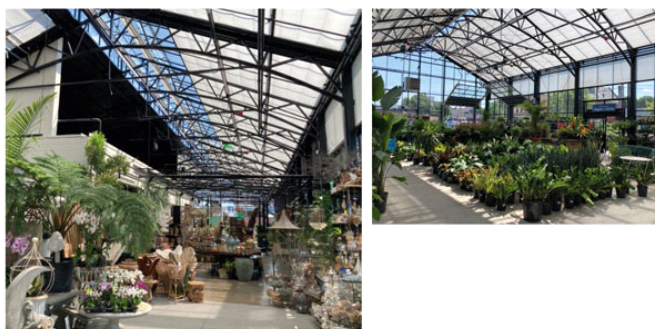


Features

12/1/2024

A “Bright” New Look

Ellen C. Wells



Clockwise from far left: The “butterfly” entry leads to this first greenhouse room, which is home to a changing assortment of products and plants. I visited on a fairly hot day and it was still comfortable thanks to the shading, venting and general design. • This room sets the mood for the shopping experience with at least three different water features, piped-in music and lovely displays. These tables were created by some of the staff from reclaimed items sitting around on this and other properties. • Flying the greenhouse over the existing building created this breezeway that can allow for merchandising plants and products, leading to another plant-focused covered greenhouse space with houseplants and other items. They plan to use the far end as a classroom/workshop space. The outdoor space to the right of this house is the outdoor selling

area for veggies and such. • When Tom and the architect were discussing the possibilities of erecting the greenhouse, they asked themselves, “Can we fly it over the pottery room? Can we fly it over and attach it to and keep the existing building?” And the answer was, yes ... yes, we can! Doing this created natural light in the pottery room, something as a previous shopper I appreciate greatly.

After a quick “Hey, friend!” catch-up at Cultivate with Liz Lark-Riley, the freshly promoted Marketing Director for Mahoney’s Garden Centers in eastern Massachusetts, we arranged for me to have a tour of their newly renovated store in Boston’s Brighton neighborhood.

As a 24-year resident of Boston myself, I’ve visited this location—a former luxury car dealership—many times and also had the opportunity to shop Mahoney’s previous spot across the Charles River when they were located in Cambridge.

Believe me when I say the third time’s the charm. Having not visited during any of the construction, which began late last summer and technically ended just after Mother’s Day (bummer about that missed weekend!), what I visited was a completely transformed location.

I should add that this store is the largest of maybe three independent garden centers and a half dozen small plant shops in Boston. It's located a short drive from some swanky city neighborhoods and is in a neighborhood that thousands of college kids call their home away from home. That is to say, they do a very good houseplant business, despite being less than a mile away from The Home Depot in Watertown.

I'm giving you a quick rundown of some of the highlights here, and in an upcoming month I'll have a more in-depth piece that will include my conversation with Tom Mahoney about this renovation.

Clockwise from near right: Believe me, if you need the City of Boston to give you a permit, take a seat and wait awhile. Mahoney's couldn't move into the greenhouse until right after Mother's Day and had to do their selling from within this large poly house. This aisle now leads to ... • ... this covered and air-conditioned checkout space, which is just on the other side of the entry to the garden center. It has plenty of registers and plenty of room for last-minute essentials and impulse items. • These are what I would call "emergency" check-out windows. Located along the outer wall of the checkout room, these two small service windows can open up during busy periods to help lessen congested indoor lines. What a super idea!

