

# Portland, Maine Loft

## Thousand Home Challenge/Case Study



Before



After

Richard Renner | Architects Revised 8/06/2015

# Case Study Questions:

Why do this project?

What was done?

How was it done?

What was learned?

## Why do this project?

In late 2006, I purchased a small (3,000 SF) commercial building to house my architectural office and a residence for my wife and me. My goal was to practice the environmental responsibility that I had been preaching since the early 1990's, when I started to focus on green design. The chance to live next to my office and in an evolving mixed-use neighborhood was also appealing. And having just designed a new LEED-Home Platinum residence 18 miles outside Portland, I was anxious to do a more responsible renovation in the city. The loft portion of the project received a LEED-Home Platinum certification.

In the renovation, the lower level became a 1,500 SF office which can accommodate a staff of up to six; the upper level is a 1,400 SF two-bedroom loft where my wife, Janet Friskey, and I lived.

## Project Team

### Design and Project Management

Richard Renner, Richard Renner Architects

Friskey Design - Design collaboration and interiors

### Consultants

Becker Structural Engineering

Petersen Engineers

Marc Rosenbaum, Energysmiths

Terry Brennan, Camroden Associates

J&M Lighting Design

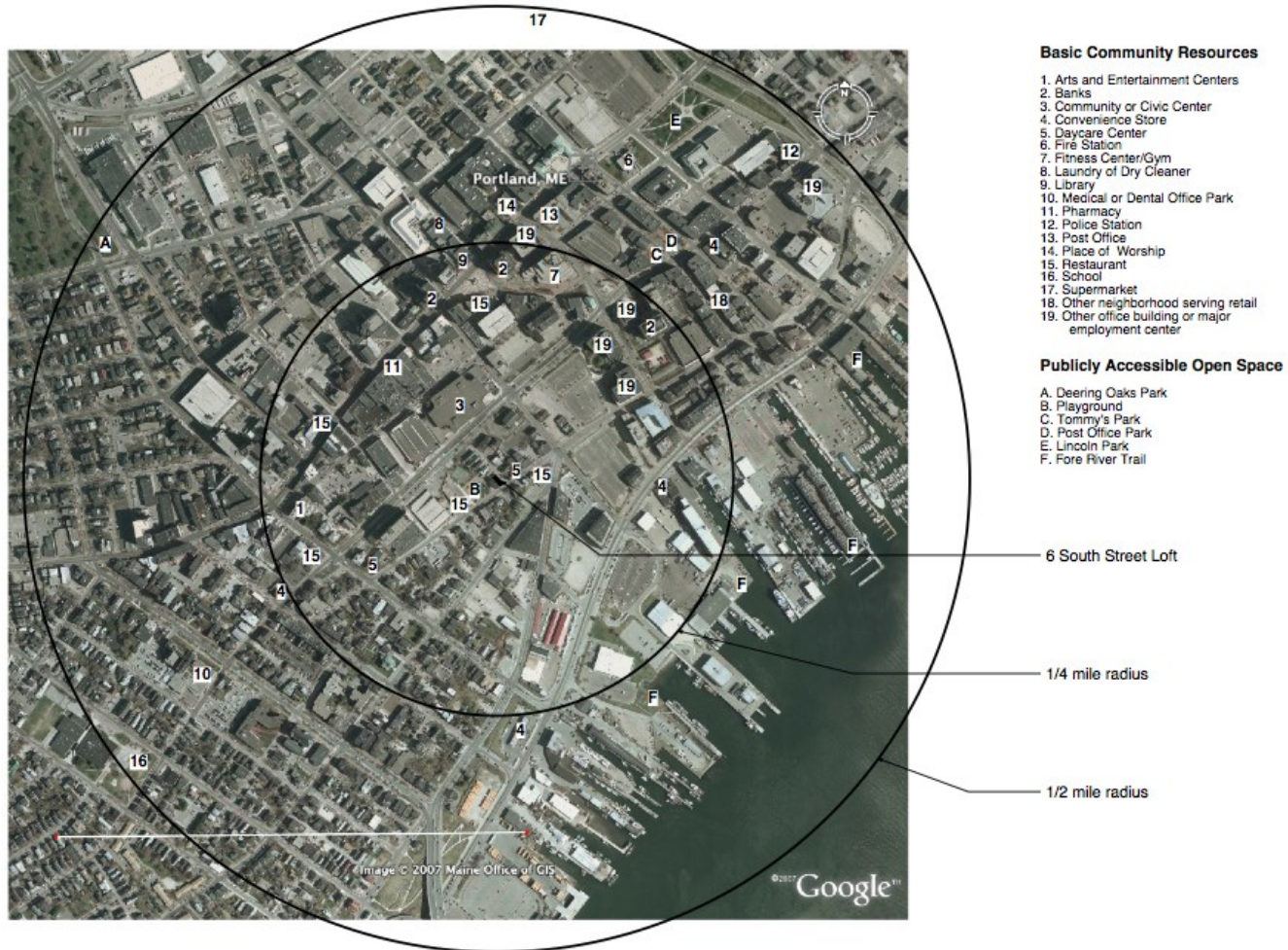
### Construction

Kolbert Building and Renovation - General Contractor

Wright-Ryan Construction - Millwork

Jon Chalfant - Steel railings and ladder





Location near the center of Portland: Minimal commute and close to community resources

# Case Study Questions:

Why do this project?

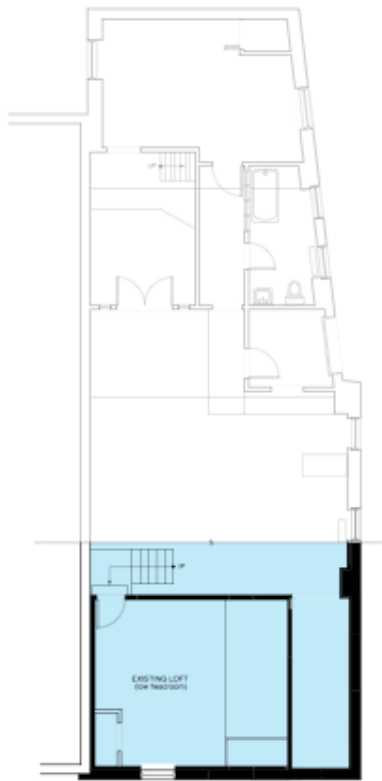
**What was done?**

How was it done?

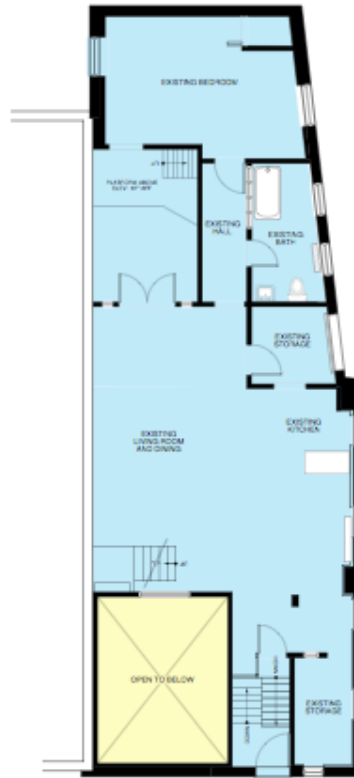
What was learned?

## What was done?

Both levels of the building were completely gutted down to the inside face of the exterior masonry walls. The roof was reinforced for snow and vegetated roof loads, and a new slab was poured at the lower level. A portion of the roof was raised to create a clerestory, which provides added daylight and ventilation for the loft as well as access to the roof deck. Exterior walls were insulated with closed-cell foam (R-34+); the roof was insulated with closed-cell foam and cellulose (R-55+); and the floor of the loft was insulated with cellulose. New triple glazed fiberglass windows were installed throughout.



Existing Loft/Storage Plan  
(Apartment)



Existing First Floor Plan  
(Apartment)

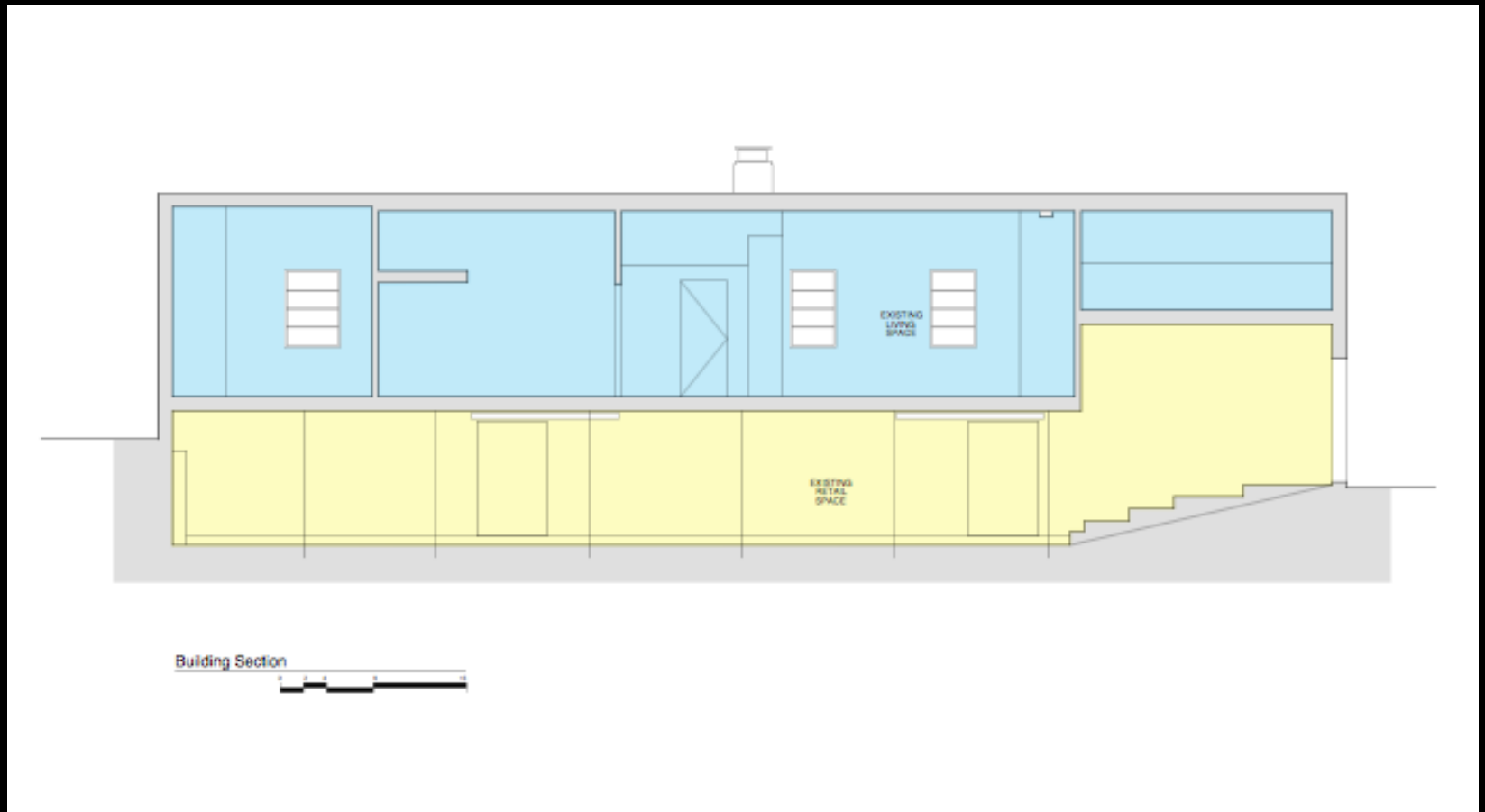


Existing Lower Level Plan  
(Retail)

Original Floor Plan

Portland Loft

Richard Renner | Architects



Original building section

## Portland Loft

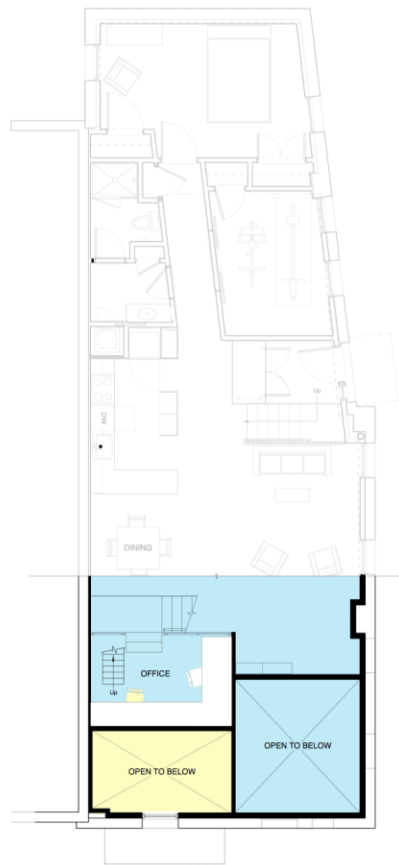


Original Building Elevation

Portland Loft

Richard Renner | Architects

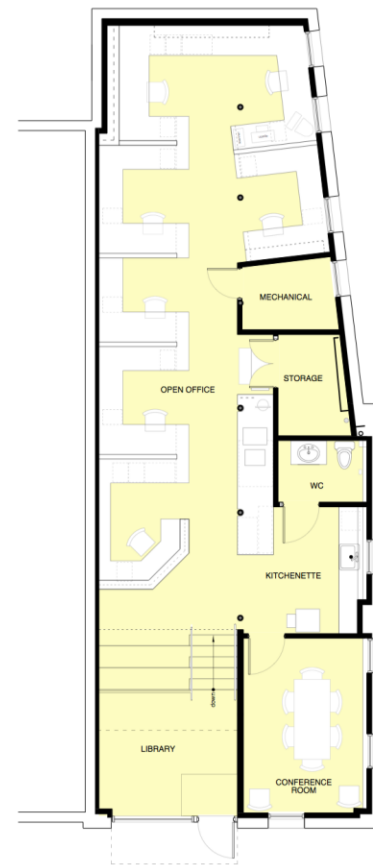




Loft Plan  
(Apartment)



First Floor Plan  
(Apartment)



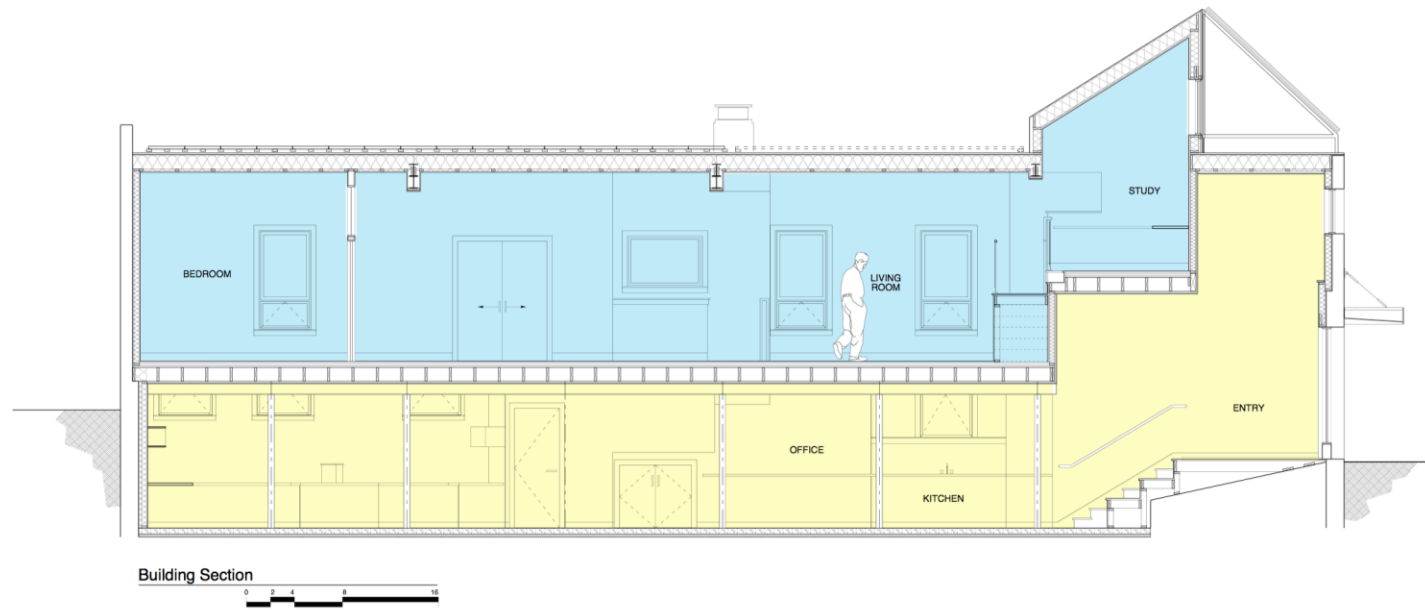
Lower Level Plan  
(Professional Office)



Completed Floor Plan

Portland Loft

Richard Renner | Architects

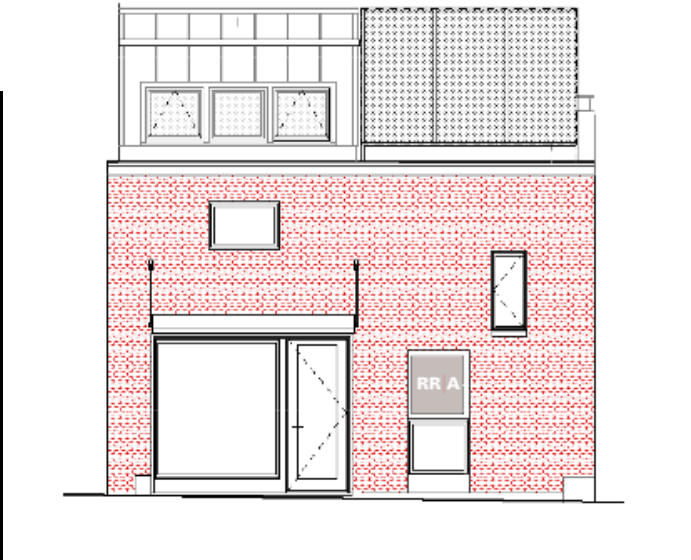


Completed Building Section

## Portland Loft



Completed Building Elevation





Site Plan - Completed



Offices on lower level - Before and after



Loft interiors before demolition





Demolition - South end of the loft



Completed loft looking south

## Portland Loft





Completed loft looking toward kitchen and bedrooms



Completed loft looking north





Completed loft looking toward mezzanine with clerestory



Mezzanine study with high windows for light and ventilation



Folding stair to roof deck

## Portland Loft



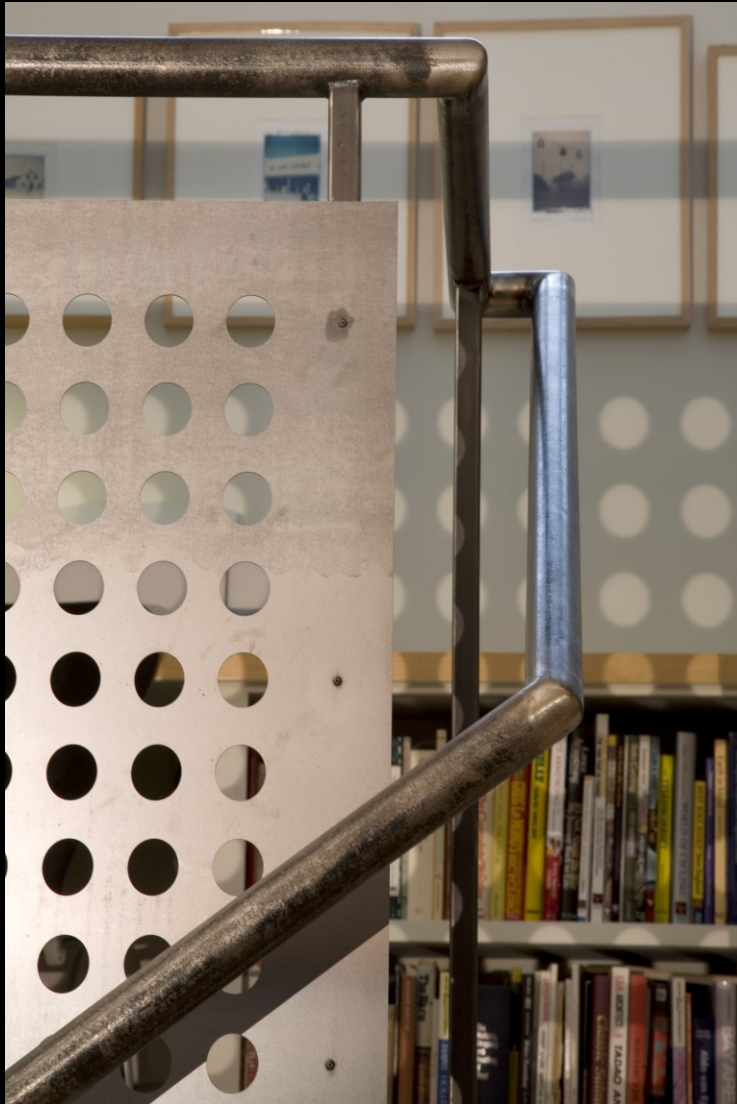


Installation of vegetated roof



Roof deck





Custom steel rail



Hardware from removed steel window frames



Boiler - Heating and demand hot water

Mechanical systems for the loft and the office are completely separate. The loft has radiant floor heating, a heat recovery ventilator, and a two-zone mini-split air conditioner. The 1 KW grid-tied solar collector serves the loft. There is a two-zone mini-split air conditioner to cool the unit in very hot weather; it is seldom needed.



**Office and Loft Exterior**

Formaldehyde-free plywood

Bamboo plywood (Plyboo)

Fluorescent lighting

Recycled content tile

Paperstone counters

FSC certified framing lumber

High-efficiency appliances

FSC certified wood trim

**Loft Interior**

**Kitchen and Entry**

Portland Loft

Richard Renner | Architects



Cellulose and  
closed cell roof  
insulation  
R-50+

Low or no  
VOC paint

Triple-glazed  
insulated  
fiberglass  
windows

Recycled doors

FSC certified  
birch flooring

Formaldehyde-  
free plywood

Bamboo  
plywood  
(Plyboo)

Recycled  
contact tile

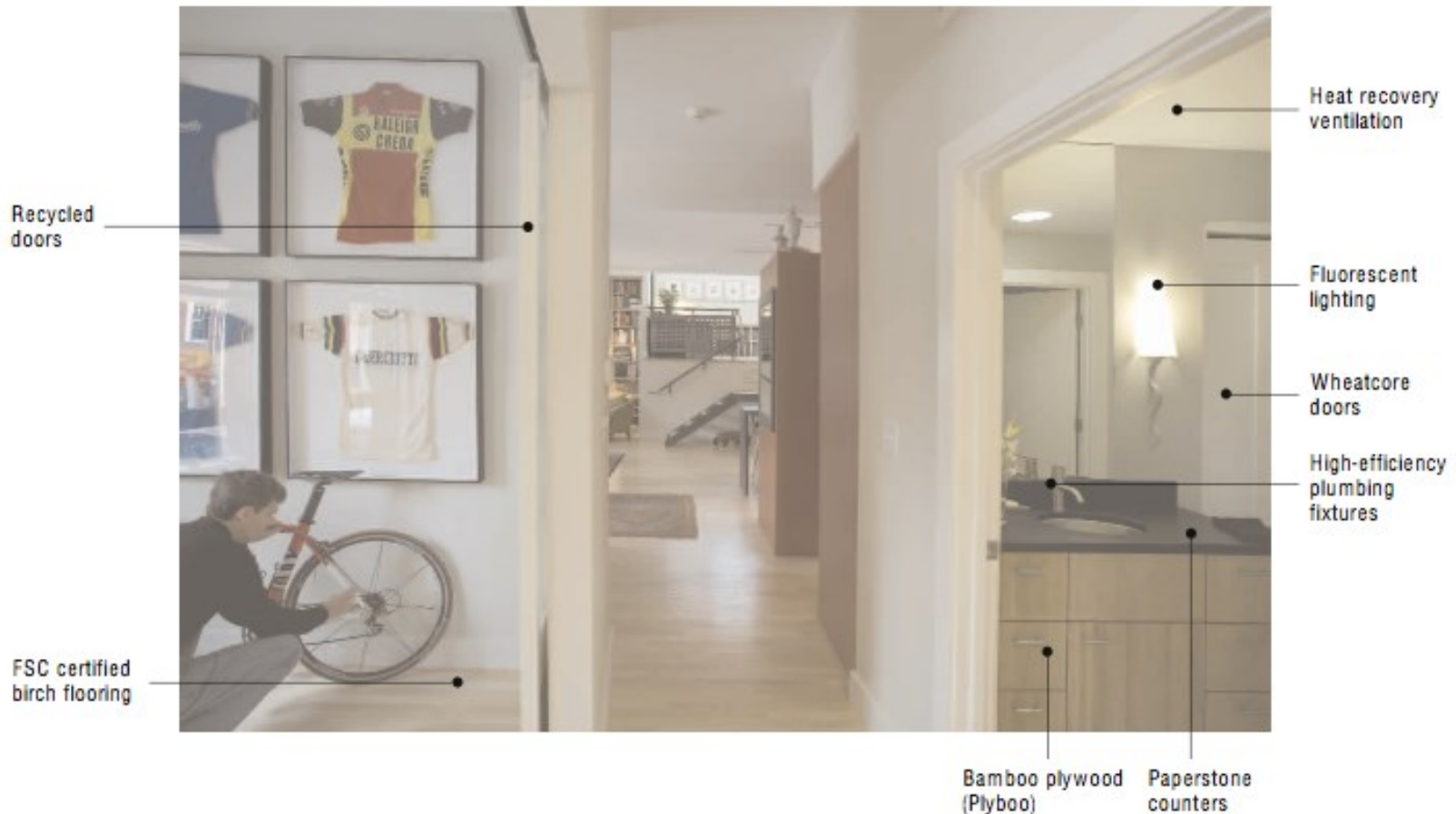
**Loft Interior**

Living Area and Kitchen

Portland Loft

Richard Renner | Architects





**Loft Interior**

**Bedroom, Hall, and Bath**

# Case Study Questions:

Why do this project?

What was done?

How was it done?

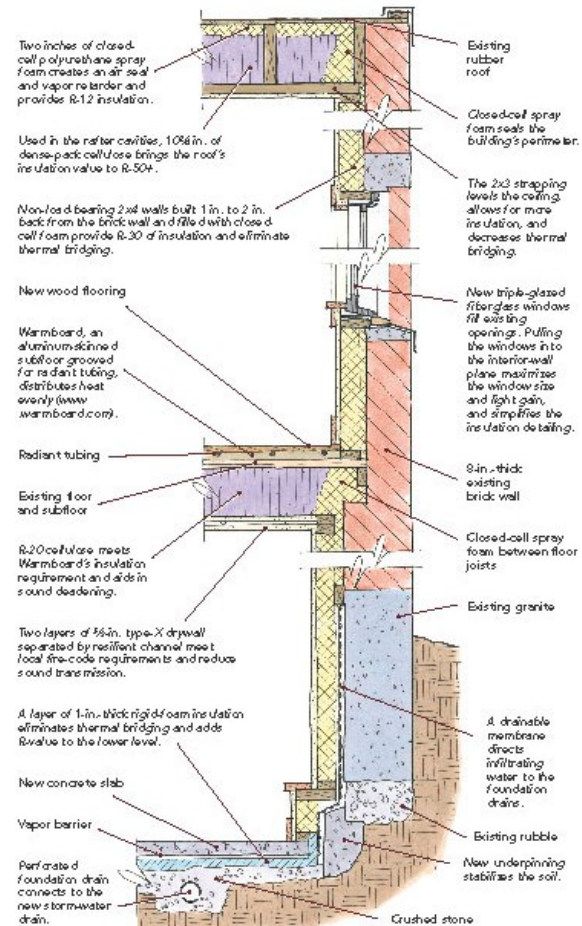
What was learned?

Wall section showing continuity of insulation from the roof to the office floor slab. Note insulation in the floor between the loft above and the office below. Mechanical systems for loft and office are completely separate. Loft has radiant floor heating, a heat recovery ventilator, and a two-zone mini-split air conditioner.



## A THERMAL ENVELOPE HIDES THE BRICK

As nice as they are to look at, old brick buildings are not energy efficient. An 8-in.-thick brick wall like the one in this project has an R-value of about 1.6. To create a tight thermal envelope without affecting the exterior, insulation and drainage systems were added to the brick walls from the inside. The result is a comfortable, healthful building that achieved a HERS rating of 43 (for more on HERS, see p. 18), exceeding even the most aggressive energy standards today.



OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2008 59





Demolition and brick re-pointing



Demolition (loft above, office below)



Demolition - Loft, looking north



Demolition - Removing brick to create loft entry

## Portland Loft



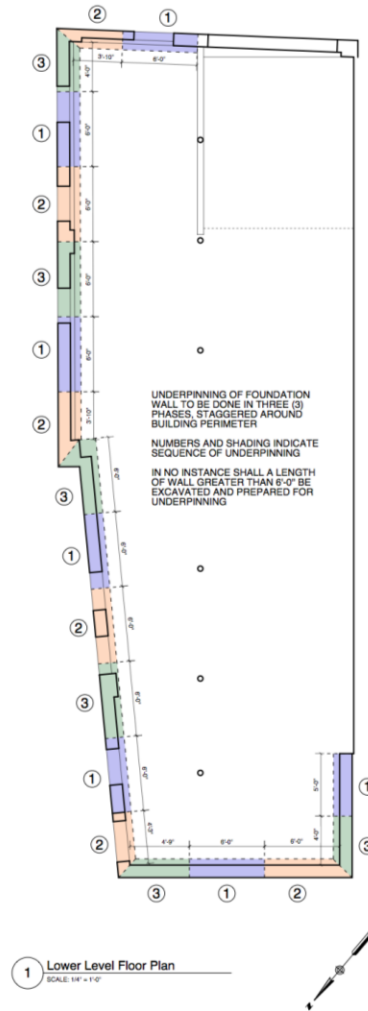
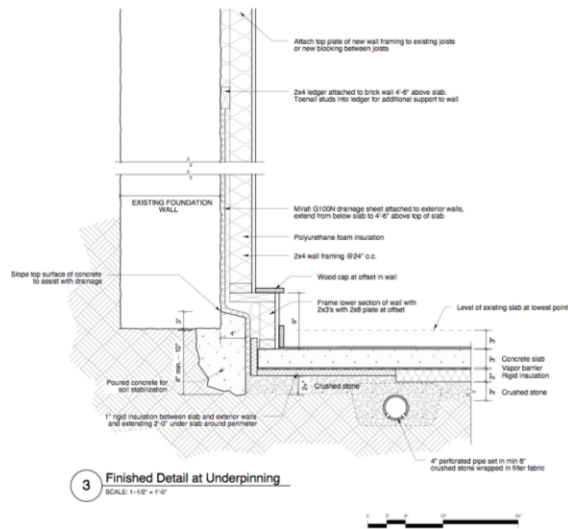
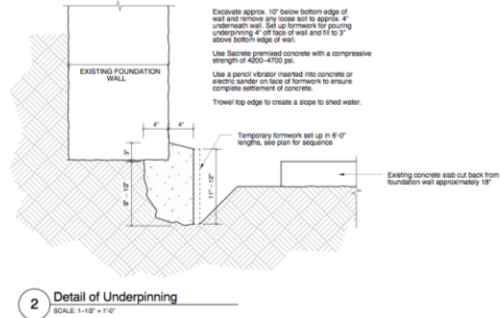
Demolition - Existing single-glazed, steel frame windows had to be removed, but they had steel flanges embedded in the surrounding brick. The windows were cut out of the walls, making it possible to install new triple-glazed fiberglass windows. Some of the removed steel window frames were cut into short lengths and used as door handles and drawer pulls in the new kitchen.







The existing foundation walls had to be underpinned because they did not have footings. At first, the existing slab was cut back to create space for the underpinning operation. Later, it became clear that the entire slab had to be removed, which made it possible to install a drainage system, insulation, and a vapor barrier.



Foundation underpinning details and sequence (sections of underpinning had to alternate so that the wall above did not collapse)





Framing at windows



Framing at master bedroom



Framing - Loft, looking north



Gap between framing and exterior masonry wall to eliminate thermal bridging

Portland Loft



Reinforced roof structure



Detail of roof reinforcing

The existing roof structure had to be reinforced to meet code for snow loads and to carry the additional weight of the vegetated roof. Steel was added to the main cross beams, and existing joists were reinforced in three of the four bays. The roof monitor was added at the fourth bay. The windows in the monitor bring sunlight into the loft and assist with natural ventilation.



New roof monitor

## Portland Loft





Repointing - Existing window not removed, yet



Repointing



Brick prior to repointing

Portland Loft





Insulation - Foam in walls; foam+cellulose in roof



Foam insulation at party wall

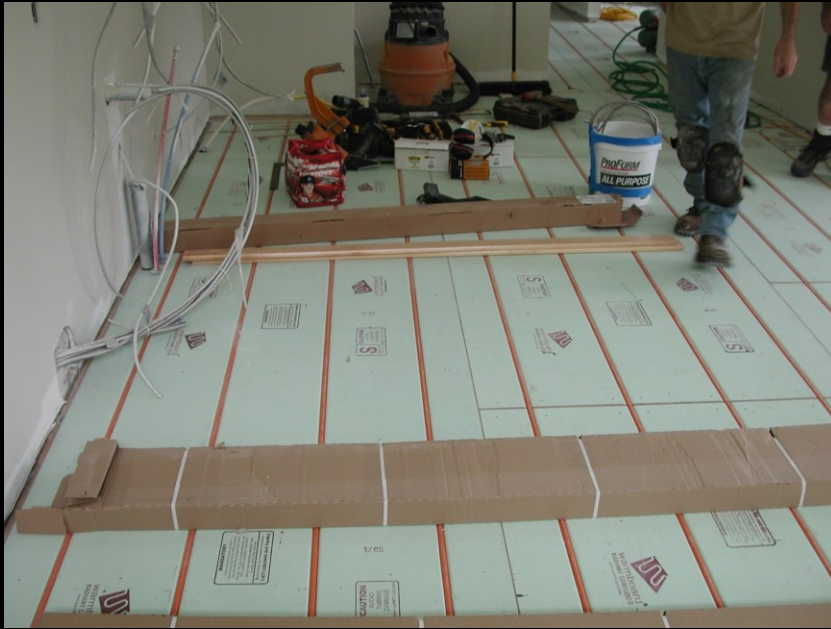


Foam insulation at exterior wall



Foam insulation at roof monitor

Portland Loft



Warmboard radiant heat sub-flooring



Warmboard detail





Installation of drywall and trim. Note that new windows are installed in the plane of the insulation, not in the plane of the brick wall. This was done to (a) maximize the continuity of the thermal barrier and (b) to maximize the size of the glass opening.



Installation of drywall and trim. Note the new entrance door at the level of the sidewalk. This was cut out of what had been a loading dock in this location.



Moving materials to roof



Laying out trays



Adding soil



Planting



Planting

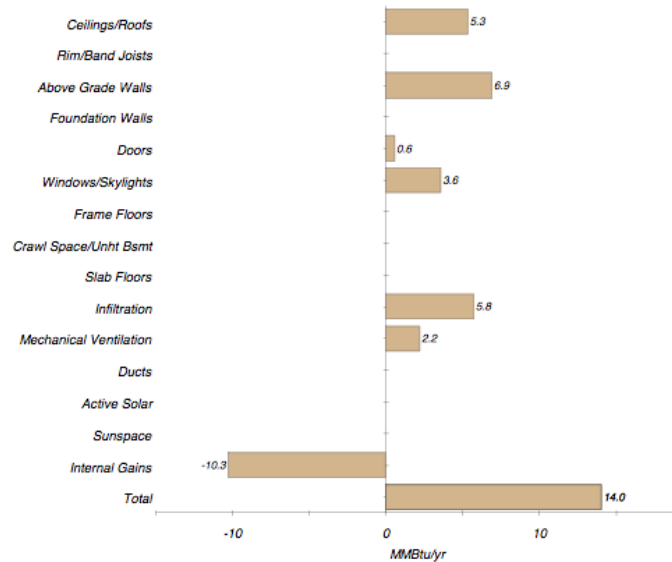
Roughly 1/3 of the roof is covered with vegetation in trays. This reduces runoff from the hard surface of the roof and may reduce cooling loads in the summer.



# COMPONENT LOAD SUMMARY

Date: November 02, 2007 Rating No.:  
 Building Name: AS BUILT Rating Org.: HORIZON RESIDENTIAL ENERGY SER  
 Owner's Name: RICHARD RENNER Phone No.: 207-221-3221  
 Property: 6 SOUTH ST Rater's Name: DAVID MILLIKEN  
 Address: PORTLAND, ME 04101 Rater's No.: HRES-04  
 Builder's Name: DAN KOLBERT  
 Weather Site: Portland, ME Rating Type: Confirmed Rating  
 File Name: Renner Loft As Is.big Rating Date: 10/30/2007

## Heating Season



REM/Rate - Residential Energy Analysis and Rating Software v12.41

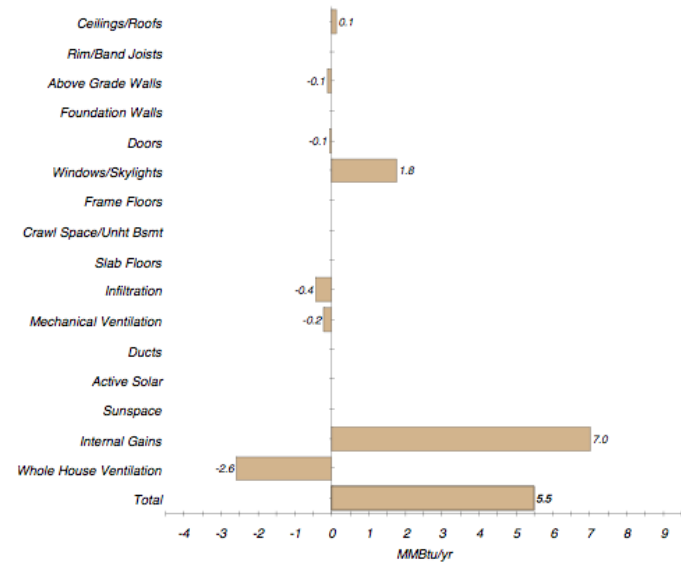
This information does not constitute any warranty of energy cost or savings.  
 © 1985-2007 Architectural Energy Corporation, Boulder, Colorado.

# COMPONENT LOAD SUMMARY

AS BUILT

Page 2

## Cooling Season



REM/Rate - Residential Energy Analysis and Rating Software v12.41

This information does not constitute any warranty of energy cost or savings.  
 © 1985-2007 Architectural Energy Corporation, Boulder, Colorado.

## AIR LEAKAGE REPORT

Date: November 02, 2007 Rating No.:  
 Building Name: AS BUILT Rating Org.: HORIZON RESIDENTIAL ENERGY SER  
 Owner's Name: RICHARD RENNER Phone No.: 207-221-3221  
 Property: 6 SOUTH ST Rater's Name: DAVID MILLIKEN  
 Address: PORTLAND, ME 04101 Rater's No.: HRES-04  
 Builder's Name: DAN KOLBERT  
 Weather Site: Portland, ME Rating Type: Confirmed Rating  
 File Name: Renner Loft As Is.blg Rating Date: 10/30/2007

### Whole House Infiltration

	Blower door test	
	Heating	Cooling
Natural ACH:	0.12	0.09
ACH @ 50 Pascals:	2.39	2.39
CFM @ 25 Pascals:	366	366
CFM @ 50 Pascals:	575	575
Eff. Leakage Area:	31.6	31.6
Specific Leakage Area:	0.00016	0.00016
ELA/100 sf shell:	1.15	1.15

### Total Duct Leakage to Outside

CFM @ 25 Pascals:	N/A
CFM25 / CFMfan:	N/A
CFM25 / CFA:	N/A
CFM per Std 152:	N/A
CFM per Std 152 / CFA:	N/A
CFM @ 50 Pascals:	N/A
Eff. Leakage Area:	N/A
Thermal Efficiency:	0.00

### Ventilation

Mechanical:	Balanced
Sensible Recovery Eff. (%):	71.0
Total Recovery Eff. (%):	62.0
Rate (cfm):	37
Hours/Day:	24.0
Fan Watts:	65.0
Cooling Ventilation:	Natural Ventilation

### ASHRAE 62.2 - 2003 Ventilation Requirements

For this home to comply with ASHRAE Standard 62.2 - 2003 Ventilation and Acceptable Indoor Air Quality in Low-Rise Residential Buildings, a minimum of 37 cfm of mechanical ventilation must be provided continuously, 24 hours per day. Alternatively, an intermittently operating mechanical ventilation system may be used if the ventilation rate is adjusted accordingly. For example, a 73 cfm mechanical ventilation system would need to operate 12 hours per day, as long as the system operates to provide required average ventilation once each hour.

### REMRate - Residential Energy Analysis and Rating Software v12.41

This information does not constitute any warranty of energy cost or savings.  
 © 1985-2007 Architectural Energy Corporation, Boulder, Colorado.

## FUEL SUMMARY

Date: November 02, 2007 Rating No.:  
 Building Name: AS BUILT Rating Org.: HORIZON RESIDENTIAL ENERGY SER  
 Owner's Name: RICHARD RENNER Phone No.: 207-221-3221  
 Property: 6 SOUTH ST Rater's Name: DAVID MILLIKEN  
 Address: PORTLAND, ME 04101 Rater's No.: HRES-04  
 Builder's Name: DAN KOLBERT  
 Weather Site: Portland, ME Rating Type: Confirmed Rating  
 File Name: Renner Loft As Is.blg Rating Date: 10/30/2007

### AS BUILT

#### Annual Energy Cost (\$/yr)

Natural gas	\$	532
Electric	\$	418

#### Annual End-Use Cost (\$/yr)

Heating	\$	246
Cooling	\$	68
Water Heating	\$	213
Lights & Appliances	\$	667
Photovoltaics	\$	-226
Service Charges	\$	60
Total	\$	1028

#### Annual End-Use Consumption

Heating (Therms)	148
Cooling (kWh)	473
Water Heating (Therms)	127
Lights & Appliances (Therms)	44
Lights & Appliances (kWh)	4092
Photovoltaics (kWh)	-1559

#### Utility Rates:

Electricity:	Elec 145 kWh
Gas:	NG \$1.65/Therm

### REMRate - Residential Energy Analysis and Rating Software v12.41

This information does not constitute any warranty of energy cost or savings.  
 © 1985-2007 Architectural Energy Corporation, Boulder, Colorado.

# 2005 EPACT ENERGY EFFICIENT HOME TAX CREDIT

Date: November 02, 2007 Rating No.:  
 Building Name: AS BUILT Rating Org.: HORIZON RESIDENTIAL ENERGY SER  
 Owner's Name: RICHARD RENNER Phone No.: 207-221-3221  
 Property: 6 SOUTH ST Rater's Name: DAVID MILLIKEN  
 Address: PORTLAND, ME 04101 Rater's No.: HRES-04  
 Builder's Name: DAN KOLBERT  
 Weather Site: Portland, ME Rating Type: Confirmed Rating  
 File Name: Renner Loft As Is.btg Rating Date: 10/30/2007

Normalized, Modified End-Use Loads (MMBtu/year)			Envelope Loads (MMBtu/year)		
2004 IECC			2004 IECC		
50% Target	As Designed		90% Target	As Designed	
Heating:	14.1	6.9	Heating:	25.3	11.5
Cooling:	3.7	5.4	Cooling:	6.6	6.2
Total:	17.7	12.3	Total:	31.9	17.7

## This home MEETS the requirements for the residential energy efficiency tax credits under Section 1332, Credit for Construction of New Energy Efficient Homes, of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

As demonstrated above, this dwelling unit has a projected level of annual heating and cooling energy consumption that is at least 50% below the annual level of heating cooling energy consumption of a reference dwelling in the same climate zone, and the building envelope components improvements alone account for at least 10% of those savings. The projected heating and cooling energy savings above have been calculated in the manner prescribed in Section 2.02 of Notice 2006-27 of the Internal Revenue Service. Field inspections of the dwelling unit performed by the undersigned eligible certifier during and after the completion of construction have confirmed that all features of the home affecting such heating and cooling energy consumption comply with the design specifications provided to the undersigned certifier.

### Building Shell Features

Ceiling Flat: R-54 Slab: None  
 Vaulted Ceiling: NA Duct: NA  
 Above Grade Walls: R-34 Window: U-Value = 0.150, SHGC = 0.280  
 Foundation Walls: NA Integrated: Natural gas, Htg eff 0.95 CAafue, DHW eff 0.80 CAef.  
 Exposed Floor: NA Cooling: Air conditioner, Electric, 13.0 SEER.

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this certification, including accompanying documents, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, the facts presented in support of this certification are true, correct, and complete.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### REM/Rate - Residential Energy Analysis and Rating Software v12.41

This information does not constitute any warranty of energy cost or savings.  
 © 1985-2007 Architectural Energy Corporation, Boulder, Colorado.



## ENERGY STAR HOME REPORT

Date: November 02, 2007 Rating No.:  
 Building Name: AS BUILT Rating Org.: HORIZON RESIDENTIAL ENERGY SER  
 Owner's Name: RICHARD RENNER Phone No.: 207-221-3221  
 Property: 6 SOUTH ST Rater's Name: DAVID MILLIKEN  
 Address: PORTLAND, ME 04101 Rater's No.: HRES-04  
 Builder's Name: DAN KOLBERT  
 Weather Site: Portland, ME Rating Type: Confirmed Rating  
 File Name: Renner Loft As Is.btg Rating Date: 10/30/2007

### Normalized, Modified End-Use Loads (MMBtu/year)

	ENERGY STAR	As Designed
Heating:	22.5	6.6
Cooling:	5.9	5.7
Water heating:	8.5	4.8
Lighting & Appliances:	16.2	19.8
Total:	53.1	36.9
HERS Index:	80	43

### ENERGY STAR Mandatory Requirements

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thermal Bypass Inspection Checklist *	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENERGY STAR Products *
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ductwork Requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENERGY STAR Scoring Exceptions

\* Thermal Bypass Checklist and ENERGY STAR Products are not checked in REM/Rate at this time.

### This home MEETS OR EXCEEDS the energy efficiency requirements for designation as an EPA ENERGY STAR Qualified Home.

### Pollution Prevented

Type of Emissions	Reduction (lb/year)	Heating:	Energy Cost Savings (\$/year)
Carbon Dioxide (CO2)	4821.3	Cooling:	\$509
Sulfur Dioxide (SO2)	1.5	Water Heating:	\$24
Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)	6.1	Lights & Appliances:	\$98
		Total:	\$17
			\$647

The energy savings and pollution prevented are calculated by comparing the Rated Home to the Reference Home as defined in the "Mortgage Industry National Home Energy Rating System's Standards" as promulgated by the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET). In accordance with these guidelines, building inputs affecting setpoints, infiltration rates, window shading and the existence of mechanical systems may have been changed prior to calculating loads.

### REM/Rate - Residential Energy Analysis and Rating Software v12.41

This information does not constitute any warranty of energy cost or savings.  
 © 1985-2007 Architectural Energy Corporation, Boulder, Colorado.

# Case Study Questions:

Why do this project?

What was done?

How was it done?

What was learned?



The project has a HERS rating of 43. The following is a summary of predicted versus actual performance:

Total Energy Use (MMBtu/year) - Predicted, 36.9; Actual, 28.4

Solar PV Contribution (kWh) - Predicted, 1,559; Actual, 513

Cost of Natural Gas - Predicted, \$532; Actual, \$382

Cost of Electricity - Predicted, \$418; Actual, \$364

It is important to remember that some of this performance is due to immediate adjacency to a heated office below and heated residential space along most of one side. This means that the project cannot be compared to a stand-alone house, but, on the other hand, it demonstrates the inherent advantage of greater density. This advantage in individual building performance is reinforced by the likely lower transportation energy use.

## 6 South Street Loft

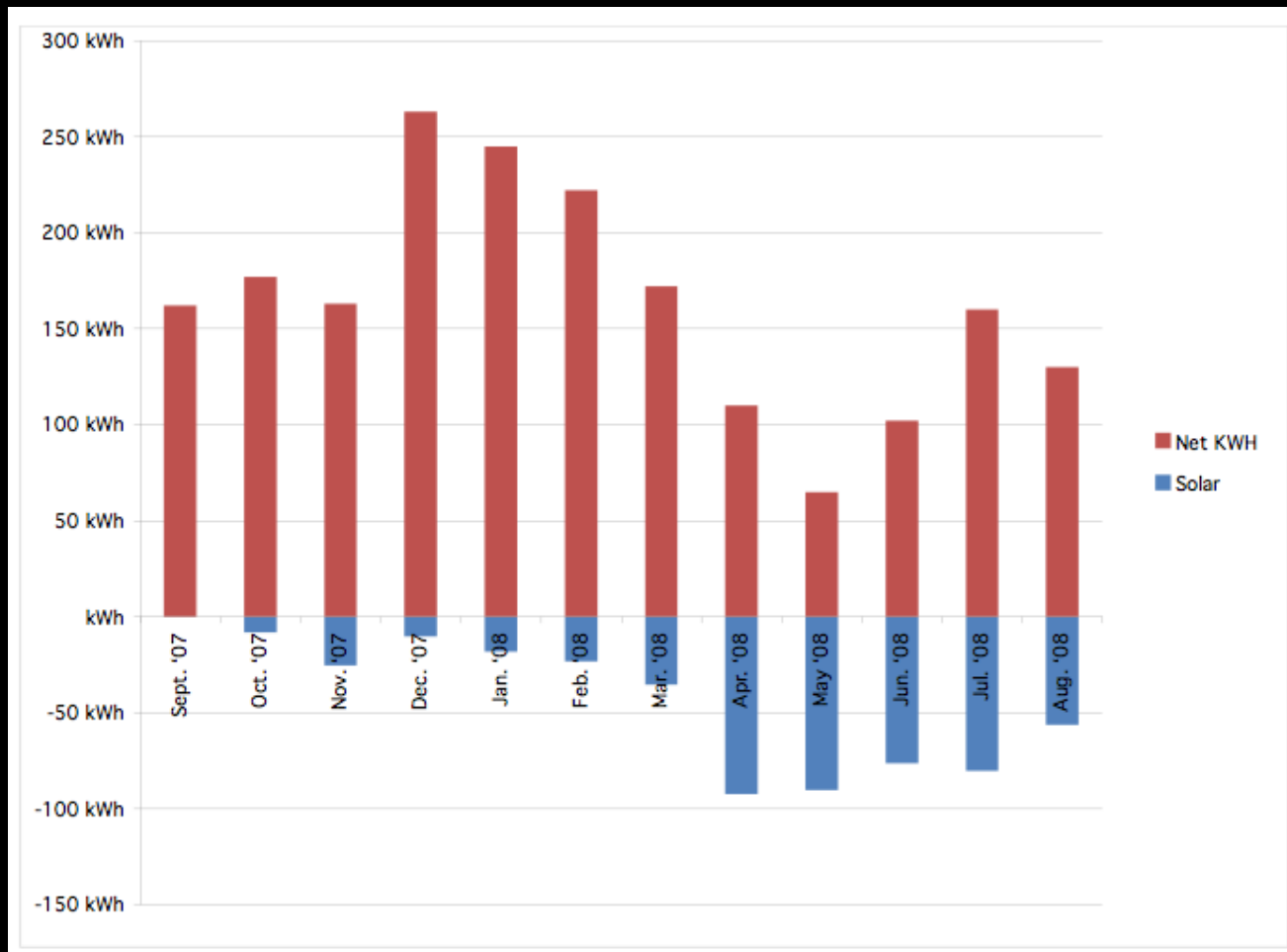
Energy Use: September, 2007 through August, 2008

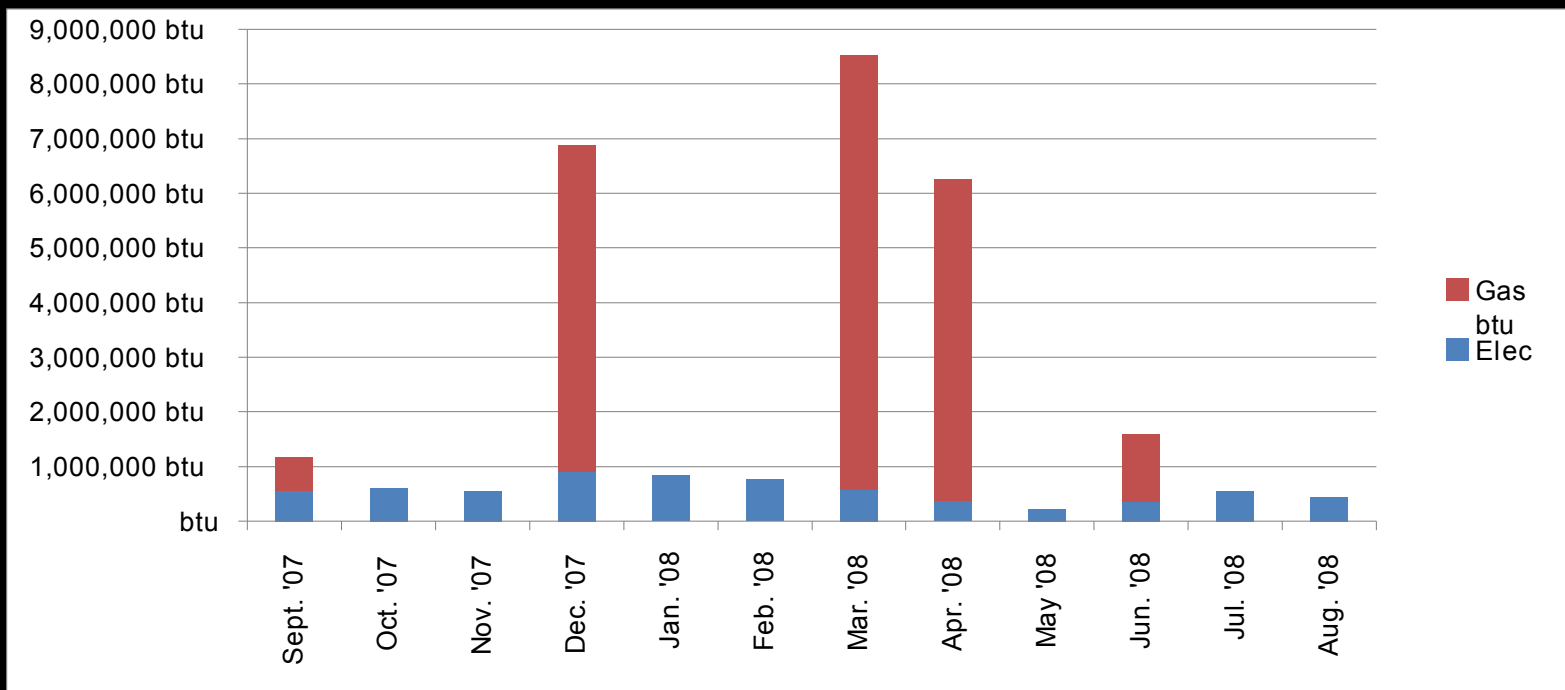
Richard Renner|Architects

September 10, 2008; revised February 23, 2009

Invoice			6 South Street Loft							
Date	Company	No.	Total KWH	Solar KWH	Electricity Net KWH	\$	btu	Ccf	Natural Gas \$	btu
9/25/07	Central ME Power	207244	162	0	162	\$ 25.76	552,744			
9/27/07	Northern Utilities						0	6	\$ 9.92	618,600
10/24/07	Central ME Power		185	8	177	\$ 15.82	603,924			
11/26/07	Central ME Power	206913	188	25	163	\$ 25.91	556,156			
12/24/07	Central ME Power		273	10	263	\$ 41.06	897,356			
12/28/07	Northern Utilities						0	58	\$ 101.26	5,979,800
1/24/08	Central ME Power		263	18	245	\$ 38.34	835,940			
2/25/08	Central ME Power		245	23	222	\$ 34.85	757,464			
3/10/08	Northern Utilities	217998					0	77	\$ 141.60	7,938,700
3/24/08	Central ME Power	209393	207	35	172	\$ 28.37	586,864		\$ 110.50	0
3/28/08	Northern Utilities						0			
4/23/08	Central ME Power	208021	202	92	110	\$ 19.09	375,320			
4/29/08	Northern Utilities						0	57		5,876,700
5/22/08	Central ME Power	202593	155	90	65	\$ 33.36	221,780			
5/29/08	Northern Utilities						0		\$ (2.13)	0
6/25/08	Central ME Power	213775	178	76	102	\$ 51.60	348,024			
6/28/08	Northern Utilities						0	12	\$ 25.47	1,237,200
7/23/08	Central ME Power	214140	240	80	160	\$ 27.08	545,920			
7/30/08	Northern Utilities						0	0	\$ (4.40)	0
8/22/08	Central ME Power		186	56	130	\$ 22.52	443,560			
Totals			2,484	513	1,971	\$ 363.76	6,725,052	210	\$ 382.22	21,651,000
btu			8,475,408	1,750,356	6,725,052			21,651,000		
6 South Street Loft btu/SF (Aug. '07-Sept. '08)			20,269	2.096 Btu/SF/HDD/Yr						

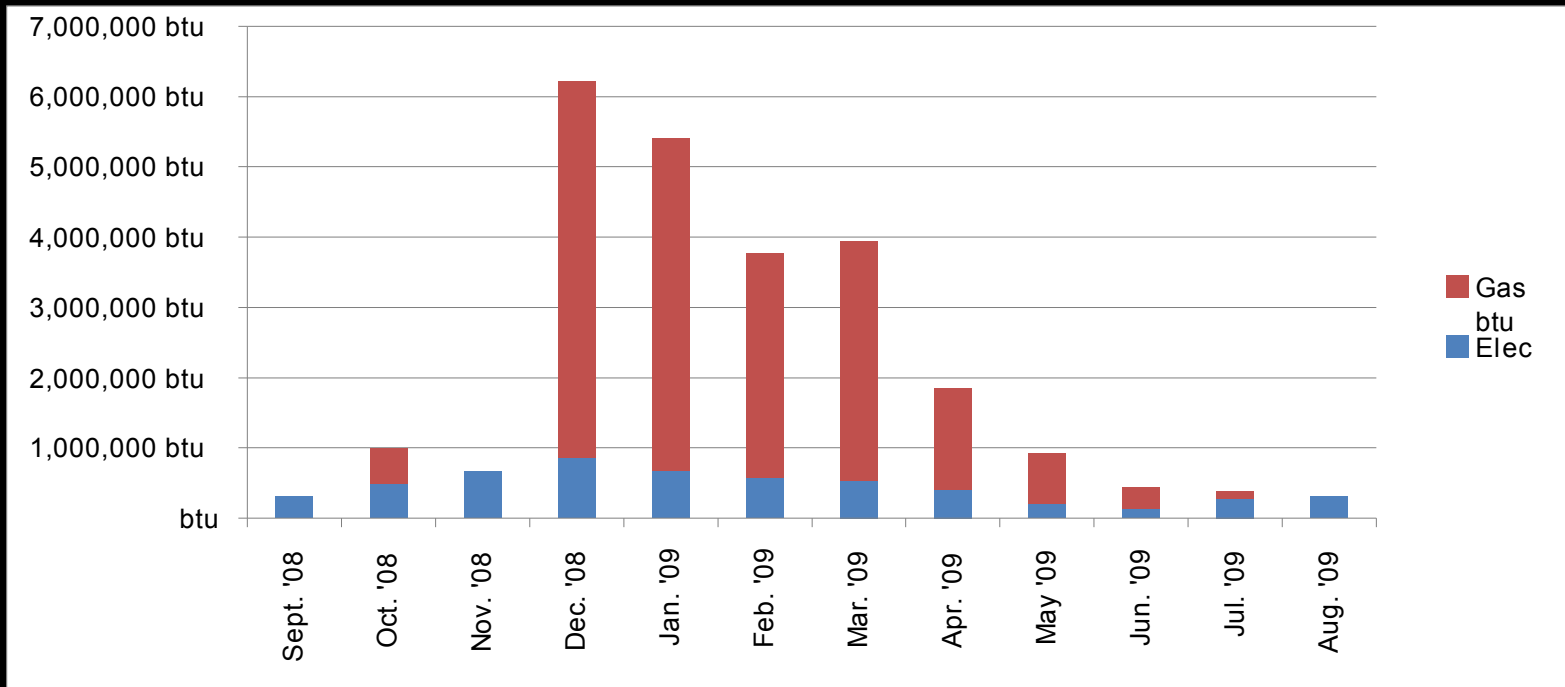
Spreadsheet developed to track actual energy consumption using information from utility bills





Bar chart showing total energy use during the first year of occupancy and the relative shares of natural gas and electricity. The intermittent pattern of gas use is a billing anomaly, not the actual pattern of use.





This chart of total energy use during the second year of occupancy better represents the actual pattern of gas use.

## User Interface - Performance Threshold Calculator for Thousand Home Challenge

yellow	shaded cells require user input
blue	shaded cells are calculated outputs

### Home Description, Basic Inputs

Home's 5-digit zip code	04101
Finished floor area (ft <sup>2</sup> )	1,400
Number of occupants	2
Number of households in building	1
Attached home, % common	45%

### Weather Station Info

Station linked to zipcode is	ME_PORTLAND_INTL_JETPORT
Preferred weather station is	use zip code

### Energy Unit Conversion Chart

Select Energy Source	Enter annual use	MMBtu	kWh
Nat Gas - ccf	210.0	21.4200	6277.8429
Electricity - kWh	1971.0	6.7251	1971.0000
Nat Gas - ccf	0.0	0.0000	0.0000
Other	0.0	0.0000	0.0000
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>28.1</b>	<b>8,249</b>

### Option A: 75% Reduction (requires one year pre-retrofit energy bills)

Current gas/fossil/wood use (MMBtu/year)	21.4	Gas/fossil/wood MMBtu converted to kWh
Current electric use (kWh/year)	1,971	
<b>Current total energy use kWh/year</b>	<b>8,241</b>	
Threshold gas/fossil/wood use (MMBtu/yr)	5.4	Gas/fossil/wood MMBtu converted to kWh; Excludes solar
Threshold electric use (kWh/yr)	493	
<b>Maximum total energy use (kWh/yr)</b>	<b>2,060</b>	

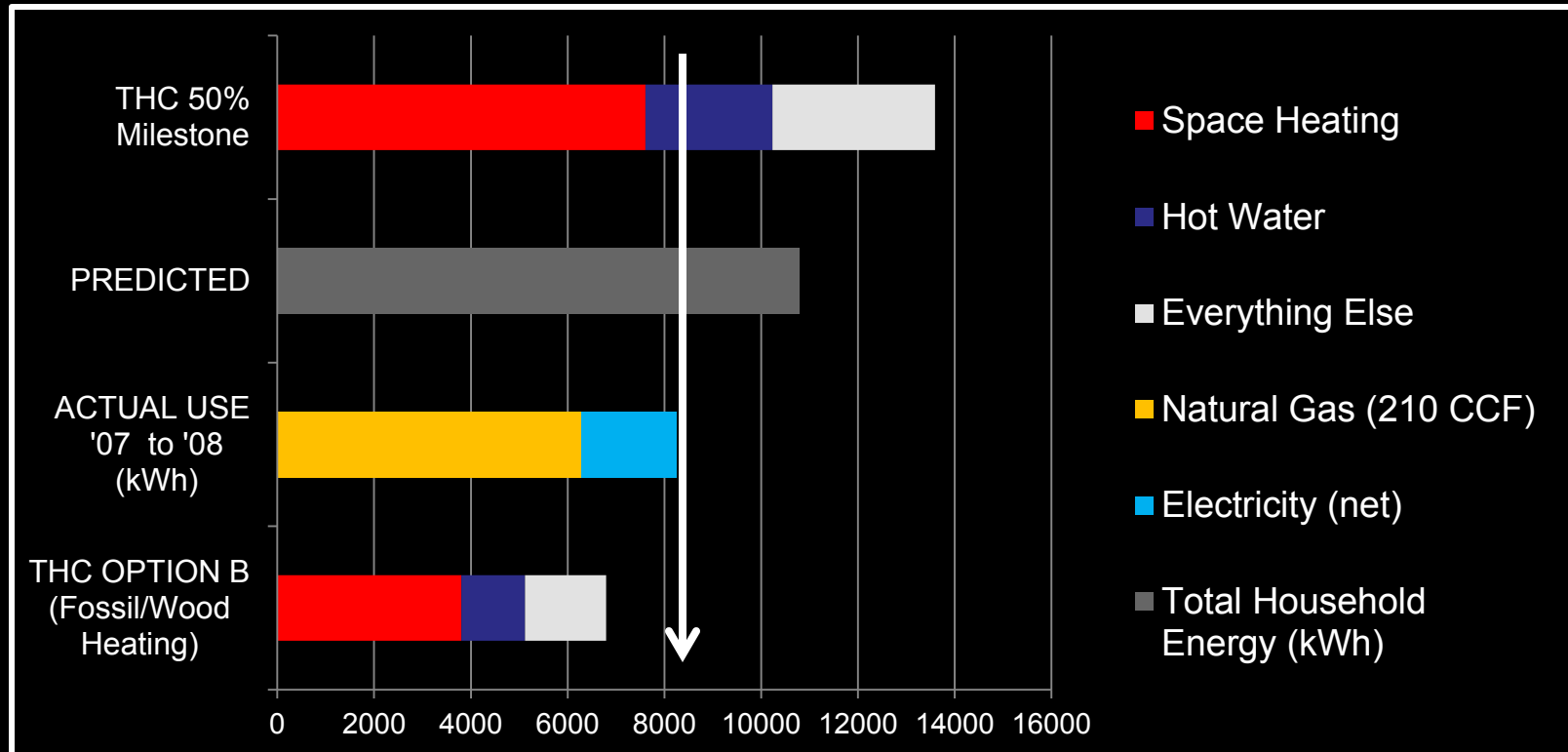
### Option B: Calculated Performance Threshold (see Threshold Calculator worksheet)

	If electric heat	If gas/fossil/wood heat	Gas/fossil/wood MMBtu converted to kWh; Excludes solar
Gas/fossil/wood (MMBtu/year)	0	17.5	
Electric (kWh/year)	4,896	1,680	
<b>Maximum total kWh/year (net)</b>	<b>4,896</b>	<b>6,797</b>	
Approximate \$/yr at \$10/MMBtu and 10¢/kWh	\$490	\$343	

The project does not quite meet the Option B criteria. One factor is that two people are living in a space that could easily accommodate three occupants; there is a second full bedroom. Since actual overall energy use is quite low, it is hard to think of anything dramatic that could have been done differently. A few marginal but, perhaps important improvements, like better exterior doors and pressure testing to tighten the envelope come to mind. Given the building's immediate surroundings and orientation, additional solar was not a good option.

Possible operating improvements are listed in a following slide.

# Comparing Predicted & Actual Post Use Against THC OPTION B Threshold & 50% Milestone



This project does not quite meet the OPTION B 1000 Home Challenge threshold: 6,796 kWh/yr. (site energy).

OPTION B Inputs: ZIP code:04101; 2 occupants;1,400 FFA; 45% common wall

## 6 South Street Loft

Energy Use: 2007 to 2008

Richard Renner|Architects

February 6, 2010

Source	Amount	Model Unit	Btu	Amount	2007-2008 Unit	Btu	Remarks
Electricity	4,565	KwH	15,662,515	2,484	KwH	8,475,408	
Natural Gas	309	Therm	30,900,000	210	Ccf	21,651,000	
Solar PV	(1,559)	KwH	(5,348,929)	(513)	KwH	(1,750,356)	
			<b>TOTAL</b>			28,376,052	
			<b>MMBtu</b>			28.38	
			2007-2008 Btu/SF	20,269	2.096 Btu/SF/HDD/Yr		

Summary of energy use during the first year of occupancy



## Lessons Learned

- There is no conflict between high levels of building performance and good design.
- The high windows in the clerestory are only ten feet above the windows on the main level, but this is enough of a difference to create air flow for natural ventilation. These high windows deliver sufficient daylighting on all but the darkest days. A shade, which was planned but omitted for budget reasons, would have reduced solar gain in the summer.
- The bathroom has no windows, but Solartube skylights provide plenty of daylight.
- An unexpected benefit of triple glazing is that the loft is quiet in spite of its urban location.
- The loft's open plan and long interior views make it feel larger than its actual size.
- Locating the heat recovery ventilator above the bathroom ceiling makes maintenance more difficult. However, there was no other place to put it.
- Recessing the windows to maximize size and thermal efficiency required complicated head, jamb, and sill flashing. Snow frozen on the deep sill occasionally restricts the operation of the awning windows.
- At today's prices, the 1KW grid-tied solar system is not cost effective.

## Possible energy performance improvements

- Aggressively address passive loads. AFTER SEVEN YEARS: Not sure the magnitude is that high. On other more recent projects, we have installed an eMonitor to track the power consumption of each circuit, and this allows us to see where there are possible improvements, both in equipment and patterns of use. An eMonitor installed in the loft would tell us where to focus our attention.
- Closely coordinate heat recovery ventilation with open windows in warmer months. When the windows are open, turn the system completely off. AFTER SEVEN YEARS: We also looked at running the ventilation system at less than 100% during the heating season.
- Turn down the heat in the winter. Daily setback will not work well, because the system is radiant, but overall set points could be lower. Bedroom zone is currently set at 62 degrees; the rest of the loft is set at 65 degrees. Both could be reduced somewhat. AFTER SEVEN YEARS: Not done, because heating costs were already low.

## Possible energy performance improvements - continued

- Put coffee in a thermos instead of using the coffee maker's heating element to keep the coffee warm. AFTER SEVEN YEARS: Not done, in part because in the several years before the loft was rented, occupancy was intermittent.
- The outside light at the front door is left on all night, because there is a graffiti problem in the neighborhood. Installing a motion sensor would reduce energy use.
- Install an exterior sunshade at the south-facing clerestory windows to reduce heat gain in the summer. AFTER SEVEN YEARS: This was implemented, but more because the lighted door attracted graffiti.
- Use the roof deck for drying clothes when possible. AFTER SEVEN YEARS: The deck was installed, but just before renting the loft. Also, access to the deck is difficult with a basket of wet clothes. However, there is little doubt that this would save energy.

# Links

*Fine Homebuilding*: “Brick Rehab Meets LEED’s Highest Standards” - [www.warmboard.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/09/wb\\_fhb\\_10-1108\\_all.pdf](http://www.warmboard.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/09/wb_fhb_10-1108_all.pdf)

*Fine Homebuilding*: “This Roof Grows Greener” - [www.finehomebuilding.com/how-to/video/green-roof-in-portland-maine.aspx](http://www.finehomebuilding.com/how-to/video/green-roof-in-portland-maine.aspx)

*Residential Architect*: “Town Architect: Richard Renner Circumscribes His Carbon Reach” - [www.residentialarchitect.com/heat-recovery-systems/town-architect.aspx](http://www.residentialarchitect.com/heat-recovery-systems/town-architect.aspx)

*Maine Home + Design*: “Taking His Own Advice” - [www.mainehomedesign.com/features/621-taking-his-own-advice.html](http://www.mainehomedesign.com/features/621-taking-his-own-advice.html)

*Down East*: “Green by Design” - [www.downeast.com/magazine/2009/march/green-design](http://www.downeast.com/magazine/2009/march/green-design)



## Contact Information

Richard Renner | Architects  
35 Pleasant Street  
Portland, Maine 04101  
207-773-9699

133 South Main Street  
Sherborn, Massachusetts 01770  
508-651-2385

[rrennerarchitects.com](http://rrennerarchitects.com)

[rrenner@rrennerarchitects.com](mailto:rrenner@rrennerarchitects.com)

