

A Sustainable Force

Jonathan Feldman cares deeply about sustainable design. **BY LUKE GILLESPIE**

Company Profile

Feldman Architecture

www.feldmanarchitecture.com

- **Sales:** \$1 million
- **Headquarters:** San Francisco
- **Employees:** 8
- **Services:** High-end residential and modest-scale commercial design
- **Jonathan Feldman, principal:** "Someday soon, all architects will realize good design is resource-conscious design."

As the first decade of the 21st Century closes, the concepts of green building and sustainable design have been pushed to the forefront of the architectural and construction industries. There are those who believe that all new buildings should be built to environmentally friendly standards, and there are those who view things such as LEED certification as costly and time-consuming. If you ask Jonathan Feldman, there is only one way to go on this matter.

"I definitely think architects can't continue to work without caring about our resources," Feldman states. "Someday soon, all architects

will realize good design is resource-conscious design." To say that Feldman is passionate about sustainability would be an understatement. He studied astronomy and English as an undergrad, and worked as a filmmaker and carpenter before earning a master's degree in architecture from the University of Oregon. He says he had a big environmental commitment prior to studying architecture, which was enhanced by the focus on sustainable design at Oregon. "As soon as I started studying architecture, it was something I cared about, and as soon as I went on my own, it was something I tried to focus on," he explains.

SNEAKILY GREEN

Feldman has helped create a blog – www.greenarchitecturenotes.com – dedicated to gathering and sharing information that promotes sustainable architecture. Since the start of Feldman Architecture, he says sustainable design has been at the core of the firm, noting that he used to have to sneak sustainable design in before it gained the popularity it has in today's market.

"There are certain types of environmentally sensitive moves architects could make that were obvious and at no additional cost to owners," Feldman says. "You could orient windows to control the sun with the daylight, not build big-



Feldman Architecture specializes in residential design with a strong environmental focus. It has recently completed a home on track for a LEED platinum rating.

ger than something needed to be, and there were things that may cost just a little more, but we'd try to sneak it in or convince owners that it was money well-spent."

It was the building of a house for his parents that provided a step forward for Feldman and green design.

Located in Carmel Valley, Calif., the house was built sustainably straight into the land. The green roof uses grasses, poppies, lupine and strawberries, with the home complementing the natural surroundings.



"I showed this [project] to clients, and it was a breakthrough for us. Clients started to ask for green materials and strategies," Feldman states. "It established us as having this interest in sustainable design and showed we had the capability. Now that we've become known for having that slant, and now that the demand for green architecture has exploded, most of our clients come to us sharing these values."

Feldman Architecture has now completed another home in Carmel Valley that is passive solar, net-zero energy, rammed-earth constructed and harvests all water needed to irrigate the site. This project is on track for a LEED platinum rating. Feldman says the company is working on two mixed-use urban projects in San Francisco, which are difficult because of the tight sites in the city. However, he believes tough constraints and challenges are the genesis of great ideas.



OPEN AND COLLABORATIVE

Feldman Architecture is a small studio, which Feldman enjoys. He says everyone is encouraged to contribute to all aspects of each project and to how the business is run. Everyone at the firm works around one large desk, so it is physically set up to be open and collaborative.

OPEN AND COLLABORATIVE

"What we do is challenging, and it requires all of us to work together and take ownership in our process and in the product," Feldman asserts. "I view my leadership style as trying to clearly establish the firm's values and goals, allowing everyone a chance to do more than they thought they could, but also being a tough critic to ensure the highest quality."

The firm's specialty is residential architecture, with projects that range from small renovations to new houses, multi-unit residences and mixed-use buildings.

WE BUILD
 smart / beautiful / user-friendly
WEBSITES
 that
 elevate your business +
 connect with your customers

visit our website to review recent projects including feldmanarchitecture.com

ODXCREATIVE.COM
 310.425.8583 / info@odxcreative.com



Since 1987, JP Builders has provided construction services for residential communities and home owners throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, providing high quality craftsmanship, uncompromising service and excellent value for investments.

JP BUILDERS
 GENERAL CONTRACTING AND
 CUSTOM HOME SPECIALIST
 Phone: (510) 763-0411
 Web: www.jpbuilders-inc.com

