

2016 Plan NH Merit Awards

The annual Plan NH Merit Awards Program recognizes New Hampshire projects that reflect the Mission of Plan NH, and incorporate Smart Growth and Livability principles, social responsibility, and creative approaches to collaboration and cooperation.



Honorable Mention: 3S Artspace, Portsmouth, transforms a past manufacturing site into New Hampshire’s first non-profit, multi-disciplinary art space. 3S Artspace incorporates a performance space, an art gallery and a farm-to-table restaurant. Concrete and asphalt exteriors are landscaped with native plants, sidewalks and outdoor dining, all of which provide an outdoor social area within an urban environment. Evening usage gives an after-hours vibrancy, which in turn, increases safety to this part Portsmouth’s North End and Historic District.

Jury comments: “A great adaptive re-use project, with a different approach to the “mixed-use” concept.” “The entire project involved a great deal of social collaboration.”

Owner: 3S Artspace. **Key players:** McHenry Architecture, Summit Engineering, Terrafirma Landscape Architecture and Wright-Ryan Construction.

Photo: Clear Eye Photo.



Merit Award: University Edge, Durham. Off-campus housing for UNH students is challenging. University Edge successfully provides 52 full-amenity apartments (88 beds) and also 8800 sqft of commercial space – all while maintaining the integrity of the compact, historic neighborhood where it is built. The owner chooses to preserve and restore two old buildings, resulting in a seamless flow between the old and new along the street. These considerations, along with the incorporation of trees and architectural details, maintain the integrity of “traditional Durham.”

The project is designed to encourage and support walking and bicycling to and from campus, underscored by providing only four parking spaces. Environmental integrity is supported through efforts such as rain gardens and permeable pavers.

“ ..Density by design is really about the solution to development with the least adverse effect, this project is representative of what is possible.” *(from the nomination materials)*

Jury comments: “A truly impressive example of how redevelopment in our communities should be happening.” “The functionality of this project is what stands out, and it has ‘set the bar to which everyone else must now achieve.’”

Owner: Orion Student Housing. **Key players:** Allen & Major, Fulcrum Associates, NE Earth Mechanics, Wozney Barbar & Associates, and The Dolben Company.



Honor Award: The Family Place Resource Center and Shelter, Manchester. Forty-three percent of New Hampshire’s homeless populations are families. Families in Transition (FIT) has been providing emergency, transitional and permanent housing for homeless and low-income families in Manchester, Concord and Dover for 20 years. FIT has purchased the former Manchester Community Resource Center of Lake Avenue to develop their new Center.

The Center houses 11 families, provides educational, employment and clinical services to support homeless and low-income populations within the community. FIT invites numerous partners to use the facility to provide on-site services to address the unique circumstances of each client.

The Center is accessible by foot, bicycle and by multiple bus routes to and from Manchester. The Lake Avenue side reflects the urban character of the street while the back of the building, using clapboards, reflects residential character. Donations for construction exceeded \$2 million. Today, 40 volunteers regularly provide meals and assist programs, pre-school and more. This volunteerism “highlights how this project has successfully convened Manchester residents around the issue of homelessness and engaged residents in being part of the solution.”

In the words Mayor Ted Gatsas: [This Center] is about helping people to get back on their feet and move into our society and into our community.”

Jury comments: “This is a shining star in a tough neighborhood – both in reality and metaphorically.” “FIT is not only talking about what we don’t want to talk about, they are doing something about it.”

Owner: Families in Transition. **Key players:** Great Bridge Properties; Dennis Mires, PA, The Architects; Keach-Nordstrom Associates; Sheehan, Phinney, Bass and Green; and Hutter Construction Corporation.

Photo: John Hession.

