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## **LADA's projects reflect its belief that simplicity is timeless and clarity is the hallmark of good design**

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Landscape Architectural Design Associates, P.C. was founded in 1980 and is currently doing business as LADA, P.C. Land Planners. LADA is a landscape architecture/planning/engineering firm whose main focus is site planning for all kinds of projects. Located in Simsbury, Conn. and Brewster, N.Y., principals Philip Doyle and Terri-Ann Hahn oversee a staff of 15 people working in over 40 towns in Connecticut, New York and Massachusetts.

Celebrating 30 years in business in 2010, LADA's projects have included both large scale and small scale projects. LADA has completed large scale Master Plans for Day Hill Corporate Park in Windsor, Conn. and Mount Ebo Corporate Park in Brewster, N.Y.; large scale retail projects include The Shoppes at Farmington Valley in Canton, Conn., and large scale campus planning projects such as the new central pedestrian core at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Conn. Our small scale projects have included the Governor's House in Simsbury, Conn., expansion and renovation to the Collinsville Ax Factory in Collinsville, Conn.; the outdoor park for wheelchair bound children at the Richmond Children's Center in Yonkers, N.Y.; the Library at Kingswood-Oxford School in West Hartford, Conn.; and a new Master Plan for the Lyman Allan Art Museum in New London, Conn.

Our designs, like our clients, are varied and variable to reflect the needs and budgets of our clients. For most people or the casual viewer, one would not be able to find a LADA style by looking at our projects. However, all our projects reflect our belief that simplicity is timeless and that clarity is the hallmark of good design - a defined visual presence, clean circulation patterns, accessibility for all and a clear but varied experience depending on the use.

Over the years, our clients have found this philosophy one that stands the test of time. Such projects as the Thomaston Opera House in Thomaston, Conn. and new "back" parking garage plaza at Eastern Connecticut State University are examples of how the LADA process results in a landscape that fits with the use and structures. Our designs change a typically haphazard collection of parts into a unified whole. No place has this been better illustrated than the design for a new town center for Hebron, Conn. This confluence of state roads had become a confusion of curbcuts and parking. By relocating and combining curbcuts and by adding a defined pedestrian environment, the center area began its transformation from crossroads to town center. This transformation continues today.

We have been privileged to work with a variety of clients. Some better known clients include Hartford Hospital, ECHN, Kohls, Big Y, a variety of national retail stores, University of Hartford, State of Connecticut, New York State Attorney General's Office, Residence Inn, Watson Pharmaceuticals, and the YMCA.

Our projects include subdivisions, townhouse development, senior housing, and affordable housing. Recently, we have worked with a variety of maturing townhouse complexes to review updates to their plantings, drainage problems and to provide designs for a general facelift.

Our commercial projects include offices, warehouse, and light industrial. Some of our projects include Forestal Center in Simsbury, Conn.; Security Insurance in Farmington, Conn.; Bloomingdale's by Mail in Cheshire, Conn.; and IntelCore Technologies in Grafton, Mass.

During the last several years, we have worked on a variety of retail projects from the Rte. 44 corridor in Simsbury/Canton/Avon, Conn. to Home Depot in Brewster, N.Y.

LADA also works for a number of municipalities. Usually these projects are recreation projects such as several town ballfield projects in the towns of Portland, Canton, Simsbury and Killingworth, Conn. We have also completed several town park projects in the town of Southeast, N.Y. including baseball fields, play structures and trails. Other town projects include streetscape design, historic preservation and memorial landscapes.

In 2008, LADA received two Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects awards. The two award winning projects are illustrative of the scope of our projects. The first was for the redesign of Central Connecticut State University. Once a commuter campus with a street down the middle, the design team changed the campus into a premier state university by creating a student focused pedestrian core. This core which links all the main buildings on campus - library, student center cafeteria and auditorium - changed the entire character of the campus. The second award was for a planning study to identify, analyze and preserve farming and farmland in the city of Middletown, Conn. This planning document offers recommendations to help farmers to remain active and to preserve farmland. The process used to understand the interests of this diverse community included workshops and surveys. This document was used to promote a \$2 million referendum for preservation of land in 2007.

Other awards include an Excellence in Library Architecture Award for Scotland Library, Scotland, Conn., an Associated Builders and Contractors Award for the UCONN Student Union and several awards from the Westchester County AIA for projects nominated by the hosted town as examples of excellence in their communities.

Looking ahead, we find that the new stormwater regulations require new thinking in order to appropriately address the issue. The principals of LADA are certified as Professionals in Erosion Control and Stormwater control (CPESC and CPSWQ). The field of landscape architecture has always led the way in green building. At LADA, we are also certified as LEED AP professionals. Our current projects include a new focus on downtown creation and infill that responds to smart growth and livable communities ideals. We are also working on medical office buildings, libraries, and tenant driven commercial buildings.

LADA is looking forward to celebrating its 30th year in business and hopes to be working with all the readers of this article in the next few years!

Terri-Ann Hahn is a principal at LADA, P.C., Simsbury, Conn.