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MUSEUM ANNOUNCES CHARLOTTE PRESERVATION CHAMPIONS
2019 Historic Preservation Awards recognize projects that preserve and protect
Charlotte's unique architectural legacy

CHARLOTTE, N.C., August 23, 2019 – The Charlotte Museum of History announced winners of its 2019 Historic Preservation Awards tonight at an event celebrating preservation in Mecklenburg County.

A panel of local architects and preservationists selected five award-winning residential, commercial and community projects, plus two honorable mentions, from among 27 nominees. All winning projects are located in Mecklenburg County.

“We were thrilled with the interest level in this year’s preservation awards,” said Adria Focht, president & CEO of The Charlotte Museum of History. “We believe this is reflective of a city with a growing passion for preserving its architectural heritage and for protecting Charlotte’s unique sense of place. We hope the Historic Preservation Awards will encourage even more preservation projects throughout Mecklenburg County, as well as sensitive integration of new construction into our existing historic environments.”

2019 Historic Preservation Award Winners

1. Excellence in Preservation Award

*A person, group or project that preserves the cultural or built heritage
of a neighborhood or community.*

Second Ward High School National Alumni Foundation and Second Ward Gym. The Second Ward High School National Alumni Foundation was established in 1980 by Dr. Mildred Baxter-Davis, Louis C. Coleman and Cecelia Jackson Wilson, all alumnae of Second Ward High School.



The City of Charlotte razed the school in the 1960s, along with most of the Brooklyn community, in the city's first wave of "urban renewal." That process displaced thousands of residents and ultimately destroyed more than 1,480 structures. The foundation is dedicated to sustaining the history of Second Ward High School and the Brooklyn community as a template for preserving Charlotte's African-American cultural heritage.

Over the last 25 years, the foundation has held annual meetings and reunions; created a number of history exhibits; saved stories and images from the school and the Brooklyn neighborhood; and shared the school's legacy through film, exhibits, oral history recordings and multi-media projects.

In 2018, the organization successfully advocated for the renovation and reuse of the circa-1949 Second Ward High School Gymnasium, all that remains of Second Ward High School. In 2008 the gymnasium was listed as a local historic landmark. In addition to its cultural significance to the Second Ward community and former Brooklyn residents, the gym is an early example of modern design in Charlotte. The restoration and renovation project was done in partnership with Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission.

Today, foundation members and former Brooklyn residents are working to help preserve Brooklyn's cultural and historical significance by participating in stakeholder meetings with the Brooklyn Village Developers and Mecklenburg County, which is developing a master plan for a new community in Second Ward where Brooklyn once stood. The foundation envisions the restoration of the neighborhood in a way that is propelled by community outreach and honors the history of the "lost" Brooklyn community.

Excellence in Preservation – Honorable Mention

NoDa Mill Homes Easements. In the early 2010s, property values in the NoDa neighborhood were soaring, making the underlying land worth far more than the small mill homes on each lot. This situation led to the loss of many of the original mill homes. Neighbors Leigh McDonald, Dale Trembl and Jennifer Cole banded together to search for a way to preserve NoDa's historic mill homes before more were lost. Because the neighborhood was resistant to seeking a historic designation,

the small but passionate group sought out other options. The group eventually discovered the non-profit Preservation North Carolina, which offers a process where individual home owners can elect to preserve their homes through voluntary preservation easements. To date, this effort has saved three 1905 mill homes in NoDa, providing an example of how preservation can happen in spite of high economic pressure and how sensitive renovations can provide livable, sustainable homes that also maintain neighborhood streetscapes. As a result of their success, there is new interest among NoDa residents who see the mill home's scale and comfortable feel as a valuable asset worth preserving.

2. Preservation Residential

Restoration of a historic residential structure.

The Greene Residence at 2601 Selwyn Ave. in Myers Park. After purchasing the property in 2008, owners Phillip and Amy Greene undertook a multi-year process to preserve and restore this 1921 Craftsman-style residence to its original glory. Phillip led the project as general contractor, and Amy provided design support, with planning assistance from architect Don Duffy. The goal was to restore the home to preserve all of its original architectural character along the popular Selwyn Avenue corridor. The result is a home that has been transformed from its prior deteriorated state into a dwelling that respects the original spirit of American foursquare architectural design, while offering the comfort and functionality of modern living.

3. Preservation Commercial

Restoration of a historic commercial structure.

Optimist Hall at 40 E. 16th St. / 1115 N. Brevard St. Charlotte-based White Point Partners and Atlanta-based Paces Properties restored the 147,000-square-foot Highland Park Manufacturing Company Mill No. 1 to its historic condition, while creating a modern space for office workers and retail patrons. Located in the Optimist Park neighborhood, this turn-of-the century textile mill building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is architecturally significant as one of Charlotte's oldest and most intact textile manufacturing plants. The developers worked with a variety of partners to transform this historic industrial space into a commercially viable development that stays true to its original design and honors its history. Partners included

Perkins&Will, Fearnbach History Services, the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, the National Park Service and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission. The finished product allows the public to see elements that epitomize late-19th and early-20th-century industrial construction, while artifacts and signage help visitors experience the story of Highland Park Mill No.1 and the importance of textiles to the history and growth of Charlotte.

4. Historic Neighborhood Infill Residential

New residential building that integrates sensitively with its historic environment.

Atomic Palm Project on Palm Avenue in the Country Club Heights neighborhood. Developer Charlie Miller of Five Points Realty built four mid-century-modern-inspired ranch homes in 2017 on a large lot that was originally developed in the 1950s with a single cottage-style home in the center. The original 70-year-old home was moved to another location on the large lot. The new homes complement the architectural period of the neighborhood, which was developed in the 1950s and 1960s. The new homes have key elements of the original mid-century-era homes in the neighborhood, including open floor plans and unique roof lines, such as the butterfly roof.

Historic Neighborhood Infill Residential – Honorable Mention

1901 Dilworth Road. Renovations to this 1924 Tudor-style cottage in Dilworth's Historic District included the addition of a new outdoor living space and a master suite, as well as renovations inside. The team at Alter Architects paid close attention to proportions and details, inside and out, to ensure the final product honored the architectural character of the original house and integrated seamlessly with the surrounding historic neighborhood. Details included carefully matching new windows to the original restored windows, ensuring the addition's roofline and stucco matched the original house, saving mature trees on the site, and restoring the original hardware and doors.

5. Historic Neighborhood Infill Commercial

New commercial building that integrates sensitively with its historic environment.

Raynor Law Office at 1822 Cleveland Ave. Built in 2016, the Raynor Law Office is on a corner lot at the edge of the Dilworth Historic District. Owners Ken and Lucy Raynor embarked on a project to

refurbish an existing historic home facing East Worthington Avenue and add a business location facing Cleveland Avenue. The project provides a unique example of historic preservation and commercial infill on a single site, striking a balance between privacy and public interaction on a busy street corner and embracing a walkable, urban lifestyle. The goal of the project was to provide a business addition that would complement the historic house and be pedestrian-friendly, with signage and landscaping that enhance the streetscape on Cleveland Ave. A new side patio provides accessibility to the business conference room, while a water fountain diffuses street noise. The project's architect, Allen L. Brooks of ALB Architecture, worked closely with the Historic Districts Commission on the design elements and with the Charlotte Zoning Department to obtain a custom zoning permit for the expanded structure, allowing it to be considered a single structure with two uses by connecting the new and old buildings with a large roofed pergola.

About the Historic Preservation Awards

Author and Mecklenburg County native Tom Mayes spoke at the awards event. Mayes is chief legal officer and general counsel for the National Trust for Historic Preservation and author of "Why Old Places Matter: How Historic Places Affect Our Identity and Well-Being." He has lectured widely on preservation public policy and historic preservation.

"Old places matter deeply to our communities, even if we sometimes struggle to put that value into words," Mayes said. "Old buildings help people flourish for many reasons, from the experience of beauty at a place like the Dilworth Historic District, to the memories people hold of the Excelsior Club, to the connection to community identity at the old churches throughout the area, such as First Presbyterian Church. Beyond those intangibles, old places support sustainability and economic growth. For all those reasons and more, preservation matters; it matters not because of the buildings themselves, but because of what they mean to people and what they can do for people."

The last Historic Preservation Awards were handed out in 2014 by Historic Charlotte, a non-profit that merged with The Charlotte Museum of History in 2016. The museum revived the awards this year to recognize outstanding preservation projects in Mecklenburg County and to encourage the community to strive for even more preservation.



About The Charlotte Museum of History

The Charlotte Museum of History engages a broad audience in the history of the Charlotte region through the stories of its people, places and events to promote dialogue and historical perspective. The museum is the steward of the Hezekiah Alexander House (ca. 1774) and home site, a site listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the oldest home in Mecklenburg County. To learn more, visit charlottemuseum.org and follow the museum on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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