

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 28, 2024

For additional information contact:  
Tiffany Tononi McNamara  
Executive Director, Plan NH  
(603) 452-PLAN  
tiffany@plannh.org

## **Plan NH Announces 2024 Merit Awards of Excellence**

### **Plan NH Merit Awards of Excellence**

On June 26, 2024, Plan NH announced the 2024 Merit Awards of Excellence winners:

- *Brick Market - Portsmouth, NH*
- *Capitol Shopping Center - Concord, NH*
- *Mill Girl Stair Improvements Project - Manchester, NH*
- *Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter - Nashua, NH*
- *The Livery - Sunapee, NH*

Merit Award winners represent outstanding projects that incorporate good planning, design, and/or development and have had a positive impact on their respective communities. Each year, a distinguished jury of industry professionals reviews each nomination and determines those that are truly outstanding and deserving of recognition. The 2024 winners were announced at the Plan NH Awards Evening on June 26 at The Hotel Concord alongside the Plan NH 2024 Scholarship & Fellowship recipients.

The 2024 Awardees will join a long list of outstanding projects including the following 2023 Merit Awards of Excellence Awardees: Berlin Riverwalk, located in Berlin, NH; Harmony Place, located in Durham, NH; Makers Mill, a Community Makerspace & Vocation Hub, located in Wolfeboro, NH; Pope Memorial Library Addition & Renovations, located in North Conway, NH; Ruth Lewin Griffin Place, located in Portsmouth, NH; and Rethinking Pleasant Street, located in Claremont, NH.

#### **1) Brick Market - Merit Award of Excellence**

By transforming a private surface-parking lot and four adjacent buildings into a multi-building development that features ground level hospitality spaces, such as a street-level public food market, ample office space office, and two underground parking levels, Brick Market is a mixed-use project that has revitalized a key area of downtown Portsmouth. Other site features include flower and sculpture-filled walkways leading to pocket plazas and a central courtyard with plentiful seating for music and cultural events. By drawing visitors through its pathways and inviting them to explore the central spaces, this project has created an impressive pedestrian experience as well as much needed connectivity from Market Square to the adjacent streets - none of which could have been possible without the owner and project team working diligently to close two alleyways to vehicular traffic and bury all power lines.

*Brick Market (cont.)*

The innovative site plan executed by the project team creates a unique sense of place and enlivens the streetscape. The distinctive contemporary building design of 60 Penhallow is noteworthy. This design incorporates entry vessels resembling a ship’s hull at the front and back corners while the three existing buildings have been restored back to their former glory. With this bold addition, the marketplace now stands as a blend of old and new, honoring the community’s history while providing a vibrant, engaging experience for visitors - celebrating tradition while embracing innovation and progress. In addition to standout design, the project team had ambitious goals around inclusion, accessibility, and sustainability. Women-led design teams played a significant role in shaping the project, accessibility provisions were made for individuals with mobility challenges, and energy-efficient systems, green spaces, and rooftop decks were incorporated to enhance environmental and community well-being.

**Project Name, Location, and Completion Date**

Official Project Name: Brick Market

Project Location: Portsmouth, NH

Completion Date: June 2023

**Owner**

Name: McNabb Properties (*owner contact Mark McNabb*)

Address: 3 Pleasant Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801

Phone: (603) 427-0725

Email: house@mcnabbgroup.com

**Key Team Members**

Mark Moeller	JSA Design	Design Principal
Richard Martz	JSA Design	Project Manager
Erin Doody	JSA Design	Job Captain
John Chagnon	Ambit Engineering - Haley Ward	Civil Engineer
Jeff Nawrocki	JSN Associates	Structural Engineer
Robbie Woodburn	Woodburn & Company	Landscape Architect
Harry Wetherbee	GSI	Geotech
Thomas Cutler	Bensonwood	Timber Frame Engineer
Paul Leveille	Resilient Buildings Group	Sustainability

**Jury Comments**

- This is a great example of urban infill and demonstrates all the criteria for Positive Community impact.
- The social component of the project is exceptional; another prime example of walkable, open space creation, and infill/redevelopment.
- Restoration of an existing building and revitalization of a parking lot is commendable.
- Mindful design to build new, but still maintain open space and access.
- Bravo for including opportunities to highlight art in this community space!
- The incorporation of mixed use space, meandering walkways, and public seating provides retail and gathering space while promoting walkability in Portsmouth's historic downtown... something every community needs!

## 2) **Capitol Shopping Center** - *Merit Award of Excellence*

Transforming an outdated, underutilized urban shopping plaza and parking lot in downtown Concord into a vibrant urban streetscape, the Capitol Shopping Center has added new restaurant and retail space, outdoor gathering areas, and an accessible pedestrian connection to the downtown area where there previously was none. What was once a sea of rarely used parking now provides pedestrian and vehicular access to three new buildings that house a 110 Grill, Playa Bowl, Starbucks, Xfinity, and T-Mobile location. The landscaping, walkways and ramps, outdoor patios, and store frontages on both Storrs Street and the parking lot, mark the biggest change to this shopping area in decades - a change that can be enjoyed by locals and visitors alike.

The project team worked closely with the City of Concord to ensure that this project met the vision laid out in the master plan for the Storrs Street area, and created the least amount of disturbance possible for the existing tenants that needed to stay open and active during construction. From extensive civil and geotechnical engineering to creative architecture and landscape architecture solutions, the team was able to implement creative solutions to challenging topography, incorporate important green infrastructure components, and tackle unforeseen conditions related to the parking lot subsurface which was also the site of the former Concord rail yard. Thanks to this project, the Storrs Street Plaza is no longer considered just an overflow parking lot for downtown businesses, but rather a great enhancement of the vibrant and active downtown area - attracting new businesses and new jobs, and setting a positive precedent for future development along this historic corridor!

### **Project Name, Location, and Completion Date**

Project Name: Capitol Shopping Center

Project Location: Concord, NH

Completion Date: May 2023

### **Owner**

Name: Brixmor Property Group (*owner contact Marc Newman*)

Address: 450 Lexington Ave, Floor 13, New York, NY 10017

Phone: (646) 344-8667

Email: marc.newman@brixmor.com

### **Key Team Members**

Marc Newman	Brixmor Property Group	Owner/Vice President
Morgan Dunson	Nobis Group	Project Engineer
Chris Nadeau	Nobis Group	Senior Project Manager
Fred Storckton	JJ Welch	Site Supervisor
Chris Cashman	JJ Welch	Project Manager
Sam Durfee	formerly with the City of Concord	Senior Planner
Jose Lovell	formerly with the City of Concord	Engineer
Scott Sykes	City of Concord	Technician II
Dan Mullen	Richard D. Bartlett & Associates	Surveyor
Shawn Laug	Create Architects	Project Architect

*Capitol Shopping Center (cont.)*

**Jury Comments**

- Great use of an underutilized parking lot for development of new businesses; creates more attraction to draw people off of Main Street and down to Storrs Street.
- Very good accessibility and access for pedestrians and vehicles; walkable expansion to downtown.
- Great coordination with the City of Concord; the project team did a wonderful job of executing an in-fill project consistent with the City's vision with the potential to be replicated along the Storrs Street corridor.
- The environmental aspects of the site were significantly improved, including updates with bio features, stormwater management, and other green features.
- High marks for altering an existing condition in a positive way; this project creates a streetscape with accessible businesses that cater to pedestrians as well as cars.

**3) Mill Girl Stair Improvements Project - Merit Award of Excellence**

Located between two prominent historic mill buildings, the improvements and renovations to the existing Mill Girl Stairs area represent a revitalized focal point and public space that increases pedestrian accessibility, safety, and connectivity between downtown Manchester and the lower Millyard area. The Mill Girl statue has been a cultural landmark in Manchester since 1988 when it was first installed to commemorate the thousands of women who worked in Manchester's historic textile mills. However, over the years the stairs had greatly deteriorated and the area was not enjoyed like it once had been. This project rightfully uplifted the Mill Girl history while modernizing the area with ADA accessible ramps, important lighting features, public seating, and a new concrete pad for vendors to set up near the monument.

The project team worked closely with each other and the original sculptor to carefully refurbish the area and highlight its rich history more prominently than ever before, focusing on increased safety through all aspects of the project. Improved stormwater management and new LED lighting ensure that use of the project area can be maximized throughout the year. In addition, the lighting scenes are programmed to display dynamic color combinations in celebration of holidays and other special events, greatly enhancing the atmosphere of this public space. By transforming the Mill Girl Stairs into a destination where people can gather, grab a bite to eat, read a book, or learn more about the Millyard, this project contributes to an increasingly thriving and walkable urban center with improved leisure and wellbeing options for all community members to enjoy.

**Project Name, Location, and Completion Date**

Official Project Name: Mill Girl Stair Improvements Project

Project Location: Manchester, NH

Completion Date: January 2024

**Owner**

Name: City of Manchester (*owner contact Owen Friend-Gray*)

Address: 475 Valley Street, Manchester, NH 03103

*Mill Girl Stair Improvements Project (cont.)*

Phone: (603) 624-6444  
Email: [ofriend@manchesternh.gov](mailto:ofriend@manchesternh.gov)

**Key Team Members**

Owen Friend-Gray	City of Manchester	Deputy Public Works Director
Matthew Low	Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc.	Client Manager
Marisa DiBiasco	Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc.	Project Manager
Aaron Lachance	Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc.	Senior Structural Engineer
Emily Belisle	Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc.	Civil Engineer
Joel Vendt	Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc.	Senior Designer
Steve Hebsch	formerly of Lavallee Brensinger Architects	Architect
Antoinette Schultze	Antoinette Prien Schultze	Mill Girl Sculptor
Lenny Edmunds	Yeaton Associates, Inc.	Electrical Engineer
Mike Ploof	Fieldstone Land Consultants	Surveyor

**Jury Comments**

- Great improvement and renovation of a much needed community focal point; improved access and safety between downtown and the lower millyard area.
- Connection for pedestrians between downtown/millyard, including space for vendors and access that didn't previously exist for ADA!
- Improved access to a statue that commemorates the important history of the area.
- Accessibility, art, and incorporation of the food truck pad all support the wider community.
- This project removes a pedestrian barrier and provides improved open space and connectivity; it is a great example of urban infill and demonstrates all the criteria for Positive Community impact.
- Significant collaboration between Manchester Connects, the design team, the City of Manchester, local business entities, and the public.

**4) Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter - Merit Award of Excellence**

From a chance encounter in 2017 where then Executive Director Mike Reinke approached Father Kerper of St. Patrick Parish about using a vacant school as storage for their most popular program, "Backpacks for Back to School," a bold vision for the future began to take shape for Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter. Fast forward to today, and the former Sacred Heart Elementary School, originally constructed in 1892 and largely vacant since the mid-1970s, is now a new emergency homeless shelter and resource center serving Greater Nashua area individuals and families.

After an extensive capital campaign that secured \$9.5 million from individual donors, private foundations, and state and local governments, responsible rehabilitation and construction of the four-story, 20,000 square-foot, 91-bed facility eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, began in 2021. This project required strong collaboration from the entire project team who tackled challenges such as remediation of lead paint and asbestos, reuse and rehabilitation of historical wainscoting, woodwork, stamped metal ceilings and wood doors and transoms throughout the

*Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter (cont.)*

building, and bringing this historic building up to modern life safety and building codes.

The property now consists of multiple independent living spaces throughout, including a first floor 18-bed single men’s shelter; a second floor, 14-bed single women’s shelter; a third floor 48-bed family shelter; and a fourth-floor supported housing space comprised of ten studio apartments and one 1-bedroom apartment (ADA compliant) for permanent supportive housing. Additional spaces throughout include areas for social and educational programming, meeting space, administrative offices, a play area for children whose parents are receiving services, and the creation of an 18-bed outdoor community garden space in partnership with Grow Nashua. As stated in the nomination materials, this project is “a humbling example of how bettering our built environment can be achieved by bringing people of all walks of life together in an uplifting and encouraging way that dignifies the human experience.”

**Project Name, Location, and Completion Date**

Official Project Name: Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter

Project Location: Nashua, NH

Completion Date: February 2023

**Owner**

Name: Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter (*owner contact Jane Goodman*)

Address: 35 Spring Street, Nashua, NH 03060

Phone: (603) 889-7770 x1120

Email: jgoodman@nsks.org

**Key Team Members**

Jane Goodman	Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter	Executive Director
Jonathan Halle	Warrenstreet Architects, Inc.	Principal Architect
Cory Bouchard	Warrenstreet Architects, Inc.	Architectural Designer
Barrett Salta	Bonnette, Page, & Stone Corp.	Contractor
Paul Sbacchi	TFMoran, Inc.	Structural Engineer
Richard Parks	WV Engineering Associates	MEP Engineer

**Jury Comments**

- Impressive transformation of this historic building; shows a strong commitment to the community and environment.
- A food pantry and shelter housed in one facility is a game changer for the community.
- The ability to negotiate a \$1/year lease ensures this resource will be there for decades!
- This project positively impacts the homeless community and hits all the categories for community impact; the incorporation of family housing is not commonly available and is sorely needed.
- Outstanding collaboration and overall community teamwork between the Diocese of Manchester, City of Nashua, Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter, and many others to make this project a reality.

## 5) The Livery - Merit Award of Excellence

The renovation and repurposing of this historic structure - the last surviving commercial structure from Sunapee's steamboat era - centered Sunapee's cultural and architectural heritage to create a space for performances, art shows, classes, and community events. Owned and managed by the Sunapee Heritage Alliance, the space is also available for rent and has been utilized for meetings and celebrations such as weddings and baby showers. Originally a carriage house and horse stable to serve the needs of the adjacent hotel, this project demonstrates the versatility and viability of historic renovations as multi-use gathering places for locals and visitors alike.

When the project team originally took on this project, The Livery had structurally deteriorated to the point of nearly being demolished. In addition, its location on the Sugar River and close proximity to the harbor area is noteworthy in that this property could have easily been sold for high end housing rather than preserved for the wider community benefit. The project team worked tirelessly to stabilize, refurbish, and repurpose the former stable into a multi-level cultural, arts, and event space open to all. While the space was modernized for public use, it maintains its historic look and feel, including the preservation of the indoor circular horse ramp that was once used to move horses from street level to the horse stalls below. This project is a wonderful example of preserving historic integrity of a structure while maximizing functionality and the Sunapee Heritage Alliance continues to explore new opportunities and ways to utilize the facility for the good of the community.

### **Project Name, Location, and Completion Date**

Official Project Name: The Livery

Project Location: Sunapee, NH

Completion Date: November 2021

### **Owner**

Name: Sunapee Heritage Alliance (*owner contact Mike Durfor*)

Address: 58 Main Street, P.O. Box 72, Sunapee, NH 03782

Phone: (603) 568-9563

Email: mdurfor@gmail.com

### **Key Team Members**

Mike Durfor	Sunapee Heritage Alliance	Board of Directors Vice Chair
Tim Schall	Schall Engineering	Structural Engineer
Frank Lemay	Milestone Construction	Construction Manager
Patrick Clapp	Sunapee Harbor Riverway	Board of Directors President
Harold Lavalley	LaValley Building Supply	Owner
Shaun Carroll	Carroll Concrete	Owner

### **Jury Comments**

- Great example of bringing back a historic building to serve as a community gathering space for events of various sorts, including the arts; close to the town center and harbor where everything happens.
- Renovation of a site that is open to all and volunteer-run; this is a project with high social value.
- Revitalized community space with high impact; preservation of a historic site that might have otherwise been demolished.

*The Livery (cont.)*

- This project checks every box!
- It's wonderful to see prime real estate be preserved and maintained for the wider community good; the volunteer effort to run a facility like this is astonishing.
- Clearly a very collaborative process to preserve the building and find a viable re-use that benefits the entire town.

**Plan NH Scholarship & Fellowship Program**

The Plan NH Scholarship and Fellowship Program recognizes and honors outstanding students who call New Hampshire home and who are studying a field that supports the Plan NH mission to *foster excellence in planning, design and/or development of New Hampshire's built environment*. These students truly represent the future of design, architecture, engineering, and construction in the Granite State.

This year, the Plan NH Scholarship & Fellowship Committee, in partnership with the NH Charitable Foundation, awarded a total of \$23,000 to the following scholarship and fellowship recipients:

**2024 Alfred T. Granger Student Art Trust Fund Recipients**

Alexandra Avakova	Fine Arts/Ocean Sciences	University of New Hampshire
Lilly Cassiano	Architecture/Construction Mgmt	Roger Williams University
Hunter Haht-Acres	Architecture	Roger Williams University
Suprina Kabadkar	Illustration/Art	Rochester Institute of Technology
Emily Swift	Graphic Arts/Fine Arts	Keene State College
Mallory Taylor	Graphic Design	Suffolk University
Makenzie Waterman	Communications/Graphic Design	Stonehill College

**2024 Paul and Ann Harvey Scholarship Fund Recipients**

Kei Kan	Architecture/Emerging Technologies	Wentworth Institute of Technology
---------	------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

**2024 Plan New Hampshire Fellowship Fund Recipient**

Siobhan Day	Environmental Science	Belmont University
-------------	-----------------------	--------------------

These students were acknowledged alongside the Merit Awards of Excellence winners during the Plan NH Awards Evening on June 26, 2024. If you or your company are interested in contributing to the Plan NH Fellowship Fund, we encourage you to contact us at 603-452-PLAN, or email: [tiffany@plannh.org](mailto:tiffany@plannh.org).

*Special thank you to The Hotel Concord, NHSaves, Bangor Savings Bank, HEB Engineers, Nathan Wechsler & Company, Stibler Associates, and Harvey Construction for sponsoring the 2024 Plan NH Awards Evening.*

###

Plan NH is a non-profit organization of planners, designers, builders, and other members across New Hampshire that share a vision to improve and preserve the state's communities. Since 1989, Plan NH's mission has been to foster excellence in planning, design, and development of New Hampshire's built environment.