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32,000-SF Philips Space a New Millennium Gem

ANDOVER — For CresaPartners project manager Dwight S. Patten, the modern office is coming of age—but that evolution has been slow to emerge, acknowledges the registered architect who recalls working on a then novel open layout concept in the mid-1990s on behalf of a forward-thinking telecommunications firm. The spirit was willing, but systems enabling workers to roam back then was ineffective, explains Patten, resulting in less-than-stellar results.



Philips Healthcare space at 200 Minuteman Rd., Andover MA

Flash forward a decade into the new millennium, and technology has finally caught up to the vision, a union on display at 200 Brickstone Square in Andover where CresaPartners and a



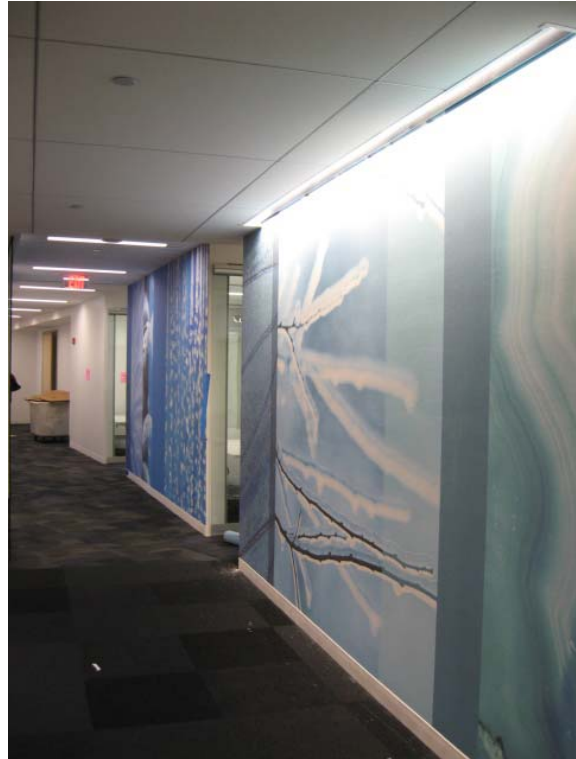
Dwight S. Patten

team including Margulies Peruzzi Architects and J. Calnan Associates has just completed a 32,000-sf fit out on behalf of Philips Healthcare using an open approach to foster interaction and movement of people and ideas. “In general, this has been a huge success for them,” Patten says of a European-based client already sold on the philosophy from an international model in place at the business conglomerate’s Netherlands headquarters.

So-called Workplace Innovations strategies did need to be adjusted to the sensitivities of American workers, but Patten says the basic tenets of WPI are incorporated into the Andover space, an office that Philips hopes to expand across the country, including one effort underway in New Jersey that CresaPartners is also assisting the client on as its US project management advisor. Patten oversees more than two dozen professionals nationally for parent company Philips Electronics North America, a diversified operation also active in the lighting industry. The

CresaPartners client has hundreds of offices across the country, and is eternally looking for ways to improve efficiency and employee performance in its occupancy, says Patten.

The 200 Minuteman Rd. layout certainly goes all out to advance the open space idea in suburban Boston. The layout has 200 individual work settings for 240 employees in a so-called “free addressing” concept. Employees are encouraged to sit where they desire each day, from anywhere in the office at anytime. To promote collaboration and interaction, the office is arranged in seven “neighborhoods” that house four clusters of six work settings, with adjacent support spaces that include meeting rooms, file areas and select areas when a private space is required.



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“Our new space leverages both technology and dynamic office design to create a livable and workable (setting),” says Philips official Jay Poswolsky in a press release celebrating completion of the facility that sits across from the group’s regional headquarters at 300 Minuteman Park Dr. According to Poswolsky, “the end result is an efficient office design that will allow employees to work anywhere and allow Philips to continue to provide the quality healthcare products and solutions that our customers have come to expect.”

Patten says the willingness to go all-in for the open space vision helps sell the footprint to others in the organization. “It has to have the senior leadership participation,” he says. “If they do not, the others will not follow.” Philips took additional precautions to prepare staff for the new-age way of occupying buildings, engaging a “change consultant” to help inure staff to the venue. An “inviting” design created by Margulies Perruzzi Architects and installed by J. Calnan Associates was critical to the favorable result, adds Patten, who says initial feedback among employees has been fawning and upbeat.

Natural light and LED light fixtures and lamps provided from Philips itself were elements aiding in the positive outcome, according to Patten and others involved in the project. The incorporation of 90 percent LED systems makes it “a showroom for Philips’ lighting solutions,” according to the press release.

Other key members of the fit out operation includes HOK for branding and signage, plus Creative Office Pavilion in delivering furniture for the diverse layout that features a “Town Square” area that can be used as a lunchroom/café or meeting room enhanced to audiovisual capabilities. The intricate electrical, mechanical and plumbing work was provided by R.G. Vanderweil Engineers.