

**NOT FOR REPRINT**

 [Click to print](#) or Select '**Print**' in your browser menu to print this document.

Page printed from: <https://www.globest.com/sites/globest/2009/05/15/green-corridor-to-rise-in-philadelphia/>

---

# Green Corridor to Rise in Philadelphia

Area students and local developers collaborate and brain-storm on a sustainable corridor for the City of Brotherly Love.

By **Debra Hazel** | May 15, 2009

PHILADELPHIA-Talk about a rebirth—a new ultra-sustainable office building planned in West Philadelphia may help create a new green corridor. At a recent charette about 2.0 University Place, the first LEED Platinum office building in the city, representatives from city and state government, the sustainable community and leading universities, gathered to hear about the coming green initiatives.

However, this charette also included students from nearby Philadelphia University, University of Pennsylvania, and Penn State, who contributed their ideas on how they would design and brand a green corridor. Topics included transit-oriented development, urban planning, green construction materials, zoning regulations and Philadelphia's demographics.

“The goal of the charette was to have the discussion with the students who are making sustainability the focus of their potential careers, to hear their discussion of the nation's first green commercial corridor and to improve the vision,” said Scott Mazo, a partner in Philadelphia-based University Place Associates, which is developing 2.0 University Place as the first component in what will be more than one million square feet of Platinum LEED-certified office and retail space on four blocks.

Located on Powelton Ave. between 41st and 42nd Streets, the 94,350-square-foot, five-level 2.0 University Place will include such sustainable features as massive amounts of glass for natural light, efficient heating and cooling systems, a rooftop garden, holding tanks for greywater, solar panels, strategically located shading systems to reduce solar gain during the summer, secured bicycle parking, preferred parking for hybrid and alternate fuel vehicles. It also is located a few blocks from the Market Street Corridor and public transportation.

“This is a textbook example of a transit-oriented development,” Mazo said. Previously a residential developer, Mazo began assembling parcels adjacent to University City and the Science Center to create a new commercial corridor.

“Green is not going away,” Mazo said. “We want companies that believe in green. But let’s not just go green, let’s go to the best. Let’s have a destination.”

This area of Philadelphia has long been a haven for new businesses, and many start-ups now are going green themselves. The property at 2.0 University Place combines new suburban office development techniques to an urban location. The building also will include a coffee shop and possibly a fitness facility.

“Most of the office buildings proposed in Philadelphia are much larger. This is very realistic,” said Craig Scheuerle, a senior vice president for Grubb & Ellis, which is leasing the building.

Making the project even more realistic and appealing to its users was a major factor in the charette. Mazo and various other speakers, including analysts, Scheuerle, project architect Shraga Berenfeld and others gave presentations, answered questions and then broke the attendees up into smaller groups, each facilitated by one of the speakers.

“What surprised me, when we did the breakout groups, was the students’ passion, the passion for a social ethic,” Mazo said. He also noted that his group, which consisted largely of graduate students, balanced the theory behind sustainable building with the

real-world need for fiscal practicality.

Some had practical suggestions, such as exploring buying air rights over a building Mazo has been unable to purchase to add to the parcel. "They documented the entire process," said student Alex Dews, a masters in sustainable design candidate at Philadelphia University, who attended the charette. The developers also were very receptive to the students' ideas, he added. "They asked follow-up questions and were very happy to have us there."

Rents are projected to be \$30 per square foot plus utilities, which is significantly less than major towers in the city. The reduced utility charge will be another benefit to leasing efforts.

All approvals and permits are in place, so construction can begin when the building is 60% leased, Mazo said. Construction would then take about nine to 12 months.

The \$25-million project cost includes about a 3% to 4% premium to achieve Platinum status, Mazo said. Financing is in place, making the project shovel-ready. Mazo hopes to have the rest of the parcel developed within five to six years. "This will evolve into the nation's first green commercial corridor," Mazo said.

---

**Copyright 2018. ALM Media Properties, LLC. All rights reserved.**