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55 YEARS

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Plan NH reveals 2019 Merit Award recipients at the Capital Commons building in Concord on June 20th

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Downtown Concord Complete Streets

Concord, NH At its annual awards evening, held on June 20th at the Capital Commons building, Plan NH revealed this year's Merit Award projects. The projects were selected from a field of nominations by a jury of professionals within the planning, design and development industries.

The Merit Awards program recognizes outstanding building projects that embody Smart Growth principles, social responsibility and/or outstanding cooperation or collaboration. These projects also demonstrate how what we build, where we build and how can have an influence on the health and vibrancy of a community.

Gilford Village Knolls III

Owner: Lakes Region Community Developers

Key players:

- Gilford Village Knolls Trustees
- Stewart Associates Architects
- Steven J. Smith Associates
- Martini Northern
- Sheehan Phinney Bass & Green
- Stewart Property Management
- DEAP Energy

This is the third building in a multi-unit apartment development for adults age 62 and older. This section has 24 units, all one-bedroom, and each rent-restricted at price points residents can afford.

What made this project stand out was not only that the site is within easy walking distance to the town's amenities (vs many developments for older adults that are isolating), but that the building itself is the first passive-house certified multifamily building in the state. And because it is identical to one built earlier, cost savings can be easily tracked.

Jury comments:

- As noted above, they liked that the residents are not segregated and isolated from the rest of the community;
- It was great that the numbers worked re-affordability; and
- They have passive house certification.

Concord City-Wide Community Center

Owner: City of Concord

Key Players:

- Milestone Engineering and Construction
- The HL Turner Group

Just off Loudon Rd. is the site of the former Dame School, which was partly demolished and other parts re-purposed to create a community center for people of all ages. Indoor courts and outdoor fields are used for games, and there is an auditorium for all kinds of uses, and old classrooms are used for different kinds of learning today. In addition, the building is on ehome to what were once myriad Concord Park and Rec offices and programs.

Jury comments:

- Great reuse of old school;
- Reuse of fields;
- Near "new American" community; and
- Location on a major bus line.

Downtown Concord Complete Streets

Owner: City of Concord

Key Players:

- Severino Trucking
- McFarland-Johnson
- Louis Karno & Company

The reconstruction of Concord's North and South Main Sts. has transformed the character and appeal of downtown. Sidewalks now 45% of street space, and, counter-intuitively, parking was reduced from 31% to 16% of the roadway. In addition, space for travel lanes was reduced from 46% to 27% of the overall design, while space for bicycles was increased from 0 to 12%. At times, pedestrian counts are more than double what they were before the rebuild. And there are virtually no empty storefronts. It's a vibrant "outdoor room" in front of New Hampshire's Capitol building.

Jury comments:

- This was a transformative project for the city's core, a catalyst to redefine downtown;
- The project has led to tremendous economic revitalization and a renewed sense of pride in how Concord looks and feels;
- The buried power lines are a great asset; and
- The great energy that went into the design and building of the new configuration is still being felt as people walk, shop and socialize in their own downtown.

Bradley Commons, Dover

Owner: The Housing Partnership

Key Players:

- Lassel Architects
- Pine Brook Construction
- Ambit Engineering
- JSN Associates
- Petersen Engineering
- Woodburn and Associates, Landscape Architects

This project is a 61,000 s/f mixed-use building where a Catholic church once stood. Rather than setting it back from the road, the designers put it closer to the sidewalk, with parking behind. As a result, it is part of the fabric of downtown Dover, and its location is within easy walking distance to amenities. In addition, the location is home to not only 39 one, two, or three-bedroom units at lower price points, it also provides space for a Head Start Program. and commercial retail spaces on the first floor. Deliberately-planned design elements contribute to an overall healthy buiding (and thus healthier inhabitants).

Jury Comments:

- The architecture shows spirit of Dover;
- With parking in rear, the street becomes a “room;”
- They like the non-profit aspects of the available spaces; and
- Liked the lower price points for the residences.

Plan NH is an independent organization with a mission to “foster excellence in planning, design and development of New Hampshire’s built environment.” Through workshops, newsletters and more, Plan NH raises awareness of the impact of the built environment and community design on the health and vibrancy of towns and neighborhoods. The organization shares information about ideas and trends and techniques with planning, design and building professionals, as well as with Granite State communities themselves.

For more information about Plan NH and its programs, visit www.plannh.org.

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