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VIKA Tackles Complex Environmental Challenges and Contributes to Design Excellence Award

Partnering with VIKA Means Engaging Collaboration, Smart Planning and Design Excellence

Germantown, MD – October 23, 2015 – VIKA’s proactive role in the Somerset Pool and Bath House (SPBH) project helps attain Jury Citation Design Excellence Award. The Montgomery County Planning Department (MCPD) announced yesterday this prestigious recognition during its first Annual Design Excellence Award gala at the Silver Spring Civic Building.

In this project, VIKA partnered with McInturff Architects and county stakeholders to provide planning expertise, permitting management and civil engineering services.

“The Design Excellence Award is intended to inspire architecture, landscape architecture and urban design of the best possible quality in Montgomery County,” says Gwen Wright, MCPD Director. “Design excellence is becoming increasingly important as the amount of available land for development is shrinking,” says Wright.

The winning projects portray exceptional design and contribute to the community in terms of character, identity and economic value. The jury was impressed by the SPBH design decisions and the way in which the building shapes the sense of community.

“This sensitive design of a community facility addresses landscape, architecture and excellent place-making within the context of adaptive re-use,” said the jurors.

The main challenge of the SPBH project was its location in Little Falls Branch stream buffer—an environmentally sensitive area. The proximity of the creek resulted in complex permitting and stormwater planning for the site.

It was clear from the very beginning that the town members were environmentally concerned about renovating this 40-year-old structure. Approval from the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission

was the most important step the town needed to accomplish in order to make any improvements to the bathhouse.

“VIKA contributed to the success of this project by teaming up with town representatives, the Architect and other team members to work through local, county, state and federal regulations for the planning, engineering and permitting,” says Jason Evans, VIKA Associate. “We helped steer the project through the intricate and continually evolving regulations and laws of different agencies.”

VIKA designed wetlands and bioretention facilities to help reduce the direct discharge into the adjacent stream while improving water quality in the area.

“During the process, we helped guide the design and led coordination between multiple agencies to minimize impacts on the stream and forest,” says Evans. “I’m pleased to be part of the design team who worked on such a unique and successful project.”

To offer feedback, get more information on VIKA’s green design and civil engineering expertise, or looking to partner with a trusted client visit www.vika.com or call 301.916.4100.

About VIKA

VIKA has the knowledge and capacity of a large firm, but provides personal and hands-on service of a small firm. With offices in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, DC, VIKA provides unmatched engineering, planning, landscape architecture, surveying and 3D laser scanning services. VIKA’s multi-disciplinary team delights clients with an innovative approach based on more than three decades of project and agency experience. For additional information, visit our website www.vika.com or call 301.916.4100.

About Montgomery County Planning Department’s Design Excellence Award

Established by the Montgomery County Planning Department, this annual award seeks to recognize exceptional work in architecture, landscape architecture and urban design that improves the neighborhood’s physical, ecological and social context. Projects eligible for the award include both private and public structures and settings located within Montgomery County that were built within the past 10 years and are currently occupied and in use. For more information, visit www.montgomeryplanning.org/planning/design-excellence, or call 301-495-4583.

About McInturff Architects

McInturff Architects, an eight-person firm in Bethesda, MD, has an orientation toward small highly-crafted contemporary design for residential, commercial, and small institutional projects. It offers architectural and interior design services. For more information, visit www.mcinturffarchitects.com, or call 301-229-3705.

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