

Zilber Ltd. By JONATHAN ALLEN

Millwaukee, Wis.-based Zilber Ltd. is known for not doing anything halfway. Which is why when they decided to do an experiment in Green construction, they created a state-of-the-art living environment outfitted with almost every sustainable feature imaginable. Heralded as the most environmentally sustainable home ever built in Hawaii, Zilber's "Good Home" is expected to garner a LEED-H Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, and has won the

"best of class" (single-family, luxury) award in the Building Industry Association Parade of Homes. It also won the Design Achievement in Architecture Award from the American Institute of Architects.

"The Good Home was the culmination of our design and construction teams creatively pushing the construction envelope to build a prototype home that we could adapt elements from to use at other projects around

the country," says Mike Mervis, Zilber's assistant to the chairman.

In addition to the standard elements one would expect to find in a LEED-rated home—such as low-flow plumbing, solar power, and low-VOC materials—the Good Home forgoes carpeting in favor of grinding the concrete foundation down to a smooth terrazzo-like appearance that shimmers with the brown, green and red of the local aggregate. Countertops are also made of smooth-ground concrete, with 44 percent recycled glass. Other features include bioswales, extensive use of natural lighting and eucalyptus hardwood floors.

One of the key features of the Good Home is site orientation—which is strategically designed to maximize natural light and wind-flow throughout the day. Though some walls are 40 percent glass, they are located within deep overhangs and covered lanais to offset unwanted heat gain.

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"The main thing we learned from this project was the importance of having an integrated team approach that engages all the specialty trades up front in the design process. This really allowed us

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to do the extensive energy modeling that was required to make the home function as a complete system, and that kind of approach will continue to impact the way we build homes, no matter where they are," says Shane Jackson, Zilber's director of environmental projects.

Lessons learned in the Good Home are being applied to Zilber's other projects including the current renovation of the massive Pabst brewery in Milwaukee and at the company's next project on Maui, Milo Court, a subdivision of duplexes at Kehalani. 🏡

Builder Profile



Shane Jackson, Zilber's director of environmental projects, oversaw development and planning of the Good Home.