

Chestertown planning commissioners give out 'best design' awards



Photo by Charlie Campbell

Daniel Saunders' law offices, at 110 Cross St., was designed by Abraham Petro. It received the "small commercial" award.



Photo by Charlie Campbell

Radcliffe Mill, at 870 High St., designed by Torchio Architects, received the "large commercial" award.



Photo by Charlie Campbell

The house at 106 Cannon St., designed by Edward W. Dunning Associates Architects, was built by Wilson Taylor Builders and received the "residential" award.

By Peter Heck
Staff writer

CHESTERTOWN — The Chestertown planning commission's "best design" award winners have been announced.

Planning commission Chairman Jim Gatto, who came up with the idea of awarding outstanding local examples of design, said that he saw them as a way to point out projects that "got it right," in the commission's opinion. Gatto originally proposed awards in three categories: small commercial, large commercial, and residential properties.

Commissioner Gil Watson, who compiled the list of nominees, suggested adding a fourth, institutional, and the rest of the planning panel agreed. The vote for the awards took place at the beginning of the Jan. 23 meeting. It had been postponed a week to allow the commissioners to view all the nominees.

The commission's choices:

- Residential: Marc and Robert Bennett, 106 Cannon St. This residential property was designed by Edward W. Dunning Associates Architects. It was built by Wilson Taylor Builders, and completed in March 2007.

- Small Commercial: Daniel Saunders law offices, 110 Cross St. The architect was Abraham Petro. The building was completed in fall 2006.

- Small Commercial: The Stacy Richardson office building at 332 Cannon St. Designed by Torchio Architects in the form of a Victorian house, it was completed in January 2006.

- Large Commercial: Radcliffe Mill, 870 High St. The former grain mill was restored and redesigned by Radcliffe Corporate Services and Torchio Architects Inc. in Centreville. Construction was completed in May 2007.

- Institutional: Roy Kirby Jr. Stadium, Washington College. The college's main lacrosse stadium seats 1,500 and features a 140-person capacity press and multi-purpose skybox room. It was designed by Spillman Farmer Architects, and built by Warfel Construction of Lancaster, Pa. Construction was completed in August 2006.

The initial awards recognize projects completed in 2006 and 2007. According to the commis-

sion's published criteria, the honored buildings "exhibit outstanding design elements that contribute aesthetically to the community at large as well as to the buildings' immediate surroundings." The commission also suggested that its choices would "where appropriate, reflect Chestertown's historic past."

The awards, which Gatto said he hopes will become an annual affair, are meant to encourage excellence in design. Not all categories will necessarily be recognized every year, and there may be multiple honorees in a category if the commissioners feel that several properties qualify. Only completed projects are eligible.

Commissioner Paul Showalter suggested making a photographic record of the winners to maintain an ongoing file of projects that have met the commission's highest standards. Gatto said the idea was worth pursuing.



Photo by Charlie Campbell

The Stacy Richardson office building at 332 Cannon St., designed by Torchio Architects, received the "small commercial" award.



Photo by Charlie Campbell

The Roy Kirby Jr. Stadium at Washington College, designed by Spillman Farmer Architects, received the "institutional" award.

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