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AHRC New York City Moves into Green Office Building

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AHRC New York City relocated its services to an energy-efficient office building, with help from Simone Development companies.

BRONX, N.Y. — A new office building for AHRC New York City, a non-profit service provider for people with developmental disabilities, opened earlier this month and features recycled construction materials.

Simone Development Companies, a New York-based real estate investment company, helped AHRC with the relocation process, identified the site and developed the property to meet the needs of the organization. Construction on the project began in November 2012 and its completion was announced earlier this month.

“AHRC approached us, seeking suitable space in a good location,” said James MacDonald, director of leasing for Simone Development, in a statement. “After looking at several sites, we identified a property within the Simone portfolio that met the requirement. From that point, our team worked with AHRC on

the design of the building, and then constructed the property.”

With it being a new building for a state agency, energy efficiency was a major priority for the project. That’s why Simone Development decided to use Kingston Block’s recycled building block, which is made from 40 percent post-consumer recycled glass to reduce waste and carbon footprint.

Pozzotive is the recycled supplementary cementitious material used in the building block. Said to reduce greenhouse gas, 21,419 pounds of Pozzotive were used in the manufacturing of the building block, and for every pound used in the concrete design mix, a 1-pound savings of CO₂ emissions was yielded. For every pound of Pozzotive used, about 2.63 empty Heineken bottle equivalents are saved from being landfilled, which translates to a savings of 56,331 empty Heineken bottles.

The construction team also incorporated other ways to save on energy. For instance, they installed energy-efficient ballasts and lighting, as well as motion sensors. They also used a rubberized roof, which reflects the sun and reduces the heat load on the building during the summer months. All of the HVAC was high efficiency, too.

“This project was unique in the fact that it was our first new building where we were able to build using energy-efficient products in every aspect of construction,” said Joe Kelleher, president of Simone Healthcare Real Estate.

Being that it was a new building, Kelleher said that the greatest challenge was preparing the site and making it level, as well as installing electricity, gas and telecommunications services. “Bringing those services in is always the greatest challenge and takes the most time,” he said.

The project allowed for AHRC to consolidate the organization into one convenient location, instead of occupying several buildings throughout the Bronx. Plus, the building’s adjacency to Westchester Square station gives staff members and visitors of the organization access to about a dozen MTA bus lines.

“Overall, we learned how important it is to be aware of building green and the long-term positive effects it would have on the environment,” said Kelleher. “We also realized how many green products are available in the market.”