designed to achieve LEED certification, provide affordable expansion opportunities and offer a friendly work environment.

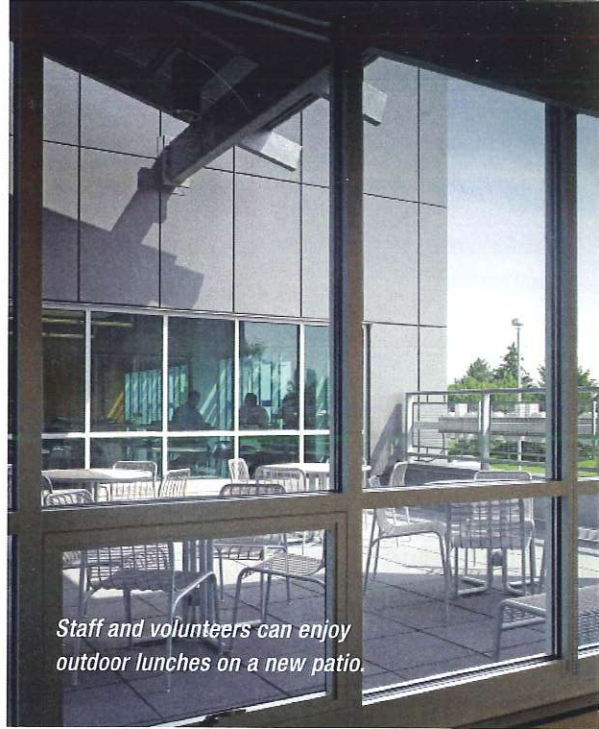
At the end of 2006, Rogers Krajnak Architects, Inc. and Ruscilli Construction studied the foodbank's West Mound Street site in Columbus and determined that the site was not adequate for the predicted expansion and growth based on anticipated need for food and services in the community. The following year, the foodbank purchased the Brookham Drive site after the architect's conceptual design showed the renovated existing building would fit the foodbank's short- and long-term needs.

"Matt Habash, CEO of the Mid-Ohio Foodbank, asked a very important question very early in the process: 'How can a foodbank be wasteful?' This question guided us throughout the entire project and led us to aim for LEED Certification and a high level of sustainability," says Rogers.

The team worked together to showcase the mission of the organization through the design of the facility. It was thought important to create a building design that engages the community and embraces the goal of sustainability through the use of carefully selected sustainable materials and systems that not only relate directly to the foodbank's mission but also allow it to function in a more efficient working environment.

During the middle of 2007, the team visited new foodbank facilities in Cleveland (see *BXM* August/September 2004) and Chicago and conducted design charrettes with the foodbank staff. This led to a building design in which the staff and administrative spaces showcase an egalitarian and collaborative work environment compared to their previous workspace. "We also held a design charrette with food bank leaders from around the nation. This provided a wealth of information regarding programs, space requirements and other functional issues," says Rogers.

The schematic design, design development and construction document stage took place from late 2007 until the middle of 2008. Weekly design review meetings were conducted with the owner's representative, Rogers Krajnak Architects, Ruscilli Construction and Heapy Engineering, the LEED consultant and commissioning authority, through conception and construction. "Meetings were also held monthly with existing staff for updates and tours for on-



Staff and volunteers can enjoy outdoor lunches on a new patio.

“The Mid-Ohio Foodbank project represents the perfect synthesis of conservation, sustainability and architectural design that reveals the mission of a facility serving a vital role in our community.”

—Darryl Rogers, AIA, LEED AP & principal,
Rogers Krajnak Architects, Inc.

going suggestions,” says Phillips. These regular meetings helped keep the team on task with time and budget during the construction process.

In building

During the construction phase, from the middle of 2008 until September 2009, Jim Cetovich of Ruscilli Construction explains because they had free access to the entire building the only major challenge was completing the project before the holiday season under budget. It was also challenging to cut a new freezer in the existing building, although the big open box shape of the building made construction simple.

According to Phillips, the installation of the ammonia-based freezers and coolers was challenging because none of the partners had experience with these types of systems. Rogers adds that removing a portion of the front façade and roof to construct a new welcoming and distinctive entry façade was challenging, as was constructing the new mezzanine space. The entry now includes new metal wall panels, storefront windows, sun controls and a second-floor roof terrace.

The \$16 million budget included the purchase of the Brookham Drive property. The project came in over budget due to the owner’s decision to include upgrades to allow for future expansion. The foodbank is currently purchasing new property across from the building to provide additional parking, currently being designed. Bidding and zoning approval is in process for an addition to the exterior building for maintenance equipment

and to load trucks during inclement weather. The foodbank is also studying the cost and design of expanding freezers and coolers and adding upgraded lighting control systems

“The facility is focused on sustainability and green thinking,” says Cetovich. A salvage sale was held before construction began as reusing the materials earned points for LEED certification. “Toward the end, it was a logistics term paper to relocate all of the food to the new facility,” he says. Phillips adds it took the foodbank ten 12-hour days and 100 trucks to transport the food to the new location, with most of the transportation donated by the foodbank’s partners.

“Achieving LEED Gold certification is significant and took a collaborative effort,” says Cetovich. The initial target was silver, and Phillips is proud the team worked hard enough to achieve the next highest level.

Rogers says the new facility has allowed the foodbank to expand its programs, connect with the community in a variety of new ways and meet the increased demand for food in the community during the economic downturn. “The Mid-Ohio Foodbank project,” he says, “represents the perfect synthesis of conservation, sustainability and architectural design that reveals the mission of a facility serving a vital role in our community.” **BXM**

Niki Swank is a BX researcher and follows the Ohio construction marketplace closely.

project specs

Mid-Ohio Foodbank

Owner: Mid-Ohio Foodbank

Architect: Rogers Krajnak Architects, Inc.

GC: Ruscilli Construction Co. Inc.

Engineers: Heapy Engineering, Kinzelman Kline Gossman, Korda/Nemeth Engineering, Shelley Metz Baumann Hawk

Consultants: EMHT, Geotechnical Consultants Inc., Lawhon and Associates, Mays Consulting and Evaluation Services

Vendors:

Simplex Grinnell LP
A. J. Asphalt, asphalt
America's Floor Source
Brush Contractors
The Brickman Group
Commercial Control Services
Columbus Sign Co.
Columbus Wood Products
DeBellis Painting Co.
Dooley Heating and Air Conditioning
Eiter Building Systems
Elite Site Development and Excavating
Fairfield Insulation and Drywall
GE Consumer and Industrial
Graf and Sons, Inc.
Haller and Associates
Interior Specialties
Jacobs Telephone Contractors
Kalkreuth Roofing and Sheet Metal
Koorson Protection Services
Live! Technologies
Loewendick Contractors
McCormick Equipment Co.
Omni Fireproofing
Ott, Inc.
Refrigeration Systems Inc.
Rite-Hite Equipment
Schlegel Construction Products
Schindler Elevator
Sands Decker CPS
Tectum, Inc.
Thomas Galss Co.
Thomson Plumbing
Trudeau's Fence Co.
The Wasserstrom Co.



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