



E.W. Howell finishes \$28 million Visitor Center for Brooklyn Botanical Garden; Designed by Weiss/Manfredi

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L.I.-based contractor E.W. Howell has completed construction of the new \$28 million Visitor Center at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

Designed by Weiss/Manfredi the 20,000 s/f Visitor Center combines architecture and landscape design to replace the Garden's gate on Washington Ave. with an enticing entryway into the 52-acre garden. Conceived as an extension of the garden's topography, the flowing glass building is a model for the integration of built structure and landscape. The Visitor Center houses a new garden store, visible from within the garden and with new street-side connections to Washington Ave., an orientation room for tours and classes, a visitor-information desk, a new event space, a refreshment bar and restrooms.

One of the many features of this new facility is the 10,000 s/f living roof which will transform throughout the year with seasonal plantings. In addition to the living roof, the Visitor Center incorporates numerous environmentally sustainable features that are aimed toward earning LEED Gold certification. A geexchange system consisting of 28 thermal wells heats and cools the interior spaces, reducing the structure's overall energy consumption. Radiant floor heating provides warmth efficiently to the building's occupants. Much of the structure and landscaping uses concrete and steel containing postconsumer and postindustrial recycled building materials. Interior wood paneling is milled from ginkgo trees harvested from the building site.

The project is EW Howell's first venture into Building Information Modeling (BIM).

"The use of BIM has complimented the MEP coordination process by highlighting trade conflicts not picked up by the traditional means of overlay review," said project manager Santo Carter. In addition the virtual model has provided a means to mitigate space constraints within this unique & compact design.

The Visitor Center is a new milestone in the Garden's history as its first "green" building, and serves as a lasting exhibit for ecologically-sound design.

About Brooklyn Botanic Garden

Founded in 1910, Brooklyn Botanic Garden (BBG) is an independent nonprofit institution committed to education, research, and the display of horticulture. Situated on 52 acres in the heart of Brooklyn, the Garden is home to over 12,000 kinds of plants and hosts more than 725,000 visitors annually. Learn more at bbg.org.

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