



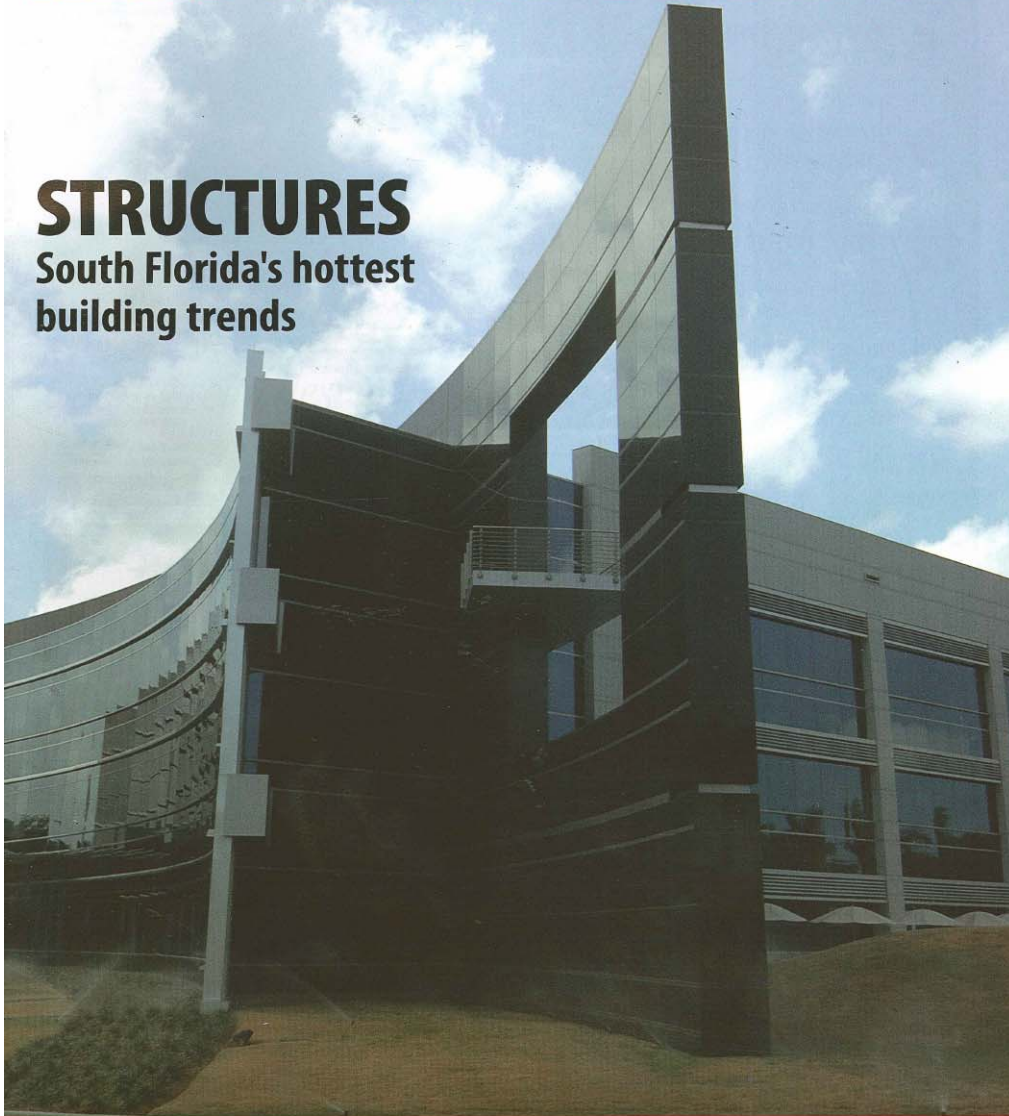
CAREY O'DONNELL
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Two future Lynn Financial Center buildings have been pre-certified gold by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Commercial design breaks new ground

BY DARCI LUNSFORD

Architect Bruce Retzsch was given a wide artistic berth to design the edgy Lynn Insurance Group headquarters in Boca Raton.

The 85,000-square-foot office opened last fall and is now the real estate cornerstone of the prominent Lynn family's commercial underwriting business, as well as a new \$75 million, three-building office park.

It is anything but the traditional South Florida suburban architecture.

It is not Mediterranean-themed. It is not made of tilt-up concrete walls. It is a wave of glass curtain wall with a black granite handle jutting out in graphical proportion. Curtain wall skeletons, popular two decades ago, are more expensive than skeletons typical these days due to newer hurricane codes.

At the structure's apex is the office of insurance executive and philanthropist Christine E. Lynn, who wanted the building situated on the 8-acre site so she could see the jets come and go from the nearby Boca Raton Airport. Lynn also wanted her company's headquarters to make an architectural statement.

"Mrs. Lynn wanted something very modern, yet something that stood the test of time," said Retzsch,



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Lynn Insurance Group headquarters in Boca Raton, which opened in 2007.

principal of RLC Architects in Boca Raton. "I have been practicing 33 years, and this is one of those once-in-a-career [projects]."

The shape of the building is "a gesture to be open to people," he said.

Next door, the two remaining buildings that will cap off the Lynn Financial Center campus are going up. While not appointed with the same materials and finishes, the 123,882 square feet of speculative offices have their own novel feature: pre-certification for the U.S.

Green Building Council's gold level of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

GREEN WAVE OF COMMERCIAL

The complex is part of a wave of green commercial buildings now washing over South Florida.

The 100,000-square-foot Boca Colonnade II on Yamato Road, developed by Liberty Property Trust, is set to open its doors this month

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Stiles Corp.'s Lake Shore Plaza II in Sunrise is the first LEED-certified multi-tenant office building in Broward County.

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with silver LEED certification.

The second phase of TIAA-CREF's 1800 Boca Center office complex along Military Trail is now being design to meet LEED standards, even though the first build-

erywhere as well as all types of buildings for the future," said Howard Elkus, co-founder of Elkus Manfredi Architects in Boston, which designed West Palm Beach's CityPlace and its newly opened state-of-the-art office tower.

Elkus said that, within three years, building design would begin to evolve rapidly from just cutting energy consumption to generating it.

"The next trend is sustainability," he said. "Eventually, we will become carbon-neutral and generate energy."

The smooth-flowing, 300,000-square-foot CityPlace Tower, which anchors the eastern edge of the CityPlace retail, residential and entertainment center, was conceived as a real estate defense after a spate of hurricanes chewed up South Florida in 2004 and 2005.

The tower's developers - The Related Cos. and Crocker Partners LLC - charged Elkus with crafting a building so technologically and structurally sophisticated that businesses could operate un-

interrupted before, during and after a storm hit. Two emergency generators, which run on redundant feeds of natural gas and fuel, are capable of powering all electronic systems,



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CityPlace Tower was conceived as a real estate defense against hurricanes.

ing was not. And Stiles Corp.'s Lake Shore Plaza II in Sunrise marks the first LEED-certified multi-tenant office building to open in Broward County.

"I think sustainability is the central theme for office buildings ev-

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including the air conditioning. "Competition is a great thing," Elkus said. "When somebody sets a higher standard, then others have to meet it, in terms of expectation in the market."

Procacci Development Corp. is rising to this design challenge.

The Boca Raton-based developer will pair the latest in hurricane resistance with green building design for two proposed 181,000-square-foot buildings in Crossroads at Dolphin Commerce Center, west of Miami International Airport, and a 40,000-square-foot building at Emerald View at Vista Center in West Palm Beach.

The buildings will not only resist winds up to 185 mph with business-as-usual power backup, but will seek LEED certification.

Even industrial developers, such as Atlanta-based giant Industrial Developments International (IDI), plan to roll out the first generation of green warehouse, manufacturing and distribution hubs.

IDI is developing five LEED-certified industrial projects across Florida, including at its proposed Rock Lake business park in Pompano Beach. No construction timeline



Phase II of 1800 Boca Center is being designed to meet LEED standards.

has been set for that one but others in Tampa and Fort Pierce will start opening early next year.

"Sustainability is a major initiative across IDI," said Scott Helms, senior VP of IDI in South Florida. "With energy costs on the rise, we think there will be strong demand for industrial space that offers tenants a variety of energy-saving and cost-saving features."

In the retail arena, Boca Raton

architect Paul Slattery said mixed use continues to be a popular trend, but architects are finding new blends and designs.

"Mixed use, originally, was commercial and residential," said Slattery, designer of the commercial heart of the massive 86-acre Renaissance Commons mixed-use development in Boynton Beach. "But, a lot of people have thrown some unusual twists to it – even industri-

al and residential."

The commercial component of Renaissance Commons blends retail, professional and medical office-

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Scott Helms | Senior VP, IDI

es with the project's 1,375 condos and 310 townhomes.

Slattery said the key is making these large projects as approachable as a traditional, small-town main street for residents, shoppers and business tenants. Slattery said he created central courtyards and masked parking structures by wrapping the buildings around them to bring the four-story structures down to a "human scale."

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