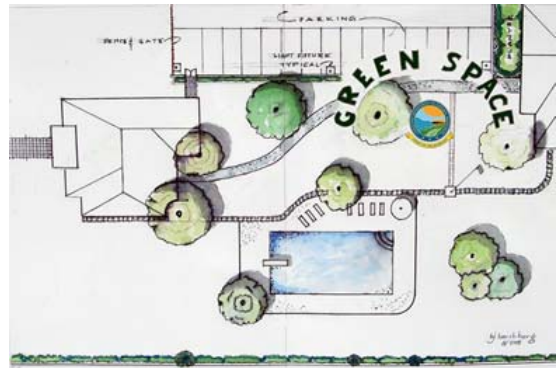


GreenSpace - Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation Synagogue

by Carol Ross Barney, FAIA,
of RossBarney Architects



BY HOWARD HERSHBERG



This is the Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation Synagogue of Evanston, Illinois designed by architect, Carol Ross Barney, FAIA, of Ross Barney Architects. The project attained a LEED platinum rating. It was listed as one of the 2009 top ten green projects in the nation by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Committee on the Environment (COTE). The full article appears in the April 15, 2009 edition of Architecture Week.

Green and sustainable features in this design include:

- The synagogue is a "tight Cube" form (in plan) which contributes to the overall energy efficiency.
- The exterior of the building is built of repurposed/reused wood and glass feature walls in strategic locations.
- The design maximizes shared spaces and shrank the programmed square footage by almost 25%. Thus substantially reducing the construction costs, annual operating costs and annual maintenance costs of the new synagogue.

- The new synagogue was built on the same site as the previous synagogue. The existing building foundation was reused for the new design. 95% of the former synagogue's masonry walls were used in the new design. It was used to fill the previous basement and the leftover concrete and masonry from the previous walls was used as filler for gabion walls which define some of the outdoor spaces.
- Recycled wood was utilized throughout the project. The building's exterior is wrapped in cypress reclaimed from old agricultural buildings in the area. Some of the existing memorial maple trees had to be removed to allow for the new construction. Wood from these trees was used for the new two story front doors. Storm toppled black walnut trees were used for the sanctuary's Bimah (the raised platform from the Torah, the scroll of the law, is read).
- Building materials were selected because they were available within a 500 mile radius to reduce the energy costs of transporting them. * Nearly all of the spaces receive natural light. Core spaces, farthest from the perimeter windows, are devoted to restrooms, storage, and other uses with lower lighting requirements.
- The heavily landscaped site is irrigated with water from a storm water retention system.

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