

WM | AIA

NEWSLETTER



SANDERSON PLACE
SUNDERLAND MASSACHUSETTS
AUSTIN DESIGN COOPERATIVE, INC

FALL
2022

UMass BRUT RECEIVES 2022
MODERNISM IN AMERICA AWARD



Docomomo US has announced the twelve recipients of the 2022 Modernism in America Awards; projects that highlight the best in preservation practice by today’s architects, designers, preservation professionals and advocates.

This year’s awards recognize preservation efforts ranging from the transformation of large-scale projects into beacons of sustainability to modest home revitalizations, many of which have been years, or even decades, in the making. The results are a testament to the dedication and foresight of those who recognize the value of preserving our modern heritage for everyone.

UMassBRUT, a multidisciplinary campaign led by a collection of faculty, students, staff, and administrators from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, is attempting to reshape perceptions of Brutalist architecture in order to advocate for the conservation and renovation of these historic and internationally significant buildings. by spreading awareness among the campuses and local communities about the architectural value and history of the iconic buildings that fill these environments. Designed by prolific architects such as Kevin Roche, Marcel Breuer, and Paul Rudolph, among others, the UMA and UMD campuses feature stunning examples of Brutalist design, and UMassBRUT wants to spread awareness and affection for these buildings through outreach and events. Hosting tours, including a GIS-based virtual tour, as well as symposiums and unique art exhibitions, UMassBRUT is working to ensure that these structures will be fully appreciated by generations of students and community members to come.

The UMassBRUT campaign stood out in the Inventory/Survey category for its all-hands-on-deck approach to rallying large educational institutions around better stewardship of their modern resources. Following a two-day symposium, they have made great strides in educating and warming their community towards Brutalism.

“This effort is an exemplary and responsible stewardship of a massive educational site. We know the rhetoric they are dealing with – Brutalism is ugly – but they leaned into it and made a case for why it is important. It elevates Brutalism to a new height where it can be recognized for its contribution to 20th century architecture.”

Angel Ayón AIA, LEED AP, NCARB, NOMA, 2022 Jury member



UMassBRUT
Documentation Award of Excellence | | 2022

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The WMAIA Newsletter is published four times a year. It is circulated to all members, advertisers and subscribers.

Please direct all newsletter correspondence to Rachael Chase, at editor@wmaia.org.

Articles, photos, notices of events and other information are welcome.

Opinions expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the WMAIA.

The Editor reserves the right to reject or revise material as space and subjective opinion permit.

Cover photo: Austin Design Cooperative, Inc

Cover story: See Anatomy of a Housing Project

UMassBRUT: COMING UP OCTOBER 29th
A PROJECTION ART & MUSIC EXPERIENCE



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ANATOMY OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

SANDERSON PLACE - 120 NORTH MAIN STREET SUNDERLAND MA

THE TOWN

Lorin Starr, Chair, 120 North Main Street Committee

Concerned with the lack of affordable housing options for seniors, Sunderland’s Selectboard, Housing Committee and Community Preservation Committee (CPC) searched for a solution to this vexing problem. The fact is that small towns have few tools to direct development and Sunderland had no intention of owning or operating such housing. Then the property at 120 North Main Street became available.... was this the opportunity we had been waiting for?

The town took the chance and approved the purchase of the property with CPA funds¹ at a Town Meeting in 2014. The 120 North Main Street Committee was appointed, and our work began.

We approached this as a “Friendly 40b” project. 40b enables local Zoning Boards of Appeals to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules (typically allowing the ZBA to set aside local zoning laws for density and overall maximum size) if at least 20-25% of the units have long-term affordability. In a “Friendly 40b,” the town and developer work together to shape the development. Our goal was to issue an RFP for development. To get there we need to complete both a Site Feasibility Study and a Market Study. The Site Feasibility Study was completed by the Berkshire Design Group (Northampton MA) and the Market Study was prepared by LDS Group LLC (Newton, MA)².

The site was both ideal and profoundly challenging. North Main Street has a historic streetscape: a wide linear green, sidewalks set back under the canopy of mature trees (including the famed Buttonball) and a steady rhythm of houses. At 120 North Main the 3.9-acre, L-shaped parcel of land fronts the east side of North Main Street within walking distance of Town Hall, the public library, Riverside Park, small grocery stores, and many of the restaurants in town. Notably, it is also accessible by public transportation on the PVTa’s Sunderland-South Amherst route as well as the FRTA’s Sunderland-Greenfield route.

The challenges included considerably more extensive wetlands than had been anticipated. The Committee assessed community concerns including the historic significance of the existing house to the streetscape and the importance of development that was in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.

The Berkshire Design Group offered a dozen or more designs. Ultimately, we decided to condense the project into a larger multi-story building with a smaller overall footprint on the site.

We insisted on the preservation of the existing house, which we knew was difficult both financially and in terms of management and operations. And, we required that all the units be affordable

The final report prepared by LDS, “Supply and Demand for 120 North Main Street, Sunderland MA,” included background information on the town and the existing housing stock, rental rates, cost burden etc. Not surprisingly, the report validated the need for affordable senior housing in Sunderland but the final analysis of development costs for the proposed plan suggested that the financial feasibility of the project was marginal.

So, with considerable trepidation we released an RFP for design and development prepared by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)³. On January 13, 2017, we went up to the FRCOG offices in Greenfield to see if, after more than two years of work on the project, we had received any proposals.



ANATOMY OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

SANDERSON PLACE - 120 NORTH MAIN STREET SUNDERLAND MA

THE DEVELOPER

Gina Govoni, Rural Development, Inc.

Laura Baker, Valley Community Development

At that moment, I (Laura Baker) waited anxiously at the FRCOG offices with the large box of proposals for the “bid opening” to see if there were any competing proposers. As I had anticipated, there were none.

Earlier, at the site visit for interested proposers, I was the only representative from an affordable housing developer. Other attendees were private developers and builders who were only interested in undertaking the development with a non-profit partner. Realizing that there would potentially be no bidders, my organization (Valley Community Development based in Northampton) reached out to our Franklin County counterpart, Rural Development, Inc. (RDI). At that point in time, RDI did not have staff capacity to develop the property. However, through their relationship with the Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority, was in an excellent position to sponsor this project, and to manage affordable senior housing located in Sunderland. In short order, RDI and Valley agreed work together, with Valley providing Project Management and RDI serving as the end owner and property manager.

The primary challenge we faced was one of scale. The Town’s RFP sought 18 units of senior housing. We deemed this scale of development financially

infeasible (and it was also the likely reason for lack of other proposers). RDI worked with local architect, Austin Design, to stay true to the 120 North Main Street Committee’s visual concept for the property while boosting the number of housing units. By stretching the building’s footprint, adding dormers to accommodate “attic” units, making each unit smaller, and building an addition to the existing antique farmhouse, we reached a unit count of 34 apartments, a financially feasible scale for development and for property management. This larger scale was proposed to the Town, and they accepted. (Final development size is 33 apartments—30 one-bedrooms and 3 two-bedrooms.)

The balance of the pre-development phase included challenges typical to affordable housing development, including environmental and historic concerns, abutter appeals, and the need to raise funds from a multiplicity of local, state, and private sources.

The construction phase, as is true for many recent projects, has been a slog through molasses due to material scarcity and supply chain disruption. We are grateful for the intrepid work of the General Contractor, Marois Construction, who capably steered the ship through this very difficult time in the construction sector.

Recent marketing for tenants was met with great excitement from area seniors eager to move into attractive, affordable, and accessible housing while continuing to live in the beautiful, rural town of Sunderland.

Site Plan showing the historic house on North Main Street, the main building to the rear, and the extent of the wetlands. (Bershire Design Group Inc, Civil Engineering and Landscape Design)



ANATOMY OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

SANDERSON PLACE - 120 NORTH MAIN STREET SUNDERLAND MA

THE ARCHITECT

Tom Chalmers AIA, Austin Design Cooperative, Inc.

When we joined the team, the challenges had already been identified and the basic form and siting of the building suggested. The proposal responded to a number of severe site restraints, but also to a few opportunities that would enhance the experience of residents soon to occupy the site.

The historic street frontage pattern called out to be maintained, and the existing village house renovated to maintain the low density and historic character of Main Street. The shape of the remainder of the lot with its narrow center portion and wetlands covering half of the rear section required that most of the units be massed together in a compact multistory building placed at distance from the street but not too far to the rear to protect the meadow wetland. This meadow and wetland in turn became the overriding feature that drove the configuration of the building.

The existing village house absorbed significant design and construction resources to enable it to support one residence consistent with today's standards. The front porch and entry maintain its relation to the street, but a sloped and covered walk was added to make the unit wheelchair accessible. On the exterior, while historic detailing was retained, deteriorated siding was removed and a weather barrier, insulation and new low maintenance siding installed. New windows and a new roof were installed. The interior was gutted, and new insulation, finishes, and efficient heat pump systems were fit to the existing frame. Existing rear storage and outbuildings were removed and a two-unit addition, scaled to be respectful to the front house was added.



The restored farmhouse on North Main Street, with addition to the rear and Mount Sugarloaf beyond

The route from house to apartment building passes along a drive delicately broken up with tree islands and groupings of parking. While configured to minimize the perceived area of pavement, the tree-lined drive supports both a pedestrian sidewalk, car traffic, parking and access for emergency and support vehicles. Beneath the pavement is an extensive stormwater catchment system that controls the volume and velocity of runoff before it enters the wetland. Above are views of the main building, meadows, and fields. As one turns and leaves the site, the house anchors the entrance, with Mount Sugarloaf overhead in the distance.

The barn red apartment building rises and stretches out in an ell shape, forming a courtyard and tower at their intersection - a focal point for the main entrance. Passing into a vestibule and then the lobby, there are glimpses through to the other side before the room opens up to a vaulted ceilinged common room and deck overlooking the meadow and fields beyond.

Lot lines, wetlands, and the desire to reduce massing to an acceptable scale restricted the buildable area and created spatial challenges, specifically: unit design and size; the number and size of community function space; and the space available for plumbing, mechanical, electrical, solar PV, and life safety systems that are a necessary part of all construction projects. Despite that, the development houses 33 units, including three fully accessible and two adaptable units, a community room, meeting room, exercise room, two laundries and an office.

Marois Construction, their subcontractors, and RDI with Valley CDC were able to overcome unprecedented price and supply crises to build a highly energy efficient shell with sophisticated support systems and nicely finished interiors that will provide a welcoming home for seniors for years to come.



ANATOMY OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

SANDERSON PLACE - 120 NORTH MAIN STREET SUNDERLAND MA

THE CONCLUSION

Lorin Starr, Chair, 120 North Main Street Committee

Sunderland could not be more pleased with the outcome of the development of Sanderson Place. In addition to providing long-sought affordable senior housing, this project is an enhancement to our village center. As I look back on this 8+ year process I can offer a few insights:

- Navigating the complexities of municipal project like this can be daunting. One of the best pieces of advice I've received is simply this: Do the next thing
- Have a great committee – and that doesn't mean just enthusiasts – healthy skepticism on your committee will result in a better project. We had great expertise in construction, design, real estate, town administration and, most critically, three abutters.
- Affordable housing is not inexpensive; it is dependent on a delicate balance of financing, incentives, and subsidies.

• Be lucky enough to get a great team. Austin Design, RDI, Valley Development and the Franklin County Housing Authority were gracious partners who included the town's 120 North Main Street Committee through design, permitting and construction.

• Have patience – you'll need it!



Funders for Sanderson Place: MA Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD); Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC); MA Affordable Housing Trust Fund; Charlesbank Homes Foundation; Town of Sunderland CPA; Greenfield Savings Bank; Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC); Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston Affordable Housing Program (FHLBB-AHP)

1 Under the Community Preservation Act, a municipality's CPC recommends spending (a combination of local (real estate transaction) and state funds) for the purpose of Open Space, Affordable Housing, Historic Preservation and Recreation. In this case funds were borrowed and repaid with CPA funds.

2 The Site Feasibility Study and Market Studies were funded with a CDBG grant.

3 A Planning Assistance toward Housing (PATH) Grant for Technical Assistance funded working with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments to Develop the RFP for the Procurement of Design/Development Services

STEPHEN SCHREIBER FAIA ELECTED
NAAB PRESIDENT FOR 2023-2024



Stephen Schreiber FAIA, founding chair of the UMass Amherst Department of Architecture, has been elected president of the National Architecture Accrediting Board (NAAB). He will serve as president-elect in 2022-23, as president in 2023-24, and as past president in 2024-25. Schreiber was first elected to the board in 2021 as a director.

The NAAB is the only accrediting body for professional architecture programs in the U.S. An NAAB accredited degree normally meets the minimum education requirement for architect licensure in the U.S. and is also recognized for licensure in Canada and in numerous other countries through international accords. The NAAB recently adopted new conditions and procedures in collaboration with the American Institute of Architects, the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ASCA), the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, the American Institute of Architecture Students and the National Organization of Minority Architects. During his three years as an officer, Schreiber hopes the NAAB will focus on issues of diversity and equity, public health and climate change crises, globalization, and the value of higher education.

Schreiber has been involved in architecture program accreditation for many years, including founding chair (originally director) of the Department of Architecture at UMass Amherst — the first public NAAB architecture program in New England. Schreiber also served on the executive committee of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) from 2004-07 (including a year as president) and as a director of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards from 2017-20. He is one of the few architects to serve as president of both ACSA and NAAB, the two principal organizations of architectural education in the country. He has been honored as a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and as Distinguished Professor of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, and is a member of the WMAIA Board.

CONGRATULATIONS STEVE!

CARYN BRAUSE FAIA WINS
BSA WOMEN IN DESIGN AWARD



CONGRATULATIONS to Caryn Brause FAIA, who has been recognized by the Boston Society of Architects (BSA) with its prestigious 2022 Women in Design Award of Excellence. Each year the award is presented to select women in the design community who have built their lives around design, whose work exemplifies the best of process and product, and who use their positions of achievement to give back to the world of design and the community at large. The BSA is recognizing just two women this year with the remarkable honor.

Caryn is Associate Professor in the Department of Architecture at UMass Amherst. In addition to teaching, she is the principal of SITELAB Architecture + Design. The practice is a laboratory for investigating the broad context of the “site” through client-driven projects, theoretical investigations, and community collaborations. Through her many activities, Caryn connects the academy and the profession, and she works to translate research into practice domains. Her current research projects examine the relationship between higher education built environments and student learning and development. She is author of The Designer’s Field Guide to Collaboration (First Prize, 2017 BTES Book Award). Her applied professional practice course, Voices from the Field: From Design Concept to Reality, was recognized with a 2016 AIA/ACSA Practice + Leadership Award and a 2013 NCARB Award for the Integration of Practice and Education. Professor Brause’s leadership and service to the discipline include co-founding and serving as inaugural Design Editor for the journal of Technology | Architecture + Design, service on the AIA Higher Education Advisory Team (HEAT) and the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) Education and Awards Committees, as well as on the Board of Directors for the WMAIA chapter.

The 2022 Women in Design Awards will be presented at the BSA at a Happy Hour celebration on October 28th at 5:00 pm.

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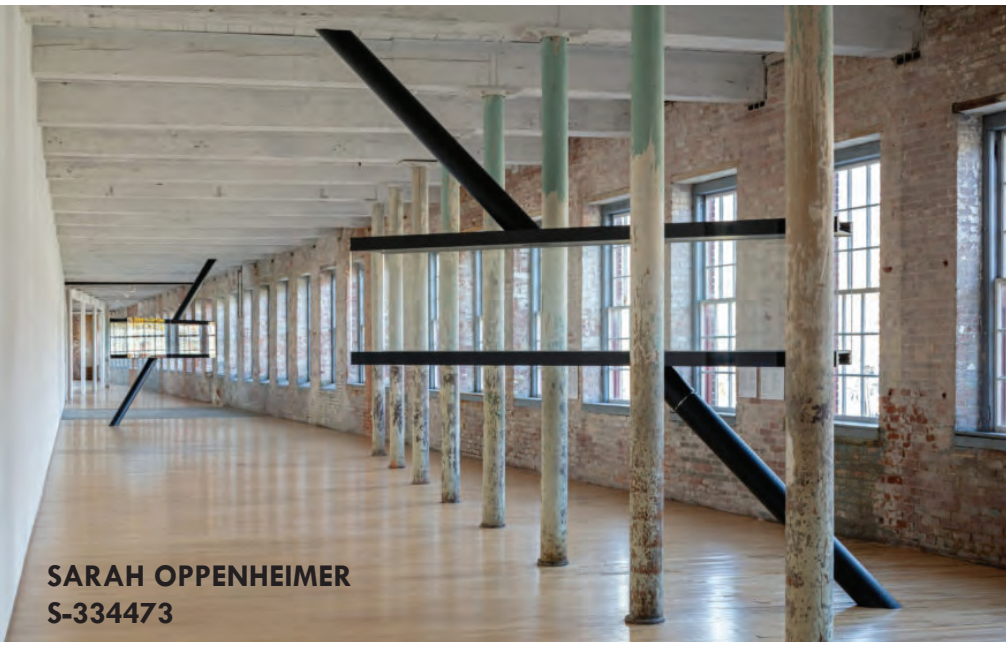
THINGS TO DO + SEE
IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

MASS MoCA

Sarah Oppenheimer creates precise instruments for manipulating our built environment—altering our frame of spatial reference, displacing our experience of inside and out, and inverting our sense of what is near and far, here and there.

S-334473 performs as a dynamic spatial switch: two instruments work in tandem to reorient the exchange of sight and circulation within Building 6. A visitor's touch sets the work in motion, pivoting volumes of glass and metal along a 45-degree axis through a defined arc.

When vertically oriented, each instrument nestles between the buildings' historic columns. Once rotated, the volumes slip out of alignment and become horizontal reflecting screens. The arcing movement from vertical column to horizontal lintel creates unexpected thresholds and pathways.




SARAH OPPENHEIMER
S-334473

While manipulating the instruments' contours and orientation, visitors walk beneath and around their outermost edges. Sightlines are redirected through the building's interior spaces, towards the north-facing windows and onto the Hoosic River and mountains beyond.

AMY HAUFT
700,000:1 | TERRA + LUNA + SOL

Amy Hauff creates installations that reorient our experience of the landscape and of planetary living. Hauff's exhibition at MASS MoCA will make visitors palpably aware of their relationship to the curve of the earth and our distance from the moon.




Oppenheimer's S-334473 mobilizes the museum's architecture in order to transform and extend the visitor's understanding of the exhibition spaces it reveals, and disrupts. In the process, artwork and viewer become joined in an intricate choreography of the inhabited environment.

THE
CLARK

TOMM EL-SAIEH
IMAGINARY CITY

The large-format, abstract paintings of Tomm El-Saieh teem with dense and dynamic marks that evoke ornament, language, and architecture. By variously layering and erasing his linework, and using vibrant color to optically push or pull his pictures, El-Saieh creates rhythmic, all-over compositions from which larger forms appear to emerge—testing both the limits of our perception and our expectations about abstraction.



9

10



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AIA MASSACHUSETTS UPDATE

With the Legislature on break, AIA MA 2022 Board of Directors took advantage of the recent Board meeting to focus on an internal fiscal management policy review and on-going efforts on two current Board initiatives.

On the issue of fiscal management, AIA MA has updated its fiscal policies to align with AIA national's recommendation that chapters maintain financial reserves of no less than 45% of annual operating expenses and no more than 100% of operating expenses. The intent of this policy is to insure chapter financial stability and encourage chapter use of funds on policy and program goals. Being in consistently sound condition, the AIA MA President's Council recommended the adoption of these goals and a goal of obligating one half of our reserves whenever reserves exceed 70% of annual operations.

The 2022 AIA MA Board is currently doing a deep dive into the law governing local historic commissions with an aim of lobbying to strengthen local historic commission powers. AIA MA has hired Noble, Wickersham and Heart to assist in this review and drafting effort.

AIA MA successfully advocated for Chapter 179, SECTION 8 of the 2022 Session Act in the last session. This amendment to Ch. 179 orders an interagency study of existing school buildings to establish a clearer understanding of current K12 school building energy use and health impacts. President-Elect Dorrie Brooks AIA of Jones Whitsett Architects and Dr. Erika Eitland of Perkins and Will led the effort working with Senator Comerford and Rep. Mindy Domb. AIA MA is now supporting Dr. Eitland's efforts to draft a white paper to assist DESE, MSBA, DPHS and DOER in the implementation phase.

Finally, the Board has begun the process of reviewing the next session's legislative priorities and continues to offer updates to architects on the details of the new Stretch Code, Municipal Opt in code and anticipated 10th Edition base code.

If you have legislative priorities you would like the Board to address, please reach out directly to your chapter representatives: Marc Sternick AIA, Ludmilla Pavlova-Gillham AIA or Dorrie Brooks AIA.

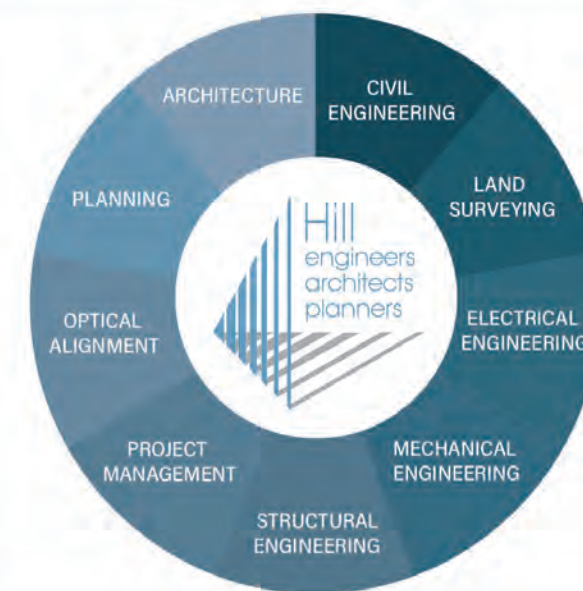
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BEFORE + AFTER : 330 COLE AVENUE

DIETZ & CO ARCHITECTS WILLIAMSTOWN MA

The 330 Cole Avenue project dynamically transformed a long abandoned riverside manufacturing site in Western Massachusetts, where large segments of the original multi-building complex had deteriorated to the point of collapse, into a stunning end product of family friendly and energy efficient affordable housing units.

Situated alongside the Hoosic River in Williamstown MA, the lone remaining existing building shell, surrounded by partially demolished foundations and remnants of long neglected parking areas, was a decades long reminder of how even the most charming Berkshire communities have complex problems to overcome regarding existing building stock enrichment and how to reinvigorate blighted locations to best serve the current needs of the population.

Through many years of hard work and coordination, the Town of Williamstown, Berkshire Housing Development Corporation, Dietz & Company Architects, Hesnor Engineering, Spring Line Design, Guntlow & Associates, and Allegrone Construction exhaustively reviewed the remaining existing structure and site in order to create a remarkable new environment that maximizes the natural beauty of the immediately adjacent river which is flanked by gently rolling hills.

From that original barren concrete shell, the design team created a mill building inspired and energy efficient residential unit centerpiece which accentuates the concrete and mass timber superstructure through inventive approaches to space planning, unit room layout, and detailing. The design allows the residents to experience the interior concrete and timber support members by means of unique expression through lighting and framing elements. The main building, now affectionately known as 'The Cube', has a blend of 1-bedroom units, 2-bedroom units, barrier free units, and CBH accessible units.

It is grounded by an entry level Community Room gathering space that opens out to the center of the elongated parcel. Flanking the renovated mill centerpiece are three additional townhouse structures that, although different in massing and construction typology, share similar material and design cues as well as the energy efficiency standards the design and development team prioritized throughout. The revitalized site is now home to 41 units of housing that are both environmentally responsible and community nurturing.

The 330 Cole Ave project has proven that through a singular vision, a team of talented people can bring new life and vitality to a community in need.



Photography credits:
Cube Before; Cube During – Dietz & Company Architects
Final Cole; Community Room Cole Ave – Peter Brown Photography

BEFORE + AFTER : 330 COLE AVENUE

DIETZ & CO ARCHITECTS WILLIAMSTOWN MA



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WMAIA COMMUNITY NEWS FALL 2022

FILM SERIES

Tuesday October 25 | 6:30 PM | Zoom | 1.5 LU requested

Breuer's Bohemia

Tuesday November 8 | 6:30 PM | Zoom | 1.5 LU requested

Architecture of Infinity

BCT PROGRAMS

Monday, November 7 | 4:00-5:15 | Zoom 1 HSW

Carbon Drawdown Now: Turning Buildings into Carbon Sinks with Bio-Based Materials

Jacob Deva Racusin, Director of Building Science and Sustainability, NewFramework

Monday, December 5 | 4:00-5:15 | Zoom 1 LU

Utilizing Design and Construction Frameworks to Design and Build Software

Mark Harrison, Product Manager, Trimble Inc.

SAVE THE DATE:

Wednesday December 14 | 5:00 PM | Olver Design Building UMass

WMAIA Annual Meeting and WMAIA / BSLA Western Mass Section Design Awards