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Alexander of Finegold Alexander receives Mass. Historical Commission achievement award

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James Alexander,
Finegold Alexander Architects

Boston, MA James Alexander, FAIA, LEED AP, senior principal of Finegold Alexander Architects is the recipient of the Massachusetts Historical Commission 2019 Individual Lifetime Achievement Award. Alexander is a senior principal of Finegold Alexander Architects whose 50-year career has influenced the historic preservation community in myriad ways.

“Jim’s impeccable ability to discern what should be preserved and that which can be adapted provides the maximum benefit to clients, agencies, and the community. His role has been pivotal in saving and adapting some of the Commonwealth’s most significant historic structures,” said Tony Hsiao, director of design at Finegold Alexander. “Jim’s passion and leadership for preservation has positioned Finegold Alexander Architects as one of the region’s leading design firms focusing on historic preservation and adaptive use.”

Among Alexander’s numerous contributions to preservation movement projects are The Ellis Island National Monument, Boston’s Old City Hall, Charlestown Navy Yard, University of Massachusetts Old Chapel, and many libraries, schools, and historic buildings. Many of Alexander’s projects have proven to be anchor projects that led to the revitalization of neighborhoods that were neglected or abandoned such as the Newburyport Downtown Master Plan, 226 Causeway Mixed Use Development in Boston’s Bulfinch Triangle, 2 Clarendon Sq. and Penny Savings Bank Residences both in Boston’s South End, the Cable Mill Residences in Williamstown, and the Holyoke Public Library, among many others.

“I am honored to receive this award and appreciate the recognition,” said Alexander. “I am hopeful that the next generation of architects and preservationists will bring the work we have done in the re-use of treasured buildings further, with a continued focus on sustainable design. Our firm’s legacy of adaptive use and preservation is something I am most proud of, and I have to credit my predecessors, Tim Anderson and George Notter, as well as our current team of skilled architects who make it all happen.”

Alexander has been responsible for a range of projects including the design of new structures, renovations, restorations and additions to historic buildings, and urban revitalization planning. Under his leadership at Finegold Alexander, the firm has become nationally recognized for historic preservation, adaptive use, and urban revitalization projects that have preserved neighborhoods and important buildings throughout the Commonwealth and nationally.

In addition to his 50-years as a preservation advocate and architect, Alexander continues to serve as a mentor, thesis-advisor, and guest critic to many young architects. Over the years he has opened the firm to school and youth programs to introduce young people to architecture, design and preservation.

Alexander has also been a lifelong advocate for preservation through his service as board member and/or president of various preservation groups and commissions including Preservation Massachusetts, Boston Preservation Alliance, Boston Landmarks Commission, and The South End Historic District.

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