

Eye on Evanston: Thoughts on Design | Design Evanston's 2024 Design Awards

by Jack Weiss, Design Evanston October 6th, 2024

In August 2023 I wrote about Design Evanston's long history, dating back to 1981, of hosting Design Awards. At the organization's 35-year celebration in 2015, founder Bob Teska said: "One of the key objectives identified [at its founding in 1980] and still applicable to Design Evanston today was to 'enhance public awareness of the commitment to good design.'"

After a long hiatus, partly due to COVID, Design Evanston hosted its 2024 awards on Friday, Oct. 4 at Double Clutch Brewing. Thirty-nine awards were announced to a gathering of 120 award winners, Design Evanston members and guests, breaking all records for both number of awards and attendance figures in the organization's 44-year history.

At the event, Design Evanston President Laura Saviano said: "Design Evanston identifies significant aesthetic and functional improvements in the Evanston community and recognizes them with our Design Evanston Awards. The awards are presented to the owners responsible for the design excellence of projects in the context of our unique community."

Three jurors were selected by the Design Evanston board to review over 60 award nominations that were submitted:

- **Laurie Marston**, a fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners, spent 23 years as a consultant teaming with a variety of planning firms on larger projects and doing smaller projects solo. She worked for 22 years as a professional planner for several suburbs in the Chicago metro area.
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- **Carol Neiger** founded NeigerDesign in 1989. For more than 30 years she and her team have provided integrated branding and marketing strategy to the firm's clients.
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- **Edward Torrez** is a member of the American Institute of Architects with a LEED advanced professional credential (the U.S. Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system focuses on sustainability and resource-efficiency). He is a principal at Bauer Latoza Studio Ltd. in Chicago and has been specializing in historic preservation/rehabilitation, interior renovation and urban design projects throughout the United States.

I asked each juror to describe their two favorite award-winning projects. Their comments and a corresponding photograph follow:

New Construction/Addition – Lodge Evanston



Lodge Evanston, at Church Street and Oak Avenue. Credit: Campbell Coyle

Laurie Marston: “Rather than demolishing the old church and building new, the existing building was retained and an addition with a dramatic black standing seam metal exterior was built. The project incorporates several green building features. The design includes not only bi-level and tri-level units providing unique layouts, but also includes three ADA-accessible units.”

Rehabilitation/Renovation – The Varsity



The Varsity, 1706-10 Sherman Ave. Credit: The Varsity LLC

Laurie Marston: “This building had been vacant for so long, it appeared on Landmarks Illinois List of Most Endangered Places. The mixed-use renovation includes a variety of apartments, from studio to three-bedroom, as well as first floor retail space. The renovated historic structure now offers apartments with all the amenities of living in the heart of downtown Evanston.”

New Construction/Addition – Karoll ADU



Karoll ADU, behind 827-833 Foster St. Credit: Studio Talo

Carol Neiger: “Although not the largest project we reviewed, the ADU movement is important, and I fully support the philosophy behind it. I’m particularly impressed by how this design makes excellent use of a tiny space. The narrow strip of windows in the soffit allows natural light to flow in, creating a brighter, more open feel.”

Interior Design – Bookends & Beginnings



Bookends & Beginnings, 1620 Orrington Ave. Credit: Nina Barrett

Carol Neiger: “The interior designer, muralists and contractors did an outstanding job in preserving that sense of warmth and creating a space filled with memory and character. The balance of light and dark throughout the space adds to the welcoming and serene ambiance, making it a truly delightful place to explore.”

New Construction/Mixed Use – Evanston Gateway



Evanston Gateway, 100 Chicago Ave. Credit: Level Architecture

Ed Torrez: “This 27-unit apartment building project has really made a positive impact on the community; economically, urbanistically and architecturally. It embraces and celebrates the urban setting that surrounds it.”

New Construction/Single Family – Evanston’s First Passive House



Passive House, 1210 Maple Ave. Credit: Nate Kipnis

Evanston’s First

Ed Torrez: “I love how this home aligns with the heights of the neighbors’ porches, respecting its context and character. The new materials of stucco and siding used on the front façade were

inspired by the neighborhood's material palette. Great to hear that its completion date was on Earth Day 2024!"

Here is the complete list of 2024 Design Evanston Awards in 12 categories that were presented Friday night:

25 Year Award: 840 Michigan Condominiums, Optima Inc. and Shand Morahan Corporate Headquarters, Murphy Jahn/Jahn.

New Construction/Mixed Use: Evanston Gateway, Harrington Brown/LG and Albion Evanston, Albion Residential.

New Construction/Multi-Family: Ann Rainey Apartments, Evergreen Real Estate Services & Center for Jewish Elderly and triplex(1), 1310 Hartrey LLC.

Rehabilitation/Renovation/Single Family: Amen Residence, Jonathan & Mary Amen, and Cohen Residence, Kim & Jeff Cohen.

New Construction/Addition: Historic ADU, C. Epting and S. Haverkamp; Karoll ADU, Sara & Albert Karoll; Lodge Evanston, Church & Oak LLC; Mudd Hall Science and Engineering Library and Laboratories, Northwestern University; and YWCA Evanston/North Shore Expansion, YWCA Evanston/North Shore.

New Construction: Kellogg Global Hub, Northwestern University; Robert Crown Community Center, City of Evanston; Ryan Fieldhouse & Walter Athletics Center, Northwestern University; and Schapiro Hall, Northwestern University.

New Construction/Single Family: Greenwood Residence, Woodhouse Tinucci Architects, and Evanston's First Passive House, Margaret Stender.

Rehabilitation/Renovation: 1229 Emerson | Mount Moriah Masonic Temple, DMAC Architecture & Interiors; 2119 Maple Farmhouse & ADU, Londinium Properties LLC; Double Clutch Brewing Company, Nine Seas Investments LLC; Fisher/Rosenthal Residence, Jason & Julie Fisher Rosenthal; Howard Street Theater/Theo, City of Evanston; The Black House, Northwestern University; The Varsity, The Varsity LLC.

Experiential Design: FirstRepair National Resource Center for State & Local Reparations, FirstRepair; Mack's Bike & Goods, Kelly & Sam Mack; Sauna Club, Ryan Cohler; The Black House, Northwestern University.

Interior Design/Merchandising: Bookends & Beginnings, Nina Barrett; Joe & the Juice, Jim Hennessey; Lefty's Righteous Bagels, Brad Nadborne; Mensch's Deli, Jack DeMar, Eric Kogan & Kiki Eliopolous; Pink & Tan, Maggie Peng & Noah Sheldon; Third Coast Pediatric Dentistry, Jason Glick; UL Research Institutes and UL Standards & Engagement, UL Research Institutes.

Landscape Design: Evanston Skate Park, City of Evanston.

Merchandising: Maison Du Prince Boutique, Ramsey Prince.

Even before the nights' successful event ended, nominations for the next Design Evanston Awards were coming into the organization. If *Evanston RoundTable* readers see new projects — from late 2024 and forward — that they feel deserve recognition, send nominations to: comms@designevanston.org.

Design Evanston's "Eye on Evanston" articles focus on Evanston's design history and advocate for good design in our city. Visit designevanston.org to learn more about the organization.

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