

The 29th Street Residences are the first residential component of a planned shopping district in the heart of Boulder, CO.



29TH STREET RESIDENCES

Keep it simple, say the people of **Kephart Community, Planning and Architecture**, who are employing their signature 'anthropological' approach to a new high-density complex

BY COURTNEY BOYD MYERS

BEFORE ANTHROPOLOGY WAS a purposefully misspelled store for fashion-minded women, it was the study of humanity. This social science became an approach for a forward-thinking Denver architecture firm, through which it considers aging populations, immigration, advances in technology, and environmental sustainability for each and every design. Kephart Community, Planning and Architecture, in its third incarnation—founded by Mike Kephart in 1974, becoming Kephart Associates, Inc. in 1987—is now run by president Paul Campbell, part of the firm since 1983.

Progressive ideas are never popular. Not at the outset. So another member of Kephart, project architect Cindy Harvey, may run into some resistance with her ideas: "My real passion," Harvey says, "is around how to downsize our American lifestyle by increasing density and creating well designed small spaces. That's how I frame my green perspective." Fortunately,

acceptance of this notion has been building for some time and is at the core of the sustainability movement. Harvey, who's been in the industry for 15 years and at Kephart for nearly 10, has been applying her ideas to multifamily residential design for 15 years.

A recent opportunity for her to work within her niche came with the 29th Street Residences. Designer Bryce Hall, in the field for 12 years, at Kephart for two, joined the team just before it got to work. "I've worked at several different firms," Hall says, "but the 29th Street project in Boulder was my first project at Kephart, and it naturally fit into my sensibilities." The project is a 315,000-square-foot, four-story complex with 238 one- or two-bedroom units, a clubhouse, and a fitness center. It has two courtyards with a pool, spa, outdoor kitchen, fireplace, and private patios. The location, more than the amenities, is what makes it unique: the heart of Boulder, near the university and two distinct commercial areas.

AT A GLANCE

COMPANY:
Kephart Community,
Planning and
Architecture

LOCATION:
Denver, CO

FOUNDED:
1974

EMPLOYEES:
18

LEED APs:
2

AREAS OF SPECIALTY:
Community-
oriented residential
architecture, land
planning

ANNUAL PROJECTS:
100+

Aerial view of the residences' south courtyard.



Kephart began working on the multifamily residence project during the summer of 2007 and is scheduled to complete the project in November of 2011. Kephart decided to avoid the added upcharge of going through the LEED paperwork, but Harvey says they are close to a LEED Silver level and, in fact, exceeded Boulder's green point system. The building incorporates green technology such as PV panels, low-heat windows, and a 95-percent efficient central boiler system that heats the entire building. The common areas in the building are powered by the roof's solar panels. It's anticipated that there will be a power surplus generated by the solar panels, and the excess electricity will be sold back to the energy provider and that money will be divided amongst the residents.

"We really tried to push the envelope on density for this project," Harvey says, "because land costs were significant, and a lot of people need professional, nice housing in Boulder, as opposed commuting into the city from the peripheral bedroom communities. This is the kind of development I get excited about and love because it fundamentally adheres to my definition of being green: it's about living responsibly." The building's sustainable features are augmented by the fact that residents of the new community will not need a car, since the development is both close to the university and within walking distance of a planned rail line to Denver.

True to Harvey's desire for responsibility, the Kephart offices are located inside an old pickle factory in the ballpark district of Denver, built at the turn of the last century. The building includes low-flow toilets, heavy insulation, and plenty of natural light. Rather than impose a hierarchy within the firm, founder Mike Kephart was adamant about not giving employees titles. "We don't put a lot of stock in titles," Harvey notes. "In fact our business cards are purposely void of them. Each of us brings a different background, expertise, and passion to the table, and we typically head our own projects."

Kephart is committed to excellent work and responsible problem solving with a huge focus on not only customer service but also basic human rights. "Everyone deserves a well designed place to live," Hall says. "No matter the scope of the project or the demographic of the perceived residence, there's a certain level of living standards that needs to be upheld." GBQ



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— Cindy Harvey, Architect, Kephart Community, Planning and Architecture



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