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ARTICLE

TerraGreen complex takes shape

Attractive designs to create a pleasant work space and save energy.

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The wide V-shaped roof on a building going up near Blackman Road and Seminole Street is intended to be more than just eye-catching. The butterfly roof is designed to allow natural lighting to come to the inside, saving utility costs and offering a more pleasant and productive environment, said developer Rob Murray, who is building a green office complex, TerraGreen, in southeast Springfield.

"I believe that's the right way to build office buildings," Murray said. "It does not make sense not to embrace sustainability and environmental sensitivity. That's the future of construction. "And we want to be at the forefront of it," Murray said. His company, R.B. Murray Co., announced in October its plans to build TerraGreen, a nine-acre, seven-building office complex that will meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards.

There, the real estate firm also is constructing a new office building -- the one with the angled roof -- for itself.

Murray said the building for his firm should be completed within 60 days. It is projected that energy-efficient designs will slash operational costs by 30 to 50 percent at TerraGreen office buildings, Murray said.

Kansas City-based Matthew Hufft is the designer for both the R.B. Murray building and the office park. He also is behind the drawings for Green Circle, a Springfield shopping center developed by Matt O'Reilly on Republic Road. Hufft said he put the butterfly roof on the R.B. Murray building so the clerestory glass can bring in day light. Research shows employees are happier and more productive when they work in daylight, Hufft said. The roof also gives the building, which sits at the corner of the office park, an iconic, eye-catching form, Hufft said. Murray said he also wants to prove it is financially viable to build energy-efficient buildings. At TerraGreen, the construction cost averages about \$150 per square foot, which Murray said is in line with that of Class-A office space. "It is not significantly more," he said. "But it will be substantially more energy friendly."

In the office park, Olsson Associates, an engineering and design consulting firm, will build the second building at TerraGreen. A building permit application with the city of Springfield indicates it will be a \$1.75 million, two-story structure. Steelwork should come up soon for the Olsson building, Murray said. DLR Group of Kansas City designed the building for Olsson Associates. MSB is the contractor for both buildings, Murray said.

Two other tenants, Bauer Orthodontics and Child Style Dental, are in the design phase for their spaces at the park, Murray said. A single corporate office user is under contract for an 18,000-square-foot building, and a high-end day spa has agreed to move in, Murray said. One 12,000-square-foot building is available for lease or sale, Murray said. The lease will run \$18 per square foot, Murray said. He said the office park and all its buildings will be constructed under LEED guidelines, although not all will be certified. Besides the butterfly roof, the R.B. Murray building will use paints with no VOCs -- volatile organic compounds -- and energy-efficient lighting fixtures. Daylight and occupancy sensors will be used, and the heating and cooling system will be zoned, Hufft said.

