

DESIGNING the Parks



2010 Designing The Parks Awards THE RESULTS



The inaugural year for the awards was a success! There were 69 entries in five categories. Entries came from over 20 states and 5 countries.

Nine HONOR Awards and Eight MERIT Awards have been selected. During jury deliberation Historic Preservation was designated as a new category – with the jury pulling appropriate entries from Building and Site Design submissions.

No awards were given in the categories of Transportation or Design Guidelines.

HONOR AWARD for Master Plan
Brooklyn Bridge Park (New York City, New York)
Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc.

The Master Plan for Brooklyn Bridge Park will transform more than 80 acres of derelict industrial waterfront into a socially and ecologically active urban park. Responsive to the majestic beauty of New York Harbor, a mandate for greater urban sustainability, and numerous site challenges related to microclimate and urban infrastructure, the Master Plan lays the groundwork for the creation of a 1.3 mile long waterfront park that will pass underneath two historic bridges and include a series of industrial piers, each 5 acres in area. Outreach over the life of the project has included brainstorming sessions, town-hall meetings, model workshops, on-site presentations, a project storefront, anticipatory signage, stakeholder review sessions, and a frequently updated project website.



Comments from the jury:
“The images worked well with the narrative and described the thought process around every piece of the project. (The entry) is compelling in its ability to communicate the intentions.”

“The floating piers are a skillful reverence to place.”

MERIT AWARD for Master Plan

Parklands of Floyds Fork (Louisville, KY)

Wallace Roberts & Todd

The Floyds Fork Greenway Master Plan establishes the general design direction for over 3,200 acres of permanently protected park land on the eastern edge of Louisville, KY. The complex landscape that evolved from hardwood forest to clear cut farmland will gradually be transformed to a sustainable mosaic of habitats, balancing habitat value, recreational use and aesthetics. Recognizing the need for urban recreation, the park is large enough to function both as nature preserve and leisure destination for the growing population.



MERIT AWARD for Master Plan
Minute Man National Historical Park (MA)
Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype, Inc.

This multi-phased project created a 5.5 mile interpretive path where the cultural and historical resources of the area, focused around the events of the April 18, 1775 battle, could safely be interpreted by visitors. The trail spans three towns linking historic houses, farms, forests and wetlands and interprets aspects of life in Colonial times, including agriculture, architecture, historical crafts and skills and cultural issues. Automobiles were removed from the trail, opening it up for pedestrians and bicyclists. The result is that farming fields, orchards, and pastures augmented with stone walls, and historic split rail fencing are closer to their original 1775 appearance than any time since.



MERIT AWARD for Master Plan
Flight 93 National Memorial (PA)

Paul Murdoch Architects and Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects

The flight 93 National Memorial is a 2200 acre national memorial that commemorates the actions of the passengers and crew of Flight 93 by transforming the site, formerly a coal mine, into a designed memorial landscape that enhances the topography and physical features of the site for expressive power. It focuses the visitors' attention on the crash site and presents a variety of open space experiences developed through a master plan to be implemented over several phases.



HONOR AWARD for Site Design
Waterfront Bunkaza Cultural Plaza (Osaka, Japan)
Ryuichi Ashizawa Architects & Associates

Aqua Metropolis Osaka was used as an opportunity to understand and rethink the relationship between people and nature. It was conceived as a reaction to escalating degradation of the environment and the belief that architectural design has the potential to change the human attitude towards how buildings and sites can be designed to consume minimal resources.

Comments from the Jury: “The Osaka waterfront park is a delightful combination of culturally valued urban park uses not common to our own daily sensibilities. Imagining how park designers here at home might reflect on recreation needs in our emerging culturally diverse national demographic creates opportunity for continued relevance to how we may recreate in the future.”



HONOR AWARD for Site Design

Teardrop Park (New York, NY)

Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc.

Teardrop Park, a 1.8 acre public park in lower Manhattan, celebrates play and inspires reverence for place by nurturing tactile engagement, adventure, and a sense of sanctuary. Rather than replicating play equipment found in nearby playgrounds, Teardrop adds depth to the neighborhood's play programming. Multiple features, including the small marsh and the steps leading up to the long slide, encourage interaction with natural landscape materials while others, like the rocky reading perch, the ice wall, and the rolling lawn, create engaging spaces for people of all ages. Based on decades of research into urban soils and non-toxic plant and lawn maintenance, the park's design includes fully organic soils and maintenance regimes that don't rely on pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides. Gray-water from adjacent buildings and runoff from the site is captured in an underground storage pipe, accommodating all of the park's irrigations needs.



Comments from the jury:

“(This park) has the ability to transport people to another place outside of daily life.”

“Landscapes are supposed to take you away – and this one does.”

“You imagine that this is a place where memories are made.”

MERIT AWARD for Site Design

Concrete Plant Park, Bronx River Greenway (Bronx, NY)

City of New York

A capstone project for the development of the Bronx River Greenway, Concrete Plant Park once housed a concrete batch mix plant located on the western bank of the industrial southern section of the Bronx River. In close partnership with community organizations and public agencies, the Parks Department and the Bronx River Alliance began the revitalization of this formerly abandoned site through re-establishing salt marshes on the riverbank once strewn with trash and tires, as well as reintroducing the public to the site through organizing community festivals and leading hundreds of residents out on the Bronx river to canoe and kayak.



MERIT AWARD for Site Design

Santa Fe Railyard Park (Santa Fe, NM)

Frederic Schwartz Architects, Ken Smith Landscape Architects and Mary Miss, artist

The Railyard Park, a great initiative of the Trust for Public Land, will activate the last remaining large-scale (13 acre) parcel of public land in downtown Santa Fe. The park and plaza, with the surrounding cultural and commercial facilities, form a new public precinct connecting diverse neighborhoods previously separated by this industrial site. The collection, storage and distribution of water allow the park to flourish as a public oasis in this drought stricken region. Gabion walls and water catchment features are used throughout the design. This site shows a regenerating of its own history.



MERIT AWARD for Site Design

Hudson River Park, Tribeca Section (New York, NY)

Mathews Nielsen

Hudson River Park (HRP) transforms five miles of waterfront on New York's west side into a magnificent park. Many of the program components were identified in community outreach sessions during the master plan phase. Special factors include achieving a balance between active and passive recreation; creating multiple experiences within an 80 foot-wide linear space; designing with the HRP-wide palette of materials (lights, esplanade paving, railings) while infusing a neighborhood identity; and ensuring that each of the three phases of construction would result in a meaningful experience for park visitors.



MERIT AWARD for Site Design

Annenberg Community Beach House (Santa Monica, CA)

Mia Lehrer and Associates

Once the location of the Marion Davies and William Randolph Hearst's seaside estate, this State Park creates a public space in the midst of very expensive private properties. An extensive public input process re-envisioned the role of these historic properties as an important community gathering place. Design goals included: 1) Preserve the history of the site 2) Create a community-oriented destination; 3) Provide public recreational activities; 4) Increase public access to the beach; 5) Create a range of year-round uses for diverse groups; 6) Link to the regional open space network. The site is a series of indoor/outdoor recreation and event space, both formal and informal.



MERIT AWARD for Site Design

Eielson Visitor Center, Denali NP (Denali NP, Alaska)

Denali National Park and Preserve

Eielson Visitor Center was designed to showcase the natural setting and physical environment, the architecture stepping aside. It is an earth-sheltered building set into a bluff, dominated by a rooftop viewing plaza and panorama of the Alaska Range. The building exemplifies sustainability as exhibited by its LEED Platinum rating. The siting of the center along with the positioning of rock and walls embodies reverence of place and creates a building expression reminiscent of a rock outcropping rather than an intrusion on the land.



HONOR AWARD for Building Design

Pocono Environmental Education Center Multipurpose Space, (Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area)

Bohlin Cywinski Jackson

The building has been designed to reflect the shared environmental stewardship ideals of the National Park Service and the Pocono Environmental Education Center. Through careful siting and orientation, thorough research, selection of materials, analysis and design of building systems, the facility is focused on the principles of sustainable design. The building itself is a teaching tool. The great south facing shed takes advantage of the warmth of the sun, cool mountain breezes, abundant natural light and view of the forest. The north facade is clad in shingles manufactured from old, discarded tires reclaimed from the site.



Comments from the jury:

“ (The building) is very much in harmony with the setting. It has a new sensibility as we embrace sustainability and recycling in a beautiful façade expression.”



HONOR AWARD for Building Design

Liberty Bell Center, Independence National Historical Park (Philadelphia, PA)

Bohlin Cywinski Jackson

Inside, the visitor's experience unfolds along an undulating granite wall that modulates crowd flow. Interactive, informative exhibits present the bell's history and significance. Outside, the building forms a narrow edge of brick, stone and glass that resonates with Philadelphia's 18th and 19th century architecture, while offering visitors an open, contemporary, humanly scaled gathering place. Minimal southern exposure and reduced western fenestration minimize summer heat gain. Trellises shade large mall windows, diffusing daylight inside the building. Sunlight-controlling vanes shelter the bell chamber. Brick and granite were obtained from sources within 500 miles of the site and low-VOC materials were used throughout.

Comments from the jury:

The building exhibits a "masterful siting of the bell in the relationship to the tower where it once hung."

"Clever design in terms of how it suggests how people move by creating the free flowing wall. The crescendo is the final view of the louver system that protects the bell from light while allowing visitors to view it (from outside) even when the building is closed."



HONOR AWARD for Preservation

Blue Ball Barn, Alapocas Run State Park (Wilmington, DE)

Wallace Roberts & Todd

This restoration, adaptive re-use and addition breaks new ground in application of contemporary green energy conservation and ventilation principles to a historic structure. Integrating the best of preservation and green design technology, the project shows how history can retain both integrity and relevance. The renovation preserves the best of the historic structure while adding a clearly identifiable contemporary wing. It is a “simple but clearly modern addition that is reverent to the historic barn.”

Comments from the jury:

“The massing and location of the addition completes the barn by creating a courtyard space. It is strategically and elegantly placed.”



HONOR AWARD for Preservation
Chapultepec Park (Mexico City, Mexico)
Grupo de Diseño Urbano S.C. / Mario Schjetnan

There is evidence of Chapultepec Park since the 1460's when emperor Montezuma designed pleasure gardens there. Encompassing hundreds of acres, the park suffered from persistent decay in its gardens, forests, infrastructure, services, water quality and uncontrolled street vendors. Impetuous for restoration started with a citizen's group and half of the money for restoration was collected from citizens and corporations. The resulting stunning restoration worked with street vendors to help reduce trash and added new elements that remain respectful of (renovated) historic elements.

Comments from the jury:

“Very much a civic grass roots effort to restore this park.”

“It is an astounding transformation.”

“New elements were added that are respectful to the character of the historic.”



HONOR AWARD for Preservation

Cavallo Point Lodge, Golden Gate National Park (San Francisco, CA)

Architectural Resource Group and Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects / Office of Cheryl Barton

Historic Fort Baker has been transformed into Cavallo Point Lodge and the Institute of the Golden Gate, to sustainably restore and enhance the historic army base as a new 350-acre destination in Golden Gate National Park. The project incorporates extensive historic preservation, protects and restores natural habitat areas, and makes use of sustainable strategies. New buildings reutilize previously developed sites to minimize site disturbance and are designed to visually blend into the hillside. The most dramatic transformation was the restoration of the coastal scrub habitat with genetic natives-58,000 plants propagated from seed harvested on the Cavallo Point site. Site water consumption for irrigation was reduced by over 50% and stormwater was managed with permeable pavement and dispersed infiltration zones.

Comments from the jury:

“The landscape is wonderfully done. The plants were chosen for sustainability – yet it is lush and expensive looking.”

