

# The Dow Smithsonian

A newsletter for clients, colleagues, and friends of Dow Smith Company, Inc.

Fall 2022

## Dow Smith Company Celebrates 30 Years With A Construction Carnival At Smyrna Elementary



*Dow Smith Company recently held a Construction Carnival at Smyrna Elementary School in celebration of the company's 30th anniversary.*

When it came time to celebrate our 30th anniversary, we weren't sure how to mark the milestone. Then we looked to our mission and purpose.

Dow Smith Company's mission is to serve Christ in the marketplace. Our purpose is, simply, to serve.

So while we wanted to acknowledge our anniversary with festivities, we also wanted to serve.

Dow Smith Company Partner & Design-Builder Joey Rhyne had the idea that we should do a service project. Holley Potts, our Director of Well-Being, met with leaders at Smyrna Elementary School about how we could strengthen our partnership there. Project Manager Ryan

Sanford had the idea that we could do an event for the school, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year.

On Friday, September 9, we hosted a Construction Carnival at Smyrna Elementary. The school's 700 students and their families were invited to come out for dinner and fun. The event had a bouncy castle, slide, face-painting, ring toss, and other activities. The kids got to build bird feeders with the help of our superintendents, got to climb in construction equipment, and they all received plastic hard hats. We served hundreds of hot dogs, chips, and drinks.

We also held a groundbreaking ceremony for the school's new outdoor

classroom/amphitheater, which Dow Smith Company is designing and building.

Smyrna Elementary School Principal Vanessa Ritter said the school is "truly, truly blessed" to have Dow Smith Company as a partner. When Holley first met with Principal Ritter, Holley asked what we could do for the school.

"I said, 'I want an outdoor classroom/ amphitheater so we can have big events,'" Ritter recalled at the groundbreaking ceremony. "Never did I believe that would happen but she came back maybe six months later with more people and gave us the surprise to say Dow Smith will help us make that happen. Tonight, we just want to say thank you for your generosity."

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# Construction Carnival... *continued from page 1*



# Seven Oaks Business Park Offers Attractive Location, Affordability And Flexibility

Back in 2005, local real estate icon Bob Parks had the vision to create flex office space in Smyrna, which was mostly unheard of in Smyrna and Rutherford County at the time.

He worked with Dow Smith Company on his idea, and Seven Oaks Business Park was born.

Seven Oaks, pictured right, is a professional flex office complex located just off Interstate 24, two miles north of State Route 840 and two miles south of Sam Ridley Parkway. The high-end, multi-building development includes 2,000



square feet of incremental finished tenant offices, loading docks with 10x10 overhead doors in the rear, and warehouse/condo space throughout the development. Dow Smith Company has designed and constructed seven buildings on the property, with an eighth to open soon and a ninth on the way.

Shortly after Seven Oaks opened, the Great Recession hit in 2008 and business slowed. But in the past 10 years, Seven Oaks has seen rapid growth with the amount of square footage there tripling. John Blankenship, one of the owners of Seven Oaks, says there are three main reasons tenants are attracted to the business park.

• **Location:** “Everybody says about real estate it’s location,

location, location. With this space, it really does come down to location,” Blankenship says. Seven Oaks is centrally located—a stone’s throw from I-24 and mere minutes from 840. Business owners in the park can get to Nashville quickly when they need to, but they don’t have to make the commute every day.

• **Affordability:**

While Seven Oaks offers everything you’d find in a Nashville business park and Dow Smith Company can help tenants build out spaces to their specifications, rent is considerably more affordable. Blankenship says tenants would expect to pay 35% more for the same space in Nashville.

• **Flexibility:** “We can

do flex space of we can do office space,” Blankenship says. “So it makes it convenient for a lot of folks.”

Joey Rhyne, Partner & Design-Builder at Dow Smith Company, says he’s been excited to see all of the growth and change at Seven Oaks. He’s grateful to get to participate in Bob Parks’ vision coming to fruition.

“We’re just thrilled to be out here,” Rhyne says. “2005 was a long time ago when we started this it seems like. So we’ve grown and I’ve grown with Seven Oaks Business Park. We appreciate Bob Parks originally giving us the opportunity to work out here.”

For more information about Seven Oaks Business Park, contact John Blankenship at 615-896-4040.

## Avoid Million-Dollar Mistakes With Due Diligence

In construction, even minor errors can be costly. And they add up quickly if you’re not careful. We know you’re excited to start building, but rushing to the ground-breaking ceremony before you’re ready will catch up with you later. It’s critical in any project to get all of your ducks in a row. That’s why due diligence is so important.

In The Dow Smith Way, the first step is Vision Collection, in which we get all of the key people at the table to discuss needs and set expectations. Right after that, we move into Pre-Construction Services, which begins with due diligence.

**Due diligence includes:**

- Finalizing site location (or size of addition and renovation)
- Geotechnical and Phase 1 site reports
- Preliminary site plan and master plan
- Preliminary floor plans and elevations
- Preliminary elevations
- Initial discussions with government officials
- Construction budget with an allowance for site work

As you can see, a lot of work has to be done before we can really get to work. If you don’t “start at the start,” you can rack up expenses that will wreck your budget.

**What Are Pre-Construction Services?**

Pre-Construction services are everything that has to take place prior to getting a building permit and starting construction. Dow Smith started the company 30 years ago and we have found that having us as the design-builder involved in pre-construction services is really critical to a project getting started on time.

We prefer to be involved in design and pre-construction services as much as the client will let us. Our desire is to be involved as early as possible in the process—even when a client is just starting to dream about their next steps.

**What Are The Components Of Pre-Construction Services?**

When talking about pre-construction services, it’s probably best to talk about the product. The result of pre-construction services is really a good set of contract documents, which includes construction documents (site plans, floor plans, structural

# Due Diligence... *continued from page 3*

drawings, etc.) that are complete enough to get a permit. This also helps us get a good vision of what the client needs, wants, and desires for their building.

## **Why Is It So Important For Clients To Share Their Vision As Early As Possible?**

Due diligence, if done properly, will either confirm the client's vision or inform them that moving forward can be a costly mistake. On more than one occasion, we have performed a pre-construction service package and the client realized that what they were thinking was not going to work. They spent a few dollars up front but avoided spending major dollars that would have resulted in a building that they could not afford or would not have met their needs in the long term.

## **Are There Red Flags That Can Come Up During Pre-Construction?**

The traditional method of construction is to go hire a design

team, draw the drawings, and then go find out what it will cost. We've seen it many times where businesses and churches and medical facilities have a nice, large, expensive set of drawings and they never get built—or they have to be redrawn, which costs even more money.

We've had to solve \$1 million problems in design because we had to go back with their design team and redesign it or provide value engineering alternates. It can be a painful process.

Often, clients will get designs that they can't afford. So it's best to have all parties at the table: the design team, the owner, and the contractor who knows what it's going to cost.

We'll design something they can afford, which obviously is most important because if you can't afford it, you can't have the chance to build it. Pre-construction services help build the foundation of a relationship for a successful project.



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*The roof is on at North Boulevard Church of Christ. We can't wait to see this finished project!*

## Works In Progress

- North Boulevard Church of Christ - Murfreesboro
- Marquee Dental - Nashville
- Dr. Thompson - Murfreesboro
- Packaging Fulfillment - LaVergne
- Marquee Dental - Lennox Village
- City Church - Murfreesboro
- MMC Veterans Parkway - Murfreesboro
- Family Pet Health - Murfreesboro
- Burn Boot Camp - Smyrna
- JoyBridge Kids - Puckett Creek

