

Engineering Efficiency

New professional group seeks to share resources impacting building envelopes

By Mehmet Turkel

Building Enclosure Council

These days when you look in and around the “Green City by the Blue Lake” you can’t miss the positive energy, vitality and excitement taking place right in front of your eyes: new developments like the Medical Mart, Horseshoe Casino Cleveland, new offices in the Flats, a major facelift of the A.J. Celebreeze Federal Building, refurbishment of the Carlyle Condos on the Gold Coast, upgrading of downtown hotels as well as repurposing of older structures into apartments and condominiums, to name a few.

Of course, all of this is not happening in a vacuum. Many groups, both public and private, are hard at work and deserve credit for helping to revitalize our community. Although many initiatives are visible, there are others quietly making their mark behind the scenes. It’s reminiscent of a BASF commercial I recall, in which the announcer states, “We don’t make any of the products you use, we just make them better.” Similarly, these groups that are busy working behind the scenes equally contribute to improve the roads we drive on and the buildings in which we work, play and live. They weave the vital fabric of city’s expanding infrastructure by strengthening the building and construction trades in our area.

Cleveland as trendsetter

One such group is the recently created Building Enclosure Council (BEC) of Cleveland, representing the nation’s 27th local chapter and so far

the only such group in Ohio. Like most others around the country, it is organized as a standing committee of the local AIA chapter (AIA Cleveland). Since last spring, BEC-Cleveland board members have been busy laying the groundwork to create an interdisciplinary and objective destination to share knowledge and resources impacting building enclosures in the unique climatic conditions of Northeast Ohio. Recent calls to help seed fund the initiative have received such an enthusiastic response from the building community at large that the group has doubled its already optimistic projections.

AIA Cleveland’s newest committee, Building Enclosure Council (BEC) Cleveland, is now a reality due to efforts of co-founders, Technical Assurance and Wiss, Janney, Elstner, Associates. The pair of local consulting engineering firms have spent the

last year working toward this goal, with enthusiastic support from Kurt Weaver, president of AIA Cleveland.

Working closely with AIA Cleveland, the BEC will bring well-respected national and regional speakers to present and lead discussions on key topics of interest to the building community in Northeast Ohio. In the past, other chapters have presented on topics ranging from building envelope design to the interaction between building enclosures and HVAC systems, and much more.

Although chartered under AIA Cleveland, BEC leadership stresses that local council will take an all-inclusive approach with other AIA chapters such as Akron and Youngstown as well as organizations like Cleveland 2030, the Northeast Ohio Chapter of the U.S Green Building Council, CSI , BOMA, IFMA and many others working collectively to raise the level

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Next steps

Beginning this Fall, the Cleveland building community at-large – including architects, engineers, contractors, building owners, consultants, facility managers, code officials, educators and anyone else with an interest in

achieving higher performing and more energy-efficient buildings – will benefit from highly practical and educational events focused on issues related to roofs, facades, fenestrations and below-grade areas. Organizers encourage interested individuals and/or companies to join, learn and make contributions.

The first technical event is scheduled for October 17 and will be held at Tri-C's

Corporate College East in Warrensville Heights. The presentation by Joseph Lstiburek, Ph.D., P.Eng., ASHRAE fellow and principal of Building Science Corporation is titled “Don’t Do Stupid Things... or what is the perfect building enclosure for the climate in Northeast Ohio?” Dr. Lstiburek’s presentation will explore building science concepts relating to the building enclosure such as understanding how buildings function, types of enclosures, and sustainability and energy. These concepts will be related to the unique and specific climatic conditions of Northeast Ohio. While in Cleveland, he will also be speaking to college students about science behind enclosures. Dr. Lstiburek has appeared on PBS NOVA and is the author of numerous books and technical papers on building science, indoor air quality and durability. He is one of the world’s foremost authorities on energy efficient construction techniques and heads one of the four Building America program teams for the U.S. Department of Energy.

Registration and more information on how to join and participate can be found at www.bec-cleveland.org. **P**

“Don’t do stupid things”

... or what is the perfect building enclosure for the climate of Northeast Ohio?

Presented by Joseph Lstiburek, Ph.D., P.Eng., ASHRAE Fellow, Lecturer

October 17th, 2012

Corporate College East • Warrensville, OH

For more information and to register, visit www.bec-cleveland.org



Joseph Lstiburek, Ph.D., P.Eng., ASHRAE Fellow, is a principal of Building Science Corporation and a building scientist who investigates building failures. He is internationally recognized as an authority on moisture related building problems and indoor air quality.

Dr. Lstiburek has appeared on PBS NOVA (“Can buildings make you sick?”) and is the author of numerous books and technical papers on building science, indoor air quality and durability. He is one of the world’s foremost authorities on energy efficient construction techniques and heads one of the four Building America program teams for the U.S. Department of Energy.

Dr. Lstiburek is an acclaimed public speaker and lecturer in building science. His seminars and presentations on building durability issues are attended by hundreds of architects, engineers, builders, and property managers in the United States each year.

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Why Building Enclosure Council?

Buildings function dynamically as a system and work at their peak efficiency only when the MEP systems and building envelope operate in tandem. Once an ignored part of the building it protected, it is now on everyone’s radar. Repeated cycles of energy crises have brought much needed focus on the building envelope as first line of defense in energy conservation. So in May 2004, the national Building Enclosure Council (BEC) initiative was established by an agreement between the American Institute of Architects and the Building Enclosure Technology and Environment Council (BETEC) of the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS).

According to the NIBS website, the purpose of the BEC is to “promote and encourage discussion, training, education, technology transfer, the exchange of information about local issues and cases, relevant weather conditions, and all matters concerning building enclosures and the related science.” –MT