

ARTISTS FOR HUMANITY

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE AT
THE AFH EPICENTER

AN APPLICATION
FOR
THE RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

SUBMITTED BY

ARTISTS FOR HUMANITY
100 WEST SECOND STREET
BOSTON, MA 02127
617-268-7620

SUSAN RODGERSON
EXECUTIVE/ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**ARTISTS FOR HUMANITY: APPLICATION TO
THE RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. PROJECT DATA

II. ABSTRACT

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

IV. PERSPECTIVE SHEETS

**Community Representatives: Nick Rodrigues and Daniel Bonham, Local Artists
Public Agency: Adam Bickelman, MassDevelopment
Professional Consultant: Mark Kelley, III, Hickory Consortium
Architect: James Batchelor, Arrowstreet, Inc.**

V. VISUAL REPRESENTATION

**Photograph 1: AFH EpiCenter/West 2nd Street, by Richard Mandelkorn
Photograph 2: AFH EpiCenter front entrance, by Richard Mandelkorn
Photograph 3: aerial view of the EpiCenter by Peter Vanderwarker
Photograph 4: AFH Painting Studio, 3rd Floor, by Richard Mandelkorn
Photograph 5: AFH Gallery, 1st Floor, by Richard Mandelkorn
Plans, Artists For Humanity EpiCenter**

VI. SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

**Artists For Humanity EpiCenter Timeline
Artists For Humanity EpiCenter Factsheet
Press Clippings
EpiCenter Case Study by the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative**

VII. AWARD USE

PROJECT DATA

PROJECT DATA

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the questions to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Project Name: Artists For Humanity EpiCenter Location: 100 West Second Street / Boston, MA

Owner: Artists For Humanity, Inc.

Project Use(s): youth arts and entrepreneurship facility; gallery; special event space; public environmental education

Project Size: 23,500 sq.ft. Total Development Cost: \$6,807,129

Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate): \$1,994,575

Date initiated: December 2000 Percent Completed by December 1, 2006: 100%

Project Completion Date (if appropriate): November 1, 2004

Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates: See attached Project Timeline.

Application submitted by:

Name: Susan Rodgerson Title: Executive/Artistic Director

Organization: Artists For Humanity, Inc.

Address: AFH EpiCenter / 100 West Second Street City/State/Zip: Boston, MA 02127

Telephone: (617) 268-7620 Fax: (617) 268-7358

E-mail: srodgerson@afhboston.com Weekend Contact Number (for notification): (781) 925-0889

Key Participants (Attach an additional sheet if needed)

Organization	Key Participant	Telephone/e-mail
Public Agencies: MassDevelopment	Adam Bickelman	(617) 451-2477 / abickelman@massdevelopment.com
Architect/Designer: Arrowstreet, Inc.	Jim Batchelor	(617) 623-5555 / batchelor@arrowstreet.com
Developer: Artists For Humanity	Susan Rodgerson	(617) 268-7620 / SRodgerson@AFHBoston.com
Professional Consultant: Hickory Consortium	Mark E. Kelley, III	(978) 456-6950 / dragon@world.std.com
Community Group: Rodrigues Sculpture & Metalwork	Nick Rodrigues	(617) 645-8863 / nicksculptor@msn.com

Other:

Please indicate how you learned of the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*. (Check all that apply).

Direct Mailing Magazine Advertisement Previous RBA entrant
 Professional Online Notice Previous Selection Committee Member
 Bruner/Loeb Forum Other (please specify) _____

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ABSTRACT

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Project Name: Artists For Humanity EpiCenter

Address: 100 West Second Street

City/State/Zip: Boston, MA 02127-1112

1. Give a brief overview of the project, including major project goals.

The Artists For Humanity EpiCenter is a pure reflection of our organization's mission, goals and sensibilities. This is a facility completely dedicated to the voice, vision and virtuosity of urban youth. It further captures our overarching goal of sustainability by capturing renewable energy sources through features such as a 49-kilowatt solar panel array. These progressive design elements have not gone unnoticed. The EpiCenter was the first building in Boston to receive Platinum LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

In 2000, facing dislocation from urban redevelopment, Artists For Humanity (AFH) decided to develop our own youth arts facility. We recognized that our arts and enterprise programming could not exist without a facility. We saw this challenge as an opportunity to significantly impact the field of art and youth as well as to redirect the future of Boston's urban renewal. We began by creating a "wish list." First and foremost, Artists For Humanity hoped to stay within Fort Point, allowing us to draw upon the creativity, resources, and vitality of New England's largest arts community. We wanted to stay close to the business community to continue to connect Boston's professionals and urban young people with each other. We hoped to have a space large enough to house an extraordinary gallery of youth created and inspired artwork. We wanted a gallery that would allow us to invite large groups to experience a piece of our young artists' world. And we needed a building large enough to allow us to continue to grow and serve hundreds of young people each and every year.

AFH's decision to "build green" was a natural continuum of our work that is centered on the sustainability of inner-city teens as they learn about art, themselves, and the environment of the world around them. A concern about the environment and sustainability is a natural extension of artists' need to find creative and economic approaches to reflecting the complex society in which we live. As stated by Artists For Humanity co-founder Carlo Lewis, "The issue is architecture versus green architecture. Green architecture should be considered good architecture or good design, and part of a building's overall aesthetics. Quality design is part of AFH's mission."

Highlights of the Artists For Humanity EpiCenter:

- A 23,500 square foot center that houses Artists For Humanity's offices, programs, and gallery.
- A first-class gallery that houses a nationally unparalleled exhibition space for youth-created and inspired art. This space is widely rented for corporate meetings and private functions, and introduces a diverse group of adults to the ideas and concerns of urban young people while earning revenue for Artists For Humanity.
- Available space for use by community-based organizations.
- Designed flexible spaces to enable us to expand our programs to better serve our youth.

2. Why does the project merit the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*? (You may wish to consider such factors as: effect on the urban environment; innovative or unique approaches to any aspect of project development; new and creative approaches to urban issues; design quality.)

The Artists For Humanity EpiCenter merits the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence* because it pioneers a future shift to affordable, sustainable design and reflects the needs and innovation of our social enterprise programs for Boston's young people. Moreover, the EpiCenter has had a resounding impact on Boston's cultural and environmental communities as a public event space, resource for environmental awareness and host of the nation's largest exhibited collection of youth-created art.

Consider the following:

- In October 2005, the Artists For Humanity EpiCenter was awarded LEED Platinum Certification from the United States Green Building Council; it was the first project in the city of Boston to have earned this distinction. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings.
- The EpiCenter was also recognized in 2005 and 2006 with nine awards for design excellence.
- At \$191 per square foot, the EpiCenter demonstrates the feasibility - and affordability - of green design and the future role it could play in our changing built environment.
- The EpiCenter has allowed AFH to significantly impact the cultural economy by facilitating a significant youth/program expansion. Since we relocated in 2004, AFH has doubled our youth employment from 60 to 120 youth; added instruction in two new media; and created eight new positions for professional artists.
- In January 2005, Artists for Humanity introduced "Spiritus Solaris," an interactive environmental education program designed to educate the public on the ways energy and the environment affect their lives. Over the last two years, AFH has shared our learnings with more than 16,000 community members, architects, developers, green building engineers, college students and artists.
- The EpiCenter offers an exciting venue for special events near downtown Boston, the new convention center and public transportation. Since September 2004, AFH has hosted 136 events in the EpiCenter's gallery.
- The EpiCenter is the fourth artist-owned building in Boston's Fort Point, which helps preserve this neighborhood's history and character as the largest arts district in New England.
- It provides local artists much-needed studio space. AFH collaborates with the Fort Point Artist Coalition and the South Boston Arts Association to provide studio space two nights a week, free of charge, to local artists. We also provide studio space for teen programming in collaboration with the South Boston Neighborhood Health Center.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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1. Describe the underlying values of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs, were required to implement the project?

The underlying values of the Artists For Humanity EpiCenter were to create a permanent youth arts facility to house our programming, offices and gallery while promoting our mission of sustainability for young people and the environment. The facility encapsulates all these values and continues to become a cultural and economic resource for the entire Boston community.

"Long ago, at the beginning of the modern movement, architects dreamed of a new day. Instead of palaces for the powerful, instead of costly architecture that seeks to impress as art, they would apply their skills to solving the problems of ordinary society. They would make a new world that would be logical, economical, practical, and beautiful. Many of those ambitions were overblown, and the results were often disappointing. But occasional works like the EpiCenter remind us that this was an ideal worth pursuing." (Campbell, Robert. "Sustaining a Positive Trend: Artists For Humanity Facility is EpiCenter of Architectural Ideals." *Sunday Boston Globe*. January 1, 2006.)

While there were no trade-offs to the underlying values of the EpiCenter, AFH did make some design concessions. To gain necessary square footage for our envisioned project, AFH needed to build along the narrow property lines. This, in turn, prevented the inclusion of fenestration on the eastern and western exposures. AFH transformed this challenge into an architectural highlight, by creating floor-to-ceiling light wells on our northern and southern exposures. These light wells allow for deep penetration of natural sunlight, provide the most significant solar capture, and offer the best lighting for artists. Our design team implemented several daylighting solutions, such as baffles and translucent studio walls, to further let light infiltrate the facility's interior spaces.

More should be said about the studio walls – the trade-offs of a trade-off, if you will – because they reflect the EpiCenter's progressive design and commitment to environmental responsibility. Comprised of fiberglass and steel, these studios were designed to meet the Green Building Council's LEED standards by maximizing the EpiCenter's innovative lighting and ventilation systems. The translucent walls dull external sounds and allow natural light to filter in, diminishing the need for artificial lighting. The walls also allow studios to vent fumes directly outside, ensuring a healthier work environment. This creates a sense of both separate and communal space, enabling participants to focus on creative projects while feeling part of the larger organization and its happenings.

Artists For Humanity approached similar project challenges as opportunities for dynamic design elements. To maximize solar capture, we created a sloped roof, which visually heightens the building and connects the northern exposure into a single glass column. Likewise, we solved an eight-foot difference in ground level between the West Second Street and West First Street entrances. The approach to the main entry at ground level on West Second Street passes by a sunken garden and continues inside as a mezzanine level overlooking the large gallery space on the first floor. A loading area and small parking lot are accessed from West First Street. Entry at this end of the building is level with the first floor gallery. Both entrances are wheelchair accessible.

2. How has the project impacted the local community? Please include relevant information on urban context.

Artists For Humanity's 100% renewable energy EpiCenter has had a resounding impact on Boston's cultural, economic and environmental communities as a public event space, resource for environmental awareness and host of the City's largest collection of youth-created art. Geographically and symbolically, it bridges the South Boston and Fort Point neighborhoods with opportunities for community interaction and dialogue. The EpiCenter is the fourth artist-owned building in Fort Point, which helps preserve this neighborhood's history and character as the largest arts district in New England.

Visually, the AFH EpiCenter is an arresting balance of steel and glass. The exterior of the building is clad in corrugated stainless steel paneling, a reference to the long history of industrial uses in the district. Large expanses of glass curtain wall on both the North and South facades allow for deep penetration of daylight into the large, open studio spaces inside. It also features a sloped roof, which holds a 49-kilowatt photovoltaic array to generate power for the activities inside.

As the only Platinum LEED facility in Boston, the AFH EpiCenter provides an unique learning opportunity for progressive design and development. In January 2005, Artists for Humanity introduced "Spiritus Solaris," an interactive environmental education program that draws from the EpiCenter's renewable technologies. Comprising a permanent exhibit and corresponding curriculum on energy, conservation and environmental sustainability, "Spiritus Solaris" is rooted in our mission to use art to educate young people about the world around them. It introduces a model that provides the Boston community with a new awareness of the potential of renewable energy and sustainable buildings. AFH sees this as an opportunity to use the EpiCenter as a testament to our belief that people can make a difference, whether it is social, economic, or environmental. In the last two years, approximately 1,500 people have directly experienced "Spiritus Solaris" through guided tours. An additional 15,000 people have experienced the exhibit through attendance at EpiCenter events.

Perhaps the EpiCenter's greatest impact as a force of local economic and cultural development is still unfolding. With 23,500 sq. ft. of studio, office and gallery space, the EpiCenter has allowed AFH to significantly increase teen participation, expand artistic media, and cultivate new business partnerships. In the past two years, Artists For Humanity has created 60 new jobs for Boston teens, 3 jobs for out-of-school youth, and 12 adult staff positions for local arts and business professionals. AFH has also collaborated with the Fort Point Artists Coalition and the South Boston Arts Association to provide studio space two nights a week, free of charge, to local artists. We continue to reach out to neighborhood youth, and collaborate with the South Boston Arts Association and South Boston Community Health Center on their Young At Arts program to evening classes for the program twice a month. AFH also works closely with several community foundations, organizations and schools as program collaborators, youth referral sources, exhibit sites and on design projects. Finally, AFH makes our gallery available for community events and public forums.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (CONT'D)

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

AFH initiated a capital campaign in June 2000 and began searching for an appropriate project site in the Fort Point neighborhood. We purchased 100 West Second Street on June 20, 2001, and assembled our development team of architects, designers, and contractors later that year. We originally planned to retrofit the existing building, an abandoned livery, with renewable technologies, but further research revealed that this approach was not cost-effective or structurally feasible.

The EpiCenter architects, Arrowstreet, Inc., led plenary sessions with staff and young people to assess key studio and office needs, and place these within the overarching frameworks of clean design and environmental sustainability. To achieve these goals, the EpiCenter project team worked within the Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Rating System. LEED is a standardized system based on accepted energy and environmental principles and strikes a balance between known effective practices and emerging concepts.

As with all our projects, Artists For Humanity directly involved teen participants in the development of the EpiCenter's architectural plans. Carlo Lewis, an AFH co-founder and Rhode Island School of Design trained architect, and 10 youth leaders collaborated on design concepts. Carlo is an example of AFH's mentoring philosophy; he returned to work as both an inspiration to the new generation of aspiring artists and as an engaged architect, shaping and developing our new facility. This project featured not only instruction in urban planning, renewable energy disciplines, and model-making, but more importantly, directly incorporated our young artists' ideas into their future studios and gallery.

Similarly, AFH collaborated with community members to include their voice in the project's evolution. In 2004, we commissioned two Fort Point artists, Nick Rodrigues and Daniel Bonham, to design and install architectural detailing for the EpiCenter's interior. Rodrigues and Bonham responded with inspired designs that correspond to the EpiCenter's commitment to environmental sustainability, by incorporating materials reclaimed from the project site or recycled from other sources. AFH later hired Rodrigues to lead a new sculpture studio where he works directly with young people to create sculptures and detailing for permanent installation.

To ensure that we utilized the EpiCenter as a community resource, Artists For Humanity worked with Community Partners Consultants to develop a business plan for increased teen participation, new business partnerships, expanded artistic media, public performances and an interactive environmental education program. Thanks to the strategic innovations outlined in the plan, the EpiCenter is introducing more and more people to the truth of the urban voice and creating new audiences for all cultural experiences.

AFH broke ground on the EpiCenter in May 2003, and completed the project in September 2004. In October 2005, the EpiCenter was awarded Platinum LEED certification, or the highest level.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable.

The total cost of developing the EpiCenter was \$6.8 million. This breaks down to \$191 per square foot before utility rebates. The site purchase price was \$1.2 million, with \$4.6 million for construction including renewable technologies, \$200,000 in financing and \$800,000 in other soft costs (architect fees, pre-development, fundraising, permits, interiors, legal requirements). The EpiCenter's development costs are within estimates for a standard commercial building of the same size constructed in Boston. AFH anticipates this initial cost will pay itself over time through utilities savings and energy "buy backs." This is a reasonable goal considering we saved \$66,246 in energy costs last year alone.

Since 2001, AFH has remarkably raised nearly \$6.75 million from individuals, foundations, corporations, and in-kind support. We consolidated the requisite gap financing to proceed with construction with a non-profit bond mortgage through MassDevelopment. Our goal is to raise the campaign's final \$64,650 as soon as possible to redirect resources toward program innovations.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

Prominently located at the seat of Boston's redevelopment, the AFH EpiCenter demonstrates the feasibility – and affordability – of green design and the future role it could play in our changing built environment. More importantly, the building offers a permanent oasis for youth in the arts, a place where they can engage in the creative process and become empowered to reshape their futures.

Artists For Humanity's EpiCenter is a living, learning laboratory for sustainable futures through arts, entrepreneurship and environmental responsibility. Our renewable energy model and inherent public awareness component is adaptable to any urban setting. Most think the environment exists only outdoors. Nature, however, does not stop at a building footprint; it crosses the threshold with the rest of us. Building materials, wood, clay, metal, sand, and stone are all from nature. Buildings consume energy and water and produce waste. The building industry itself accounts for more than half of the world's energy and raw materials consumption. While today's buildings are inherently wasteful and inefficient relative to living organisms, buildings in the future may filter air and water, create habitat and collect energy. A building like the EpiCenter could indeed teach our children about nature and help them see the beauty of nature in everyone's world.

In the 21st century, the deterioration of the natural environment and subsequent stress on our built environment coupled with trends in population growth and increased consumption, all suggest that we, as a society and as individuals, must develop sustainable projects and programs. AFH was especially excited by this opportunity for Boston's urban teens to play a central role in creating an ecologically innovative building that takes long-term use of natural resources into account. Our green building project builds on our success. Most importantly, AFH participants were actively involved in a process that encourages a sustainable future for themselves and the community at large.

PERSPECTIVE SHEETS

**Community Representatives:
Nick Rodrigues and Daniel Bonham, Local Artists**

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Names: Nick Rodrigues and Daniel Bonham

Title: Artists

Organization: Rodrigues Sculpture & Metalwork/Workshop EBO

Telephone: 617-645-8863

Address: 319 A Street, 4th FL

City/State/Zip: Boston (Fort Point), MA 02210

Fax: 617-628-0575

E-mail: nicksculptor@msn.com / dabonham@hotmail.com

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The following questions have been answered jointly by two community artists who designed and created much of the architectural detailing inside the EpiCenter. The artists, Nick Rodrigues and Daniel Bonham, will be referred to henceforth as "Nick" and "Dan."

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play?

Nick: At the time of this project I was a young artist living and working in the Fort Point arts community. I had just graduated two months previously from the Massachusetts College of Art. Artists For Humanity commissioned me to design and build artistic bathroom partitions, handrails and various architectural details for the Artists For Humanity EpiCenter.

Dan: As a young designer living in Boston, I was approached to submit proposals for the design for the banister of the main gallery space at the EpiCenter. Due to the project's ecologically minded design, we chose to develop a scheme that used recycled materials as the primary component. I served as project designer and worked with a team of local artists to install the banister over the course of 8-9 months.

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning the project?

Nick: Fort Point is a transitioning artist community. For several years now, urban redevelopment has been forcing many artists out of this area. In a time when the neighborhood is concerned about losing studio space and its identity as an artist community, Artists For Humanity has been creating a permanent place for artists to work. The EpiCenter is now one of four artist-owned buildings in the Fort Point artist community.

Dan: The area around the EpiCenter is a hodgepodge of parking lots, light industrial buildings and residential homes. By borrowing some of the area's industrial sensibilities, the EpiCenter helps bring a more unified look to the neighborhood. More importantly, I think many would agree that the EpiCenter has become the catalyst for activity in the area, enlivening a formerly desolate strip of asphalt. The youth who work there have brought activity and creativity to this emerging neighborhood. As the youth work here, they gain the skills and the confidence to enter into a career in the arts. This building and the activity inside is the essence of communities working together to raise the potential and the expectations of the youth.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?

Nick: During this project we made several compromises to meet the strict requirements of green construction, and work toward the client's goal for LEED certification. For the most part, the compromises were made in the choice of design materials aimed at increasing the building's environmental responsibility. We used recycled car windshields to make a banister for the EpiCenter's mezzanine gallery. We also utilized the old trolley tracks that were pulled out of the street during construction to make a canopy and posts for a fence. All these decisions were creative solutions that I made with the client, and contributed to a dynamic design statement.

Dan: If designing is about concept then building is about compromise. There were trade offs made every day as we built the banister. The process of installing over 50 windshields around the mezzanine of the gallery required close negotiation with trades people, designers, building inspectors and the client. I think in the end we have a product that shows the team's ability to work together and above all make the clients vision a reality.

4. Has this project made the community a better place to live or work? If so, how?

Nick: Absolutely! As I mentioned earlier, the EpiCenter has helped strengthen the artist presence in Fort Point by virtue of becoming the fourth artist entity to own a property in the community. It also brings more artists to the neighborhood through its extensive employment opportunities. Thanks to the EpiCenter, Artists For Humanity now provides creative jobs to more than one hundred young people from Boston's public schools. AFH also expanded their visual arts programming to include new media, and now have a sculpture studio complete with a metal and wood workshop. They consistently involve community artists in collaborative projects, and in fact recruited me to join the organization as a Sculpture Instructor in September 2004. In essence, the EpiCenter is Boston's creative hub for young artists - youth and young adults.

I should also mention that the EpiCenter started a chain reaction resulting in a string of green buildings in our community. Pappas Enterprises is developing a green mixed-use building down the block from the EpiCenter. Others from the community visit the space to learn about sustainability and green design.

Dan: As I stated, the building has brought life to an otherwise bleak area of the city. The youth who work there inspire others around the city to get involved in the arts. Teachers from around the region bring their students here to see this model program. It teaches the youth about the possibilities creativity has: social change, careers in the arts and education. The EpiCenter is an example of the multivalent potential of the arts in the community.

5. Would you change anything about this project or the development process you went through?

Nick: After the completion of the project, I was hired by Artists For Humanity and I currently run the sculpture studio. I have the utmost respect for the ideas and talents of the dedicated teen artists I work side-by-side with on a daily basis. I only wish we could have tapped into their creativity and skills more on the banister, railing, and bathroom projects. I did enjoy incorporating their ideas in the construction of the bathroom. I know they were contributors to the overall design of the facility, and I understand the constraints of youth working on a construction site, but even more youth involvement would have made an unforgettable opportunity even more special. Now, the youth and I are creating renewable powered sculptures and architectural details in the EpiCenter making up for lost time.

Dan: If I could change any thing, I would have been a member of this community as a youth myself. I see the sense of community and belonging that these youth have and it inspires me to be more involved, to take the time and teach what I know. I have not had much time since the project was finished, thanks to graduate school, but I look forward to being a member of this community and others like it in the future. Creativity makes for vibrancy in the community. The best thing we can do is support it!

Public Agency: Adam Bickelman, MassDevelopment

PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by staff representative(s) of public agency(ies) who were directly involved in the financing, design review, or public approvals that affected this project.

Name: Adam Bickelman Title: Director of Communications

Organization: MassDevelopment (Massachusetts Development Finance Agency) Telephone: (617) 330-2000

Address: 160 Federal Street, 7th Floor City/State/Zip: Boston, MA 02110

Fax: (617) 330-2020 E-mail: abickelman@massdevelopment.com

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Signature Adam Bickelman 12/13/06

1. What role did your agency play in the development of this project? Describe any requirements made of this project by your agency (e.g., zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements).

In October 2003, MassDevelopment partnered with Artists for Humanity, Inc. to arrange a financing package for the organization's EpiCenter project, located in South Boston. The group utilized a \$2,800,000 tax-exempt bond issue to build a state-of-the-art, LEED-certified (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) "green building" to house fine and commercial art studios for AFH's youth programming, a learning laboratory and 5,000 sq. ft. of gallery space to showcase student art.

As the state's economic development authority, MassDevelopment is charged with financing projects with a tangible public benefit. In most circumstances, the agency's involvement in a deal results in the creation of jobs, housing or affordable housing units. Like any other project financed by MassDevelopment, AFH needed to prove a significant "public purpose" of the EpiCenter in order to qualify for tax-exempt financing through our bond department. Upon learning more about the organization and their array of programs, it became clear to MassDevelopment's bond officers that any AFH expansion would immediately and significantly benefit one of Boston's most vulnerable and underserved populations: inner-city adolescents.

In the two years since they completed construction, AFH has met their promise to inner-city teens by doubling employment opportunities and establishing a public venue for the community to experience youth-created art.

2. How was this project intended to benefit your city? What trade-offs and compromises were required to implement the project? How did your agency participate in making them?

Artists for Humanity's new EpiCenter benefits the City of Boston in two distinct ways. First, it provides an opportunity for inner-city youths to access the arts, while learning leadership skills and experiencing first-hand the spirit of entrepreneurship. Unfortunately, many of Boston's public schools lack the necessary resources to provide a rounded education in the arts. As noted earlier, the EpiCenter enables Artists for Humanity to employ an additional 60 students each year (for a total of 120 students), engaging them in the community after school, and paying them to think creatively while simultaneously beautifying the city via AFH public art displays.

The EpiCenter also benefits Boston through the message the building's LEED-certification sends. The MassDevelopment team was very impressed with AFH's focus on LEED-certified "green building" practices. The

organization's implementation of those practices in its new headquarters, and, more importantly, their use of the EpiCenter as a teaching tool showcases and supports the clear environmental benefits of sustainable building practices city-wide.

PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Did this project result in new models of public/private partnerships? Are there aspects of this project that would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

N/A

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

While the EpiCenter provides an impressive new facility for AFH to grow and create, the building itself is a resource for Boston and beyond. While AFH uses the innovative "green building" to educate others, MassDevelopment can utilize this example as the agency supports projects across the state. The long term benefits of this project will be reflected in other buildings, hopefully creating momentum for more sustainable urban design. The highlight of the EpiCenter is that both the building and its tenants are working to improve the community.

Since our involvement in Artists for Humanity's EpiCenter project ended once the financing process was complete, we are unable to comment on the "least successful" aspects of this project.

On a side-note, another successful aspect:

Since issuing the EpiCenter bond in October 2003, we have had the pleasure of partnering with the students of Artists for Humanity on two additional occasions. Our team was so impressed with the dedication, work ethic and artistic ability of AFH's many students (most of whom are under 18 years old), we decided to commission the group to create permanent art work for 100 Cambridge Street, a downtown Boston high-rise we recently redeveloped into a mixed-use office, retail and residential high-rise. We also hired AFH to create a rotating photo gallery depicting the neighborhoods of Boston for display in our Boston-regional office.

**Professional Consultant: Mark Kelley, III, Hickory
Consortium**

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the questions to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, legal, or other services. Copies may be given to other professionals, if desired.

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Signature Mark L. Kelley III, PE

1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?

As the lead sustainability consultant, the Hickory Consortium provided guidance in green and environmental building issues and the process to achieve a successful project. We led the initial scoping process with owners, students, architects and engineers, which resulted in the prioritization of sustainable goals for the design. We also produced the building simulations, feasibility studies and applications necessary to make good design choices, procure funding from utilities and state agencies and for LEED accreditation.

This project had several salient goals related to both the urban and the global environment. The process followed the key steps for sustainable design:

1. Develop consensus on Sustainability Economics, Indicators, Values and Goals.
2. Establish and prioritize Sustainability Vectors.
3. Develop a base case for comparing choices.
4. Select the best strategies for meeting priorities.
5. Incorporate Sustainability Goals in the design process.
6. Follow through during occupancy.

In our sustainable scoping workshops, we established a consensus on the meaning of sustainability for the Artists For Humanity organization and we identified the highest priorities for the project before the start of schematic design. Paramount was, of course, the educational goal of the Artists For Humanity organization. The list of building priorities is as follows, starting with the highest priority:

1. Energy autonomy
2. Identity
3. Practicality
4. Comfort
5. Health
6. Efficiency
7. Recycling/waste reduction

The project has been a great success on all fronts, with the potential for renewable production of over 100% of the low amount of energy needed. The distinctive design, committed to sustainability, and ingenious interior treatments create a building that reflects the true identity of the organization.

2. Describe the project's impact on its community. Please be as specific as possible.

There can be no overestimation of the positive effect of having a new, dedicated, landmark building as a focus for the activities of Artists For Humanity. Talking with the users (the students who work there) immediately reveals the pride and support they feel.

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. How might his project be instructive to others in your profession?

The whole project is a lesson in doing building process right. The integrated design process, starting with the sustainability workshops to establish priorities, LEED guided design, using an energy model to tradeoff costs and measures, and following through in construction with commissioning, led to a successful, low cost project in a complicated building environment.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

Most successful:

Integrated whole building design and construction process. The use of high efficiency envelope and equipment in an integrated whole building design should be a model for other organizations. The demonstration of a naturally cooled commercial building in an urban setting is a very important milestone for sustainable construction. The whole building design process begins with site design then optimized envelope design, finishes and materials, distribution and finally equipment selection. The entire building was thus designed to minimize energy demand, then photovoltaic electricity generation was applied to an optimized building envelope.

Least successful:

Managing a rapidly changing construction market on the part of the contracted builder. Builder's financial problems led to a chaotic completion process and difficult subcontractor relations.

Overall:

All in all, the end result is a very successful and strong example of exemplary sustainable construction can be done on a tight building budget. The robust process was able to overcome construction issues and successfully produce an exemplary building. Sustainably designed buildings, such as this one, exert a continuous pressure for positive change in society that persists into the future. A building that expresses these values offers the belief in a better future.

Architect: James Batchelor, Arrowstreet, Inc.

ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services. Copies may be given to other design professionals if desired.

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Signature

1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

Arrowstreet started out by convening a series of workshops with Artists for Humanity (AFH) staff and students. Immediately, the notion of a green building sprung to the top of the list. The enthusiasm with which the youth and staff embraced the notion of sustainability was hardly surprising considering that the mission of AFH is to foster a sense of empowerment and self-sufficiency. What was stunning, however, was the passion these urban youth and the leaders of AFH applied to educating themselves about the elements of green buildings. Equally impressive was their insistence on having an iconic building, one that would stand out in the city of Boston as a prominent reflection of AFH's identity as a cutting-edge, socially and environmentally conscious educational organization. They selected an ambitious name for the building: the EpiCenter.

The design concept was simple: make the building strong in form, functional, green to the highest level of LEED certification—and affordable. Because there would be many people passing through the building either as a part of the AFH program or as guests at the many functions hosted at the EpiCenter, it was understood that the building itself would serve as a regional model of sustainable design. As a result, thousands of people pass through the building each year. The Boston Museum of Science, as part of its green building education efforts has organized a public, on-going, cell phone tour of the EpiCenter.

The building sits prominently in a part of the city that is currently changing from heavy industry to mixed use. Directly adjacent are the old residential neighborhoods of South Boston, up until recently insulated from the arts cultures of the city. The building is designed to harken in form to the waning industrial landscape but feel inviting and upbeat as the growth of the waterfront draws new office workers, tourists and residents to the area.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

AFH's mission is to give city kids a route to a productive life through art. The program emphasizes the arts as a route to entrepreneurship, instilling rewards for commitment and growth. The assertive form and the environmental self sufficiency of the EpiCenter building is intended to make these kids feel unique, assertive and self sufficient themselves. The open spaces are intended to foster teamwork and a spirit of shared creativity.

The EpiCenter is designed to be a part of the broader community, an extension of the residential neighborhood and the Fort Point Channel artist community. The openness of the design starts with a public courtyard. When the oversize garage wall-door is open to the courtyard, the gallery becomes a virtual extension of the neighborhood around it. The great expanses of glass on the north and south walls make a statement of welcome, generosity, and inclusiveness that fits the mission and philosophy of AFH.

The large top floor studio and the ground floor gallery are places for congregation and sharing ideas. Studios on the middle level for woodworking, silk screening, and other mediums share light and views through transparent corrugated fiberglass walls.



3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project.

The site chosen for the EpiCenter was very narrow and incorporated a grade change of more than 10 feet. Arrowstreet turned these constraints into assets by making them major features of the design. In order to maximize the footprint on the narrow site, the building was designed with zero setbacks from the side lot lines. Because of this, the building code dictated that there be no windows on the east- and west-facing sides.

This “constraint” ended up matching the optimal fenestration model provided by the sustainable design consultant. His model showed that, in order to meet heating and cooling needs without air conditioning, the most energy efficient design was to concentrate windows on the north and south sides of the building and to limit or eliminate windows on the east and west. The east and west walls, sheathed in sleek corrugated stainless steel, became important design elements, reinforcing the strong and simple geometry of the building. The transparent corrugated walls of the windowless rooms at the center of the building allow daylight from the north and south window walls to reach these spaces.

Perhaps the most significant decision during the design process was to respond to the grade change by carving out a lower level courtyard on the south (entry) side of the building. This grassy courtyard provides generous daylight to the ground level gallery and is unique to this asphalt-dominated part of the city. When the 20-foot-wide garage door is rolled up, the outdoor space becomes a seamless extension of the gallery.

In order to eliminate the use of environmentally unfriendly hydrochlorofluorocarbons and make the building as green as possible, the design had to provide a way to cool the interior spaces without air conditioning. Natural ventilation, low-speed fans, reflective wall materials, super-insulation and night-time air flushing were designed to provide a comfortable environment even on hot, sunny days.

The building has a photovoltaic array that generates more power than it uses. Excess power is returned to the grid. The array covers the entire roof and is mounted 3 feet above it, shielding the roof from solar gain and allowing a cooling flow of air under the collectors.

In summary, the Artists for Humanity EpiCenter surmounted many challenges of siting and budget to achieve LEED certification at the highest Platinum level, the first building in the City of Boston to achieve this distinction.

4. Describe the ways in which the project relates to its urban context.

The scale and design of the building on its narrow parcel helps to transition between the historic South Boston residential neighborhood and a rapidly transforming mixed-use waterfront district of new, high-rise offices and hotels. Careful placement of the building on the very small site enabled designers to create a much needed green space, especially valuable in this urban environment. The industrially scaled overhead door at the front of the main gallery opens high and wide into this recessed courtyard to fully integrate the interior and exterior spaces in warm weather.

Locating the EpiCenter, which serves inner-city kids of all races and backgrounds, at the edge of an old South Boston neighborhood was a bold move. Although the neighborhood is becoming much more diverse, it has a history of racial tensions. By opening so boldly and so trustingly to the surrounding area, evidenced by the roll up wall and the public courtyard, the building is a physical embodiment of an invitation to participate, to come in and join the activities.

