

Partners in Excellence



Kampi Components — Patience & Perseverance

By Jon Otto



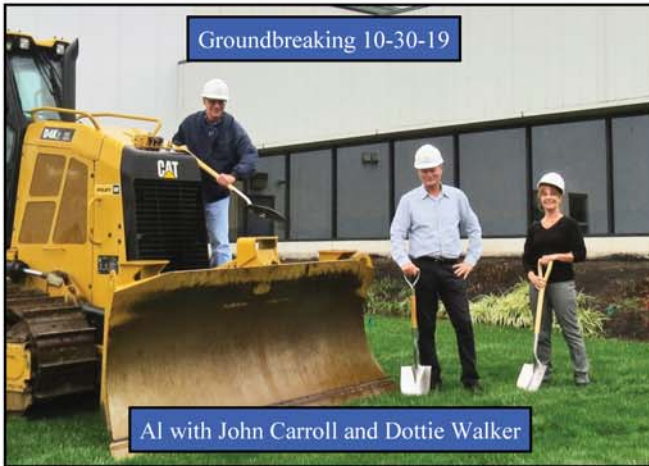
In the late summer of 2018, I received a call from John Carroll of Kampi Components in the Penn Warner Industrial Park in Fairless Hills. During our conversation John told me that they needed more space but were not sure how to do it or even if they could. He knew we had built the original building for the previous owner, the Kras Corporation, and wanted to know if we had any plans. Unfortunately, the Kras building was designed and built in 1989, nearly 30 years before our conversation. We did not have much and on top of that, the building had been added on to when Kampi bought it in 2000. Fortunately, between us we were able to locate enough plans to cobble together an “as built” of what was on the site.

Shortly after John and I completed our search, I was called to meet with the owner of Kampi Components, Al Goodman, John Carroll and the rest of Al’s management team, Dottie Walker and John Viviano. At that meeting, Al described his dilemma; Kampi needed more space; as much additional space as possible, at least 2,500 square feet of office, the rest warehouse. If they couldn’t get a total of 10,000 additional square feet, they would have to move. Here I got my first inkling of the kind of person Al is; he wanted to avoid moving if at all possible because most of his employees were (very) local and did not want to disrupt their lives.

Well, we had a starting point — we knew “how much”, we just had to figure out the “how”. We also learned that we were to replicate the existing building which made it easy. I knew the Kampi building very well as I was personally involved when we built the original building in 1989. It was the third building we built for Kras and at the time, a very upscale building incorporating insulated metal panels, precision thermal control and an early cousin of highly tinted low “E” glass.

The design process for the new addition would include energy code compliance and creative “maxing out” of the site while tying into different roof lines. By using every available space, we were able to come up with an 11,050 square foot addition, a bit more that Al and his team had hoped for.





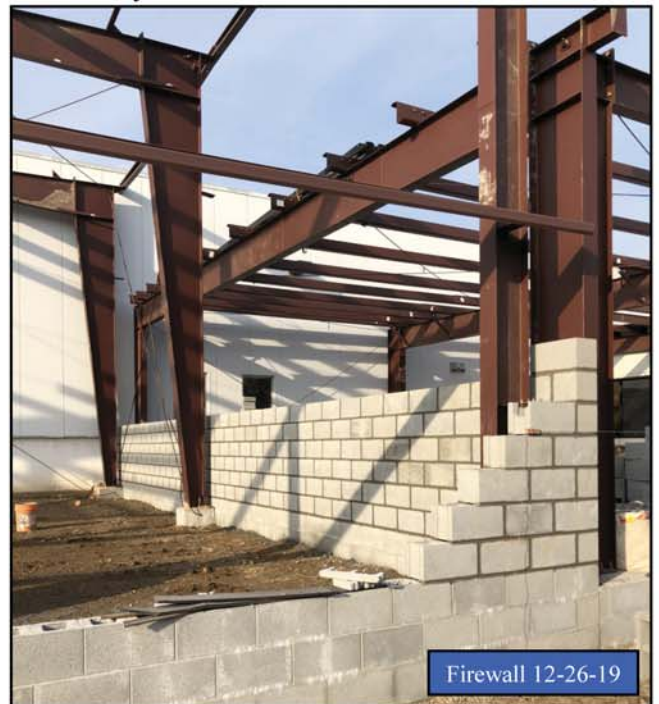
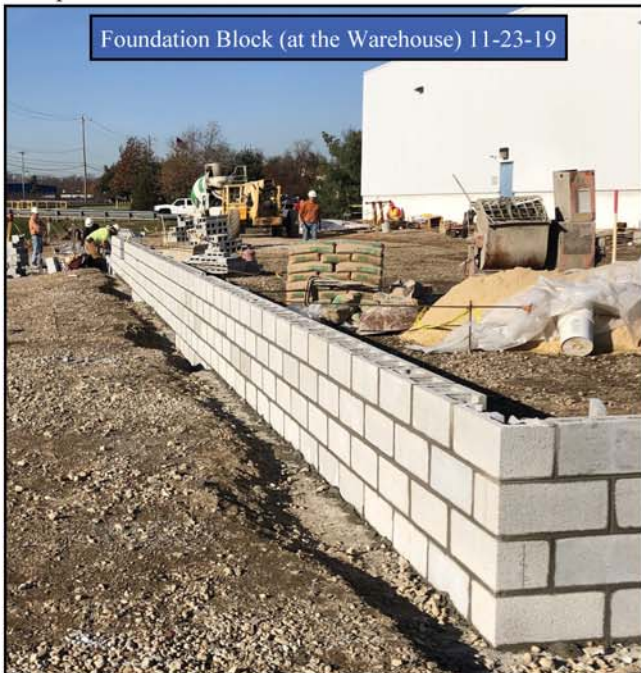
From the first meeting it took about six weeks to develop a schematic plan and budget. We had multiple meetings with Al and his team. I noticed from the beginning that Al, while clearly “the boss”, values his teams’ input and opinions and always includes them in the thought process. In December of 2018 we presented our budget and design agreement to provide the architectural, structural, mechanical and electrical designs. Based on our layouts, Kampi had already hired the civil engineer to run the gauntlet with the township and the process was begun.

So, what is Kampi Components and who is Al Goodman? Kampi Components is a major player and industry leader in diversified military procurement and the distribution of OEM products (Original Equipment Manufacturer). These can be complete units, parts or finished goods. Al’s primary customer is the U.S. Government. Kampi wins government contracts by bidding for them. They handle literally hundreds of thousands of products in their complex data base and are successful to a remarkable



level with 12,000 contracts a year plus multiple 1, 3 and 5 year contracts. This amounts to over \$142,000,000 in contracts per year. 95% of the products they distribute pass through Kampi’s warehouse where they are repackaged and transhipped to U.S. military installations all over the world. Over the years, Kampi has developed exclusive vendor relationships and strong strategic alliances with many others.

I was amazed at the volume of business that passed through what was then a 25,000 square foot building. No wonder they needed an addition.





When I asked Al what the secret was to working with the government, he laughed and said “patience and perseverance”. I later learned Al’s other secret, his business philosophies in dealing with his 75 plus coworkers; “I try to do the most for my people and I get the most back. What you get from people is returned in equal parts to what you give.” Penn Valley was to learn this first hand in the course of the project; Al treated us extremely fairly and made us want to give him everything he was paying for and more.

So, how did Al get Kampi started? He grew up in Northeast Philadelphia and graduated from Northeast High School. He loved sports and he loved to work and work hard. Even in his early teen years, he always had an after school and weekend job. Fortunately, in his last couple of years at Northeast, he was able to arrange his school schedule so he went in early and was out of school in time to work the 1:00 to 7:00 shift at Pep Boys. Al attributes his time at Pep Boys as one of the major foundations in his business career. At Pep Boys he learned the organization of a warehouse with fast moving products. He also learned to sell by working at the counter and outside sales. Al continued part time at Pep Boys while attending Penn State’s Ogontz Campus.

It didn’t take Al long to figure out that college was not for him; he wanted to work! So, he became a full time Pep Boys employee and continued to learn the business. After a couple of years, Al recognized that while he had learned a lot at Pep Boys, there wasn’t much more to learn and very little opportunity for growth. Fortunately, an opportunity came up at Centennial Industrial Sales in 1978 and Al made the move.

Centennial was a government procurement company specializing in military hardware. Here, Al was able to build on the foundation started at Pep Boys while learning a very specialized new business. As a salesman at Centennial, he had to respond to government RFQs by getting vendor pricing, estimating, shipping and repackaging costs, and making sure everything could happen in the time allotted. As always, Al worked hard and learned this new business quickly and became highly efficient and successful.



In 1983, Al had that moment that many entrepreneurs have; “Hey, I can do this.” So, with limited capital, but great energy and courage, he started Kampi in his house and worked nights and weekends at home packing and shipping products and receiving government inspectors in his dining room to inspect material as needed.



By 1984 Al had cut his ties with Centennial and was renting space at 210 Route 13 in Bristol. He hired his first two employees, John Carroll (who called me 33 years later) and Dottie Walker who is now Kampi's human resource manager/controller. As other tenants vacated adjoining spaces in the building, Kampi would jump to rent the space. Business was thriving and in 2000 Kampi purchased the 15,000 square foot Kras Building we had built 11 years earlier and added 10,000 square feet to it before occupying.



This brings us back to Penn Valley's meetings with Al and his team that evolved into a building contract in August of 2019. We were ready to go, just waiting for the township to dot the I's and cross the T's and levy the fees. As is often the case, this took longer than anyone would have liked, but finally in late

credit with us for a successful project. Whenever we needed a decision or a choice had to be made, Al quickly pulled his team together and a decision was made. When we were demolishing walls, installing roof frames and air conditioning in the warehouse, John Carroll and John Viviano worked seamlessly with Rick and our subcontractors.



We were flying and with Kampi's help, we managed to finish the job almost a month early, a good job finished early for a great customer.

October, our team of Project Manager Steve Pfau and Superintendent Rick Lutz, were able to mobilize onto the site. Steve, who is a 34-year Penn Valley veteran and Rick who first came to work for us as a carpenter in 1978 made a great team. With winter staring us in the face and moisture sensitive soils in the area of most of the addition, every day was going to count. If we didn't get the drainage work installed, the building pad filled and the foundations in place before winter, the site would turn into a quagmire. Our goal was to get those foundations in and the steel erected and closed in before January's hard freezes. Steve and Rick succeeded in doing this with the blessing of good weather and the commitment of our team of subcontractors.



For More Information:
 Kampi Components Co., Inc.
 88 Canal Road · Fairless Hills, PA 19030
 www.kampi.com · 215-736-2000

Isn't it time you contact us for your next project!

800.523.3746

Now we could attack the rest of the project; carpentry, finishes, heating, air conditioning, fire suppression and electric. A lot of the work we were doing was inside the existing building which was already very crowded. Al and his team proved to be model customers and share the



Penn Valley Constructors, Inc.

1707 South Pennsylvania Avenue
 Morrisville, PA 19067
 1-800-523-3746 • 215-295-5055 • Fax: 215-295-2980
 www.pennvall.com
 Issue 37, November 2020