

## Facts & Figures

**Owner:** Barry R. Koretz, AIA, Brockton, MA  
**Tenant/Architect:** BKA Architects, Inc., Brockton, MA  
**Type of Project:** New office space in an existing historical building  
**General Contractor:** Turner Brothers, LLC, Raynham, MA  
**Size:** 11,500 square feet  
**Cost:** \$700,000 (construction costs)  
**Construction Time:** April 2005 - December 2005  
**The Need:** A larger office space to provide room for an architectural firm's growth  
**The Challenge:** Having the tenant/architect design its own space



Brockton, Massachusetts

# BKA Architects, Inc.



Photos courtesy of Todd Pollock

mill were sandblasted away, the mill's natural beauty emerged to showcase an open, timber-framed area surrounded by brick and concrete block walls with remnants of steel-paneled window frames. A contemporary palette of lighting, flooring and furnishings woven into the existing exposed architectural elements displays colors derived from the existing natural materials, including red from the brick, gray from the concrete block and caramel from the wood. In addition to providing visually rich textures and patterns, the exposed structural materials pay homage to Brockton's historic shoe industry, which blossomed during the American Civil War. On the exterior, a new stainless steel panel entrance with bold illuminated signage enhances the firm's presence.

BKA Architects, Inc., realizing it needed a larger space to provide room for growth, relocated its office space from the second floor of a renovated, two-story 100-year-old shoe mill facility to 11,500 square feet of unfinished space on the ground level of the same building in Brockton, Mass. Barry R. Koretz, AIA, president of BKA and owner of the project, bought the space from the building's owner/adjacent ground-floor tenant. By choosing this space, the firm maintained its original address and reduced moving complexities while obtaining more room.

Once the space's old paint and grime leftover from being a shoe

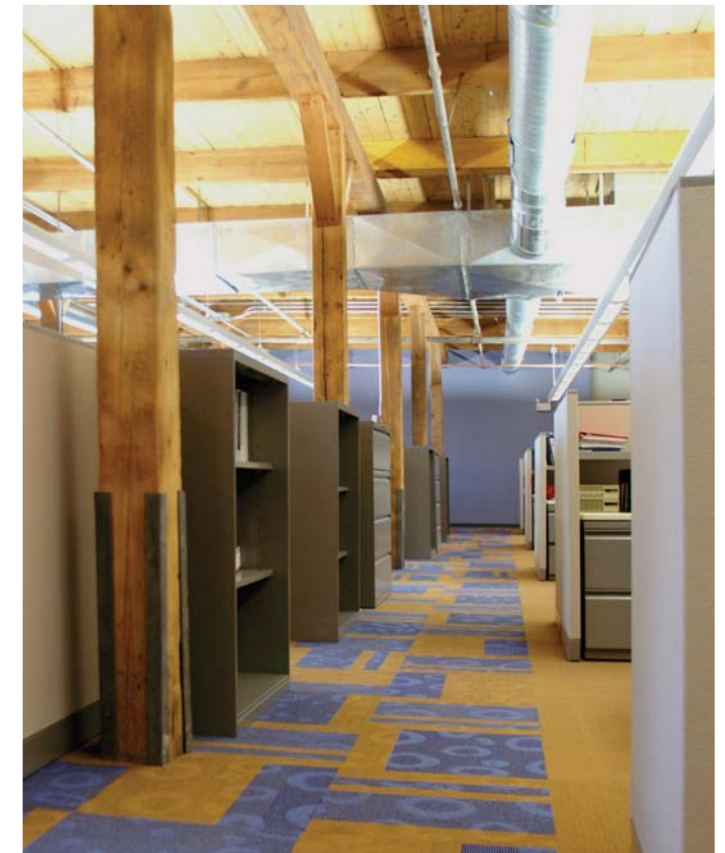
"[The most unique aspect of the project was] renovating a 100-year-old mill building into a fun and functional architectural office space and not going broke in the process," Koretz said. The team's cost-effective plan took

advantage of existing walls and exploited the mill's open high bays and large windows. By exposing the mill structure, the project team was able to keep within the budget. For example, the plan reduced the cost of new drywall, studs and acoustical ceiling tile in the large open studio area.

However, BKA faced the challenge of designing a space for itself. When an architectural firm becomes its own client, ideas flourish and must be sorted through, which tends to take up time. "As the tenant, we had to put constraints on ourselves, the designer," said Koretz. By assigning a design team specifically to the project, BKA cut down on the number of team members controlling the project, and therefore decision making could happen at a faster pace.

According to Koretz, the new office space provides a better working environment with open, communicative space and room for growth. "To grow and thrive, architects need an open and creative workspace," he said. The new office space has also led to increased business and productivity and has elicited positive feedback from clients. ■

— June Campbell



Photos courtesy of Todd Pollock