

Downtown library goes green with new ecoroof

Snyder Roofing of Oregon is currently applying adhesive for an ecoroof on Portland's central library building

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BY NATHALIE WEINSTEIN

It's about to get greener on top of Portland's central library building.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and the city of Portland recently gave two grants to Multnomah County in order to fund a \$180,000 ecoroof on its central library building at 801 S.W. 10th Ave., in downtown Portland.

DEQ awarded the county \$102,000 while the city gave \$60,000 to cover construction and maintenance costs for the roof, which is currently being worked on by Snyder Roofing of Oregon. This is the second green roof project Multnomah County has performed; the Amy Joslin Memorial Eco-Roof on the Multnomah Building was constructed in 2003.

Snyder is currently applying a cold-applied roofing system to the top of the 95-year-old library, which was extensively renovated from 1994 to 1997.

"Ecoroofs can triple the life of a roof membrane," said Multnomah County project manager Alan Proffitt. "The biggest causes of roof breakdown, UV rays and thermal shock, can't get to the membrane."

The library green roof will involve several layers of installation.

First a membrane with dirt and a protective root barrier will be laid down, followed by a four-inch-deep tray system filled with soil. Snyder also will install an irrigation system, which will keep the plants hydrated during summer months. Architect Carlton Hart Architecture and landscape architect Macdonald Environmental Planning have chosen mostly succulent plants for the roof, which will be planted once the summer heat eases up.

The library's TremCo roofing system uses four layers of ply sheet, mineral surface protection and a solvent-free adhesive. LG board and the roof system membrane from the library's original roof will be recycled and used as a root barrier. Insulation removed from the roof will be reused by the county.

Snyder was challenged by the library's location, which is surrounded by trees and located right by tracks for the MAX light-rail.

"We had to erect scaffolding to get our materials up here," said Rick Gehrts, a senior estimator for Snyder. "There's only one loading area on 11th Avenue because there are trees on all sides of the building."

And then you have the MAX going by on Yamhill every few minutes.”

The structural capacity of the library was important during the planning phases of the project because the green roof will place 20 pounds of weight per square foot on the building.

“The building has to be able to support the saturation,” said Proffitt. “On some of the Southeast corners of the library, there are weight restrictions.”

Gehrts said his company has seen a rise in the demand for green roofs. Interest in preserving roof longevity and increasing environmental awareness could be reasons for the increase, he said.

Snyder is currently three-fourths of the way done with the green roof; it will be completed in the coming months. Tours of the library’s new roof may be offered to the public once the project is completed, said John Cabrera, a spokesman for the library.

Other contractors on the project include B&K Sheet Metal Inc., Teufel Commercial Landscape, WACO Scaffold & Equipment Co. Inc. and Beaverton Plumbing Inc.

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