

The August/September 2005 issue of dpdINFO highlighted a green future for the health care sector. This month, we're featuring a case study on a successful Built Green™ remodel in the Phinney Ridge neighborhood.

case study

A Built Green™ Remodel

green building



expressed through



modern design



Over the past two years, the Seattle market for Built Green™ homes has steadily grown, thanks to a handful of Seattle builders and developers. In King and Snohomish counties, 17 percent of all new homes are Built Green™ certified. In Seattle, there are 84 Built Green™ certified projects—single family, multifamily and community projects—with nearly 300 green homes for Seattle citizens and more on the way.

Built Green™ offers a framework for creating green homes that reflect the values of local builders concerned about health, the environment and profitability. Built Green™ homes are built with care and it shows. Homebuyers are demonstrating that they understand that green building adds value and that they are willing to pay more for it. The new, sophisticated buyer is looking for a home that enhances health and comfort, offers superior quality and durability, provides utility cost savings, and promotes environmental stewardship.

BLIP Design is one Seattle builder offering Built Green™ certified homes. Jim Burton, principal of BLIP Design, found that through his architecture practice he wasn't able to affect the market in a significant way and focus on his two passions—green design and modern design. He decided to develop his own projects and partnered with a former client, Jeff Lewis. After working with Burton on his own home renovation, Lewis was also convinced that there was an untapped market for modern, green homes. Lewis left his software developing career to create a new partnership with Burton. Together, they recently completed their first spec project.

Burton and Lewis purchased their first property and began renovating a traditional, one-story bungalow located on the east side of Phinney Ridge, following the Built Green™ Remodeler program. They wanted to develop an alternative to the typical housing offered by area builders. When completed, the house sold in two days at the upper range of market values in the neighborhood, demonstrating that there is an unmet market for integrated modern design and green building.

The renovation involved a seismic upgrade, opening the floor plan on the first floor, adding a second story, raising the ceiling height in the basement, and using contemporary materials and finishes.

The BLIP team learned a few lessons on their first project. They learned that more needs to be done to educate other disciplines. The real estate agents and building inspectors that represent prospective buyers were unfamiliar with alternative construction methods, new technologies and green building products. Instead of learning about these

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systems, like rain screen siding and radiant floor systems, they counseled their clients against them. Burton and Lewis did have a very positive experience with their DPD building inspector, Tim Blevins, and found him to be interested in supporting the Built Green™ project and learning more about new products and systems.

While the house sold in two days, the buyers didn't find the house through their real estate agent. They discovered the home on the Live Modern website at www.livemodern.com, where BLIP had posted it on a blog. From this experience, BLIP plans to consider new ways to market its modern, green homes directly to reach both consumer groups—the modern crowd and the green crowd.

Improving Energy Efficiency

The 3-Star Built Green™ home achieves greater energy efficiency, is healthier for the homeowners, and features natural building materials. BLIP modeled the energy performance to optimize the space conditioning requirements and energy efficiency. Energy efficient strategies include: passive solar and daylight design, airtight drywall construction, added insulation, NFRC-certified windows with a U-Factor of 0.35, ENERGY STAR® heating and cooling equipment and appliances, hydronic radiant floor heating system with a very efficient Viessman boiler, and a whole-house heat-recovery ventilation system.

Enhancing Health

BLIP designs healthy homes for their customers by attending to indoor air quality, moisture control and ventilation. The house features a rain screen system as the exterior finish, operable windows that allow for cross ventilation, highly efficient ventilation system with upgraded filters, whole-house fan, and low-VOC paints, sealers, adhesives and grouts. No carpeting was installed; instead the house features wood, Marmoleum, straw-board, ceramic tile and stained concrete floors.

Selecting Green Materials

Modern design is often thought of as cold and stark. BLIP creates warmth by using natural materials and expressing the nature of these materials with clear finishes. Green building materials were supplied by local companies, including the Environmental Home Center, Dunn Lumber and Best Paints. The green building materials featured in the house are: FSC-certified lumber, plywood and cabinetry; reclaimed fir beams and columns; sustainably harvested Ipe wood siding and decking; straw-board and Marmoleum flooring; Paperstone countertops; non-toxic paints and finishes; concrete with fly-ash content; Hardie Plank siding warranted for at least 50 years; and a roofing product warranted for 40 years. The kitchen facilitates recycling with a built-in recycling area.

To view BLIP design's work visit www.blipdesign.com. To learn more about green home remodels visit the City's sustainable building website at www.seattle.gov/sustainablebuilding/green-home.htm. Learn about Built Green™ at www.builtgreen.net. Visit Live Modern at www.livemodern.com.



Local Builders & Developers with Built Green™ certified projects in Seattle:

- Archdiocesan Housing Authority
- BLIP Design
- Catapult Community Developers
- Environmental Homes Northwest
- Family Pryde Homes
- Finehome Development
- Green Leaf Construction
- Habitat for Humanity of Seattle
- HomeSight
- Kauri Investments
- Martha Rose Construction
- Seattle Housing Authority
- Sunshine Construction
- Wild Radish LLC
- Yale Avenue LLC

To find more builders, developers, architects, designers, vendors, services providers, real estate agents and lenders involved with Built Green™ please visit www.builtgreen.net.

Learn more about DPD's role in green building at www.seattle.gov/dpd/sustainability or contact:

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