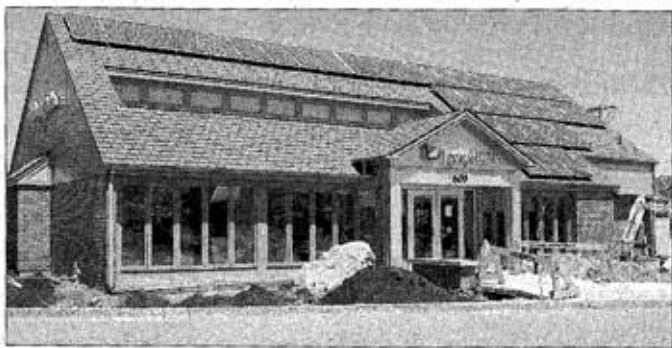


Legacy branch upgrade includes solar installation

Energy conservation and aesthetic upgrades are among the end-products of a major renovation of the Legacy Banks branch office at 609 Merrill Rd. in Pittsfield, adjacent to the Shops at Unkamet Brook retail complex.

The site design for the \$600,000 project was completed by EDM Services Inc. of Dalton, with Allegrone Construction of Pittsfield serving as general contractor for the renovation and reconstruction work.

Key among the improvements was the installation of a 7.2-kilowatt photovoltaic system, comprised of 36 solar electric panels which are mounted on the south roof of the 2,500-square-foot building.



The Merrill Road branch office of Legacy Banks has been fitted with a 7.2-kilowatt photovoltaic system as part of a renovation project that included other energy-conservation and aesthetic improvements.

The system was designed by Berkshire Photovoltaic Systems (BPVS) of Adams, one of the oldest firms in the country specializing in photovoltaic installations. The panels, designed for longevity and the rigors of New England weather, are made by Evergreen Solar of Devens, which utilizes a cell production process considered among the most environmentally benign on the market. The system is also equipped with a web-based monitoring system made by Solectria Renewables.

Chris Kilfoyle, BPVS president, credited the bank's management team for exhibiting "leading-edge technical savvy in their energy and construction strategy" on the project. He also cited the collaborative efforts of other contractors involved in the solar installation. "We have completed several projects across the region, and it was a pleasure to see the craftsmanship Allegrone Construction, Gigliotti Electric and Pittsfield Roofing put into this retrofit," Kilfoyle said.

Angela Motler, Legacy's senior vice president of retail banking, similarly expressed appreciation for the contractors' efforts. "We are pleased to join together with these experts in their field to provide improvements to our Merrill Road location, which will not only generate a return on our investment, but will continue to benefit the community for years to come," she said. Motler also credited David Hicks, Legacy's facilities officer, for his management of the renovation project.

Funded in part by a grant from the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust, the photovoltaic system is wholly owned by Legacy Banks, and the electricity produced will be used primarily for the building's own needs. Any surplus energy produced will be exported to the WMECO grid through a net metering arrangement with the utility.

In conjunction with the solar installation, several other energy efficiency and conservation improvements were made as part of the broader renovation project. Among these were replacement of antiquated lighting systems with high-efficiency "T5" lighting fixtures and compact fluorescent bulbs.

Also included was the use of high-efficiency LED lighting for the office's new signs. The LED signs were designed and manufactured by Graphic Impact Signs of Pittsfield. "It really made sense to utilize LED lighting within the new building signs for a project of this nature," said Graphic Impact co-owner John Renzi. "The energy savings will be significant without sacrificing the brightness."

Additional conservation features included increased insulation to reduce heat loss, and installation of a new power-assisted front entrance just to the left of the previous ATM/lobby door. The drive-up lane also received new LED signs as well a height clearance indicator.

The aesthetic and service improvements to the branch include new banking equipment, such as a pneumatic transaction system with two-way cameras, drive-up ATM, night drop, and a completely new teller line. In addition, Legacy replaced the furniture, fixtures, carpeting and flooring throughout the building. ♦