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GREENHOUSE TAVERN

Greens on your plate

The creative use of existing materials makes this space an exciting design that lives up to its name

BY MICHELE KILROY

Many people might consider it madness to open a restaurant in today's economy. But the passion of those at the helm of The Greenhouse Tavern could not be quelled since they persevered to open their much anticipated gastro pub this past April.

The Greenhouse Tavern operates by two primary guiding principles: that the proximity of food to a restaurant confirms the quality of the dishes served and that environmental operational practices are fundamental. And while several area restaurants have embraced the ever-growing trend of using local food ("farm-to-fork" or "slow food") as part of their menus, The Greenhouse Tavern has gone beyond by designing, constructing and operating the first green-certified restaurant in the state of Ohio from the national Green Restaurant Association.

The visionaries (along with many supporters) who created The Greenhouse Tavern are chef Jonathon Sawyer, chef Jonathan Seeholzer, operations manager Everest Curley and project designer Jonathan Sin-jin Satayathum, LEED AP. Chef Sawyer notably worked for restaurants such as Lolita, Parea and Bar Cento. From these experiences, he crossed paths with Seeholzer, Curley and Satayathum, all of whom had spent much of their careers in the restaurant industry.

The four banded together with the conscious intent to promote healthy local food to the community in a healthy, efficient environment for patrons and staff.

Pre-existing wins points

In keeping with the adage that the greenest building is the one that is already built, the team only considered existing building stock for the restaurant. With advantageous available space in Cleveland's East 4th Street entertainment district, the historic Cort's Building emerged as the future home of The Greenhouse Tavern. The long and narrow space wedged between Wonder Bar and House of Blues presented some challenges, but preserving much of the interior and exterior was attained



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through thoughtful design and space planning, which pleased the Landmarks Commission.

The restaurant currently features multiple interior levels and an outdoor seasonal dining area. Plans have already been approved for the future three-season dining space and a greenhouse installation on the roof. Food sources rarely get closer than having your own on-site greenhouse! The design and construction called for the concepts of recycling, upcycling and reuse within the open-space plan. As with all good design, these sustainable elements are not easily recognized, and they often need to be pointed out to the untrained patron's eye—one of the reasons GHT chose to print design/construction highlights on the back of their menu. The highlights also warrant mention because the team, led by Satayathum, spent countless hours tracking down installers, suppliers, fabricators, fixtures, and materials through online research, letter-writing campaigns or in person. Their efforts paid off in the result of an exceptionally sustainable build out with a high-end appearance.

Some notable reclaimed items include the vintage solid hardwood doors from salvage that became partitions in the restrooms. An expansive bar located on the street level is faced by these same vintage doors, some still with their original hardware, and topped by a custom-made countertop. At first glance, the countertop appears to be a standard industrial composition available through national distributors, but GHT's bar is actually made onsite of concrete, shattered commercial curtain wall glass from Midwest Curtainwalls, and beer and wine bottles collected from various restaurants. Anchored above the bar is a series of storage units that were obtained from local business Old School Architectural Salvage, which specializes in the distribution of well preserved building materials rescued from educational and government buildings. Some of GHT's storage units can be traced back to science labs at John Carroll University. Opposite the bar in the main dining room, the wall is beautifully treated by barn siding resurrected from a Civil War-era barn in Jefferson, OH. Oak flooring and framing from former Ohio farmhouses was used throughout the space to construct bar stools, chairs and shelves. Many of the furnishings were constructed by A Piece of Cleveland and Form-2-Design, local firms which specialize in repurposing historic building materials. Some chairs and table bases came from former area restaurants now out of business. The cantilevered east and west mezzanine levels offer more private dining areas and a great view overlooking the main dining area. The west mezzanine was an existing space, while the east mezzanine was newly constructed. All floors were treated with polished concrete with high fly-ash content for strength. But the mezzanine levels boast a patchwork pattern of Interface FLOR recycled/recyclable carpet tiles that were obtained through GHT's ties to ZeroLandfill Northeast Ohio, a non-profit that works to reduce the amount of architectural products in our landfills. From the mezzanine, one can fully appreciate the drum lighting that was custom designed to accommodate the high ceilings. The lights are composed of eco-fabric stretched to meet anchoring bike rims from Ohio City Bike Co-op. At this level, you can get a closer look at the environmentally friendly acoustic ceiling panels made of aspen wood fibers from Tectum Incorporated in Newark.

High energy

GHT met the confirmed assumption by having all Energy Star-rated appliances and fixtures installed in kitchen and bar. All paints, sealants and stains used contain no or low volatile organic compounds as supplied by Sherwin Williams. And while most sustainable build-outs now contain compact fluorescent and LED lighting, GHT benefited from working directly with General Electric to have the latest in light emitting diodes and dimmable options in the space. Another newly established relationship with Sloan Valve Company yielded the highest end motion sensitive, water

conserving fixtures which are powered by light energy in the restrooms. All these behind-the-scenes sustainability practices strongly complement the restaurant's primary purpose: to work with the local food network and provide unique, fresh, artisanal dishes from area bakers, growers, cheese makers, brewers, and butchers. The Greenhouse Tavern will have some seasonal changes to its lunch and dinner menus, but you'll be guaranteed to have that drink or meal in the most sustainable setting in Cleveland to date.

For more information about The Greenhouse Tavern, go to www.thegreenhousetavern.com. *BXM*

Michele Kilroy, LEED AP, is the coordinator of the Northeast Ohio Chapter of the USGBC.

Designer: Jonathan Sin-jin Satayathum, LEED AP

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