

High-Voltage Office

Lakewood Ranch embraces modernism with Energy Court Center.



Principals in the new Energy Court Center are Brian Kennelly, Rick Fawley, Peter Hayes, Brian Leaver and Mike Bryant.

>>What happens when you let 15 architects loose to dream up their ideal building? You wind up with the \$6.2 million Energy Court Center, one of Lakewood Ranch's first modernist commercial buildings, which is set for completion in March.

The three-story blue-glass and white-brick building on the corner of Energy Court and Lakewood Ranch Boulevard is the new headquarters for Tandem Construction and Fawley Bryant Architects, who partnered on the project with Lakewood Ranch Commercial Realty. Half of the 32,000-square-foot building is available for lease.

"We broke the mold" on this project, says Michael Bryant, a Fawley Bryant partner. "Lakewood Ranch took a leap of faith to let us build something this cutting-edge."

Fawley Bryant got the whole office involved in the design, forming four design groups. "They took off like rockets and competed with each other," says Bryant. "We wanted them to have fun with it and enliven the space."

The main entrance has a glass soffit leading to a three-story open atrium with glass stair-

wells. A 600-foot outdoor terrace on the first floor doubles as meeting space.

The contemporary design is a stark departure from the Mediterranean Revival style that dominates Lakewood Ranch. "Diversity of architecture is healthy for a development of this size," says Brian Kennelly, executive vice president of Lakewood Ranch Commercial Realty. Because both companies have a track record building in Lakewood Ranch, Kennelly says, "there was a comfort level to let them reach and stretch."

Tandem and Fawley Bryant have worked together on about 20 Lakewood Ranch projects, including the LECOM medical school and University Professional Center, but this collaboration was a first for both of them. "It's value-added because we're both contributing to each other," says Brian Leaver, a partner and senior vice president of Tandem Construction. "It's unique to have an architect and builder develop" their own space together.

Energy Court Center sits on a peninsular-shaped lot along curving streets overlooking

wetlands on three sides, which by definition can't be developed. Six tons of blue-tinted, impact-glazed glass were incorporated in the building to take advantage of natural light and to keep energy costs down. The building follows green building principles, but the builders do not plan on having it LEED certified.

Fawley Bryant will occupy part of the third floor. The architects' conference room forms a 90-degree angle, with floor-to-ceiling glass overlooking wetlands. Other touches include hanging glass partitions and the Fawley Bryant glass logo built into the side of the building.

Fawley Bryant will continue to maintain its downtown Bradenton office, but Tandem will move its downtown Sarasota office to the new building. Tandem's office will be on the second floor, where there's nearly 4,000 square feet for lease. The first floor is all available for lease. Rates are \$20 to \$22 a square foot, triple net.

Kennelly, who is leasing the space, says it's ideal for attorneys, accountants and graphic designers, and people "who are looking for an identity." ■