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Colantonio's Provincetown Public Library restoration honored with Mass. Historical Commission Preservation award

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The Provincetown Public Library, a Nationally Registered Historic Place, was honored with a 2012 Massachusetts Historical Commission Preservation Award in the categories of Adaptive Reuse and Rehabilitation and Restoration. Secretary of State William F. Galvin presented the award during the Commission's 34th Annual Preservation Awards Program held at the Massachusetts Archives Building in Boston.

General contractor Colantonio performed the restoration work on the library, architect McGinley Kaslow and Associates designed the project and Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture LLC created the landscape design.

Twelve awards were given to projects and individuals who work to protect the Commonwealth's historic assets, serving to revitalize neighborhoods and preserve the character of our communities. Award categories include: archeology, adaptive reuse, education & outreach, landscape preservation, restoration & rehabilitation, local preservationist, individual lifetime achievement, and stewardship.

The Provincetown Public Library, located at 356 Commercial St., is one of the most prominent buildings of the town's skyline. Its spire rises 100 feet from the ground, making it easily recognizable from the end of MacMillan Wharf. Built in 1860 as the Center Methodist Episcopal Church, it housed the Chrysler Art Museum from 1958 to 1974 and the Provincetown Heritage Museum from 1976 to 2001.

Renovations to convert the space for the Library began in 2002 and were completed in 2005. The interior was gutted, reconstructed and restored to its original design during that first phase of renovation. The project featured an expanded vault ceiling to incorporate the half-scale replica of Provincetown's Grand Banks fishing schooner, the Rose Dorothea, previously displayed at the Heritage Museum.

In 2011, Colantonio was charged with restoring the exterior of the building. When the temporary exterior skin was being removed, they discovered that one of the original 60-foot structural wood timbers had rotted completely through. They attached bracing to the exterior to keep the building's structure sound while they replaced the timber with a crane. This task was particularly challenging given the small size of the building's footprint, closely surrounded by homes and a busy street.

Other minor structural upgrades were made before the Italianate style facade was restored to replicate its original 1860 appearance using historic rusticated mahogany siding and polymer castings. Colantonio painted the remaining three sides of the building and installed a new landscape master plan, which incorporated the placement of large, granite slabs where the property meets the sidewalk. They also built a new research and study area on the basement level.

Colantonio's portfolio of historic restoration projects includes Weymouth's Fogg Public Library, the Maynard Public Library, the Weston Town Hall and the Helen Heineman Ecumenical Center at Framingham State University.

The firm also provides preconstruction and construction management services in the academic, commercial and sustainable markets.

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