



BEST ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PROJECT



PHOTOGRAPHER / SCOTT PAULUS

MILWAUKEE COMMUNITY SAILING CENTER

450 N. LINCOLN MEMORIAL DRIVE, MILWAUKEE

PROJECT CREDITS

OWNER/DEVELOPER:
 Milwaukee Community Sailing Center

GENERAL CONTRACTOR:
 Oliver Construction Co.

ARCHITECT:
 HGA Architects and Engineers

PROJECT COST:
 \$1.64 million

Since 1977, the Milwaukee Community Sailing Center has worked to make the waters of Lake Michigan accessible to anyone and everyone who wants to give sailing a try.

But its original, 900-square-foot facility with no indoor plumbing made that mission nearly impossible. Classes were overcrowded and the organization's outreach was limited.

So about eight years ago, executive director Peter Rieck and the organization's board of directors began talking about building a new home.

"Lake Michigan makes Milwaukee a unique mid-sized city in the Midwest," Rieck said. "We like to be that next step for people, from water's edge to on the water."

Eugene Neyhart, board president and charter member, said several expansion projects were considered but rejected in favor of a more long-term solution.

"Finally, we just decided we needed to bite the bullet and build a new building," he said.

In 2006, the sailing center hired a capital campaign director and began applying for permits from the city and county. No public funding was used and more than 600 private donors made contributions to the \$1.64 million project, Rieck said.

Sailing center members also contributed "sweat equity" that included hours of labor, building benches and painting walls.

HGA Architects and Engineers in Milwaukee, along with general contractor Oliver Construction Co., Oconomowoc, broke ground in June 2009. Less than seven months later in early 2010, the two-story, 6,000-square-foot facility was complete

along the Lake Michigan shore.

But the building process wasn't totally problem-free. Tom Heinrich, project manager for Oliver Construction, said his company continuously worked with HGA Architects to find collaborative, cost-effective design solutions. Extensive foundation analyses were needed to measure the stability of the near-water, Veterans Park construction site.

Together, Oliver and HGA decided to anchor the building with 25-foot helical piers, saving about \$55,000, Heinrich said. Oliver's workers also implemented various erosion control methods to minimize the construction process's environmental impact.

The building itself has numerous green features. Since no natural gas was available on the remote lakefront site, a geothermal heating and cooling system was chosen as an energy-efficient alternative energy source. Only a handful of other Milwaukee-area projects have implemented a geothermal system, Heinrich said.

Other environmentally friendly considerations include passive solar heating, spray foam insulation, water-saving toilets, deep roof overhangs for summertime shading, a rain garden and ample windows to allow natural light.

The building's curved roof, wooden arches and stainless steel handrails all reflect a nautical theme.

And with the new facility in place, the Milwaukee Community Sailing Center has been able to expand its programming as well as its income opportunities. The center now offers 60 to 80 different classes during the summer and 25 to 30 during



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the all-indoor winter months, Rieck said.

The new building features two dedicated classrooms, fully functional bathroom and shower spaces, and a large, second-story reception hall. This community room is largely used for classes and multimedia presentations, but can be rented for other group's business meetings and events, Rieck said.

"After operating out of such a small space ... it's so wonderful," he said.

— William O'Brien