

# Design: Awards celebrate stories with happy endings

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These are the kind of stories that the commission invites you to hear and celebrate at its 26th annual Awards of Excellence ceremony Tuesday night. And these, briefly, are the winners:



Urban Design Commission

This new pavilion at Brookwood Hills Community Club recalls designs of the 1920s.

## The good news about urban design

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There are many stories in the naked city, and the Urban Design Commission can tell you some hair-raising yarns. Big-box stores in little neighborhoods. Lovely old buildings decaying into decrepitude. The dreaded wrecking ball smashing history to smithereens.

But this city agency, which works for the welfare of Atlanta's historic buildings and districts, can also recite tales with happy endings. Old factories given new life as homes or offices. New buildings that respect their environment. Parking lots turned into people places.

► **The Adair Estate** — Ponce de Leon Avenue at Springdale Road. Adaptive use. Menefee and Winer Architects. One of the first residences in Druid Hills, this 1910 house was on the brink of demolition when Historic Developments bought it. Though much had to be gutted, the architects were able to save the foyer, central staircase and some of the mantels in rehabbing the building as condominiums. They renovated the carriage house and added homes and townhomes on the 3.5-acre property, taking care to retain the look of a single-family home when seen from Ponce de Leon Avenue.

► **The Parterre Garden** — At the Atlanta Botanical Garden, 1345 Piedmont Ave. Landscape design. Tunnell & Tunnell Landscape Architecture. This formal garden, centered on a fountain, links the main building and new pavilion, creating a fresh space to meander and a framework for seasonal flowers that adds much-needed space for additional plant display.

► **MidCity Lofts** — 845 Spring St. Urban design. Brock Green Architects. The architects inserted this new loft building into a context of historic buildings and new construction, using materials and forms that bridge the gap between them. Street-level retail spaces contribute to a pedestrian future.

► **Puritan Mill** — 950 Lowery Blvd. Adaptive use. Smith Dalia Architects. Built in stages between 1917 and

### URBAN DESIGN AWARDS

► The 26th annual Awards of Excellence ceremony of the Urban Design Commission. 6 p.m. Tuesday, followed by a reception. Free. Academy of Medicine, 875 W. Peachtree St., Atlanta. 404-330-6200.

1946, Puritan Mill was a wreck of a soap factory when the architects first cased the joint. Careful to leave intact as much of the "bones" as possible, they turned the buildings into a live-work community with a killer event room. With old brick walls and timber ceilings inside, and corrugated tin canopies and large windows on the exterior, the historic and the modern merge seamlessly here, marking the 12th UDC award for Smith Dalia.

► **Brookwood Hills Community Club** — 77 Wakefield Drive. New construction. Square Feet Studio. When the members of the neighborhood association decided to refurbish the buildings in its pool and park area and add an entry and picnic pavilion, they knew they wanted architecture that was compatible with their historic neighborhood, something that was comfortable rather than overly grand. Starting with a concept initiated by architect Norman Askins, Square Feet Studio developed a well-detailed design of cedar, bluestone and fieldstone that is reminiscent of traditional park structures of the 1920s.

► **Ami Restaurant, Biltmore Plaza** — Cypress and Sixth streets. Urban design. EDAW Inc. What was once a strip of parking spaces in front of Ami Restaurant is now a welcoming, shaded, neighborhood-scale plaza accommodating al fresco diners, valet parking and pedes-

trians. For continuity, EDAW used materials and street furniture found in the Biltmore's courtyard.

► **1056 N. Highland Ave.** — Contextural infill. Peter Hand & Associates. There's no need to pretend that this two-story, yellow-brick building was an original Virginia-Highland storefront. It fits right in anyway. Hand tipped his hat to the scale and proportions of nearby facades so that the building extends the flavor of this popular neighborhood without visual interruption.

► **The Stove Works** — 112 Krog St. Adaptive use. Richard L. Taylor Jr. Once a blight, the Stove Works is now a funky live-work-play extension of Inman Park. Unlike many loft renovations, with their old brick walls and timber beams, the original buildings here were characterless prefab metal boxes. To create personality, Taylor removed the walls and reinstalled them several feet inward to make balconies. He added lots of glass and depended on the craftsmanship of simple materials to give it pizzazz.

► **Talley Sweat** — Greenspace activism. Sweat, who has been active with Park Pride, the Garden Club of Georgia and the Olmsted Parks Society, is currently president of the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance, for which she has facilitated the development of a master plan, raised funds and helped manage implementation of the plan's first phase.

► **Kevin Kuharic** — Jenny Thurston Award. Kuharic serves Atlanta as restoration and landscape manager for Oakland Cemetery, but he also works nationally for the formulation and adoption of preservation policies for historic cemetery landscapes.

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