



SPEC'S BACK

The wine was flowing and shrimp swimming in cocktail sauce Thursday evening at Hobbs Brook Office Park to celebrate the return of a long-lost friend, "spec offices." Partying in the corporate dining room, it was almost a throwback to the American High-Tech Highway. The only thing left to do is lease the 335k SF.

We snapped Hobbs Brook Management's Don Oldmixon and Kevin Casey with Margulies Perruzzi Architects Marc Margulies in the just completed 175 Wyman St (225k SF) which connects by walkways to the new 185 Wyman (110k SF). The office park, which now has 11 buildings, overlooks Rt. 128 and has an 11% vacancy rate among its existing buildings. Tenants include Xerox, Raytheon, and IBM. Leasing agent Wyman Street Advisors is asking mid-\$40 SF for the two new terra cotta and aluminum rain screened offices that cost \$81M to develop (excluding land costs). "Next year, we expect to be full," said Don. One reason he's not worried: Hobbs built with cash and holds no mortgage. "We're ready to rock 'n roll."



John G. Crowe's Charles Scott Doty and Don were partying with John Crowe, who says the engineering was very complex because water from the site discharges into a public reservoir; that made environmental protection very important. The office park is also adjacent to a state highway, so permitting was quite involved. Lastly, they used every inch of the tight 26-acre site for construction and at the same time preserved the mature trees and landscaping.



Columbia Construction's Jim Marsh, Bruce Gordon, with Marc, designed and built the project to qualify for LEED Gold. When they demolished the existing 335k SF building on-site, they sorted and crushed 31k cubic yards of masonry and concrete to use as fill. In total, they used about \$7M worth of recycled materials and saved hundreds of trips to remove old materials and haul in new soil. Also, the terra cotta tile rain screen provides thermal insulation, reduces energy costs, and balances air pressure. AHA Consulting Engineers was part of the team. Jim says a highlight for him was the camaraderie on the three-year project—1 year pre-construction, 2 years of construction.

