



▲ KIB's new headquarters at 1029 Fletcher Ave. should be ready for occupancy in the spring, consolidating its many operations under one roof.

KIB's new headquarters to be environmental gem

This report is provided by Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Inc., through its partnership with Urban Times.

AS THE ENDEAVORS OF KEEP INDIANAPOLIS Beautiful have grown more relevant and accessible in the city, the size of their projects has increased exponentially – both in volume and manpower.

Having outgrown its current headquarters Downtown – and thanks to an anonymous donor – KIB now has the means necessary to take on one of its most ambitious missions yet – a \$1.7 million environmentalist's dream home.

KIB's staff will soon be projecting their magnificent green beacon of beautification from 1029 Fletcher Ave., in Fountain Square. The project will appropriately include a makeover of the pre-existing urban lot and building, pur-

chased for \$450,000. The new KIB headquarters – after it is renovated – will be one of the most beautiful, energy-efficient and earth-friendly structures in the city.

“We couldn't be doing this without an angel donor, who wishes to remain anonymous,” says KIB President David Forsell. “This donor came forward with the ‘seed’ – a vision for a new, ‘green’ space and a generous donation to get us started. The idea took root, along with additional support from other community donors and partners. Now we'll be able to serve neighborhoods more efficiently, and the headquarters will embody our commitment to a quality environment and community renewal.”

KIB will likely be the first local nonprofit to be certified for Leadership in Environmental Design (LEED) status with the US Green Building Council. KIB worked with

Ratio Architects to incorporate as many environmentally sensitive “green” elements into the design as possible, starting with reuse and redevelopment of an urban lot and pre-existing building.

If buildings were cars, the future headquarters of KIB would be a 30-mpg hybrid Cadillac – with all the space, style and comfort needed for a long day on the road of city-wide beautification – minus the gas bill. But the amenities begin outside the building, where the parking lot will be pervious, allowing storm-water to seep through the surface, rather than running off as a pollutant. A 10,000-gallon cistern will be installed to capture rainwater and provide water for plant material. Atop the building, a reflective “cool roof” will reject those nasty UV rays – giving KIB its own little proverbial stone of David to

throw at the Global-Warming Goliath.

The crown-jewel of the green kingdom may be the building's central atrium, which will capture natural daylight and give tenants and visitors alike the aesthetic pleasure of a view to an open-air courtyard of native plants and trees. Sensor-activated lighting will alleviate an unoccupied room of any unnecessary power consumption.

At completion, the additional features will account for a 10- to 15-percent increase in building cost, but Forsell sees this as an acceptable temporary expense for future savings – both fiscal and environmentally. “It takes a little more ‘green’ to go green,” said Forsell. “But the long-term benefits fit our mission, provide a return over time, and make it the right decision for our organization.”

The project team includes Ratio Architects, Inc., as lead architect and Shiel Sexton as general contractor. The project will use talents of three engineering firms – Circle Design Group, Fink Roberts and Petrie and Elements Engineering. Synthesis Incorporated is the lead landscape architect.

In addition to the anonymous “Angel Donor,” Forsell said the project would not be possible without the generous financial support of the Lilly Endowment, Inc.; The Indianapolis Foundation, an affiliate of the Central Indiana Community Foundation; the Local Initiatives Support Corp.; Indianapolis Power & Light Co., the Nicholas H. Noyes Jr. Memorial Foundation, Inc.; and The National Bank of Indianapolis.

With the space and resources that a building of these proportions provides, the staff will be able to operate at an unprecedented level of efficiency. Previously, volunteers and KIB staff had to spend hours of valuable time, fuel and resources hauling equipment and supplies to and from rented or borrowed storage facilities. Community and volunteer meetings also commanded hours of staff attention in allocating venues – but now every facet of operations will be centralized, allowing for KIB to spend less time administrating and more time beautifying the city.

Generous donors have already given or pledged nearly \$850,000 to help KIB redevelop 1029 Fletcher into its headquarters. Just over \$900,000 remains to be secured to pay for the project – and while this investment is undeniably a hefty one, the green strategies will pay for themselves after continued decades of decreased energy consumption.

In the spring, when the 20,000 daffodils that KIB planted this fall finally bloom around the city, the building should be ready for its new tenants. ■

Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Inc. is a charitable, 501 c 3 non-profit organization. In 2006, KIB supported more than 28,000 volunteers in 500 community improvement projects. For more information visit www.kibi.org.



▲ The building's central atrium will capture natural daylight and give tenants and visitors alike the aesthetic pleasure of a view to an open-air courtyard of native plants and trees.