

2015 Community Improvement Awards

Huntingdon County Chamber of Commerce
Huntingdon County Planning Commission

March 2016

Award Promotes Excellence in Development

The Huntingdon County Chamber of Commerce and Huntingdon County Planning Commission are proud to announce the winners of the eleventh annual Community Improvement Awards.

The Planning Commission and the Chamber jointly reviewed the nominees, with the final selection being made by the Planning Commission. Sponsor for the Awards is Kish Bank.

The Award categories are Community Spirit, New Construction, Preservation and Special Merit. New Construction includes any type of new construction of buildings of all types. Preservation includes the restoration, preservation and/or rehabilitation of buildings of all types to retain historic character. Community Spirit includes the recognition of individuals and organizations that have made a significant contribution to Huntingdon County in the field of community development. A Special Merit Award may be made for projects, persons or groups that demonstrate outstanding achievement on their own merits.

While nominations were open for all categories, no applications were received in the New Construction category for 2015.

The principles of sustainable development include:

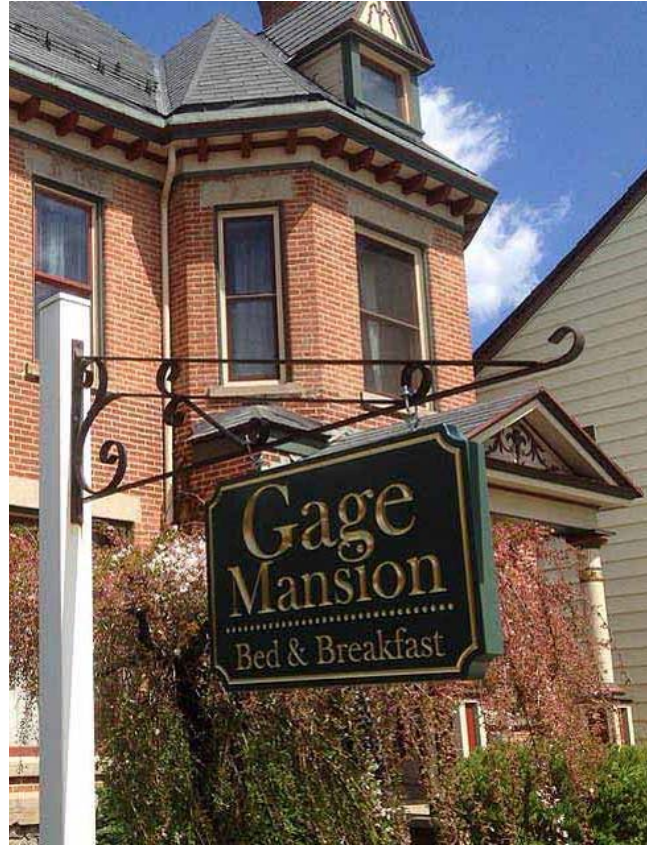
- ⇒ Creating walkable neighborhoods;
- ⇒ Directing development toward existing communities;
- ⇒ Creating housing choices;
- ⇒ Providing transportation choices;

- ⇒ Encouraging a mixture of land uses; and
- ⇒ Preserving open space, farmland and environmentally sensitive areas.

Community Improvement Awards are based on both the visual and the environmental impact of the project. Nominations were judged on how the project:

- Enhances the attractiveness of Huntingdon County;
- Is compatible with the site area and environment;
- Shows creativity/innovation in design and use of materials;
- Enhances the quality of life, including job creation; and
- Exhibits the principle of sustainability.





Preservation Award

GAGE MANSION, PENN STREET, HUNTINGDON, PA

After being vacant for over a year, the Gage Mansion was purchased by John and Angie Thompson and reopened as a bed & breakfast and event venue. Before the Mansion was opened to the public, renovations were made to the 5,800 square foot Mansion, the 1,400 square foot Carriage House, and the overgrown perennial garden.

During construction, the apartment above the Carriage House was improved; the first floor of the Carriage House was gutted, and fire safety features were added. The Carriage House floor plan was reconfigured to provide the following improvements: private access to the apartment, a new handicapped accessible doorway for guests from the parking lot and to the courtyard, an ADA compliant powder room, and an open flex space with gallery style lighting for meetings, events, and exhibitions. Improvements to the Mansion included the addition of six full bathrooms, individual heating and cooling units for each suite, a new roof on half of the house, and thorough cleaning and redecorating to reflect the historic character of the property.

New construction materials in the style and quality of materials in the original structure were utilized. Examples include the marble tile in the new bathrooms and the new roofing material. The same type of marble found in the original bathroom counter tops and drip trays was used in the flooring and shower surrounds of the new bathrooms; and the new roofing mimics the original slate shingles, but is made from recycled tires. In addition to retaining the historic character of the building, energy efficient heating and cooling units were installed in each suite.

These improvements enhance the streetscape, affect the longevity of the buildings, and positively impact the economic vitality of the community.

The rehabilitation of the Gage Mansion embodies this Award by enhancing the attractiveness of Huntingdon County while maintaining the historic detail of the building and exhibiting the principle of sustainability.

GAGE MANSION, HUNTINGDON, PA

CARRIAGE HOUSE ACCESSIBILITY



A window was removed from the corner of the Carriage House to create a handicapped accessible entrance from the parking lot.



BATHROOM REFINISHING

Intricate bathroom woodwork, covered with several coats of paint, was stripped, stained and sealed to complement the finishes throughout the Mansion.



LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS



Planting grass alleviated run-off and drainage issues in the Courtyard.



Tidy grass and flower beds created easy-to-navigate spaces.

Community Spirit Award

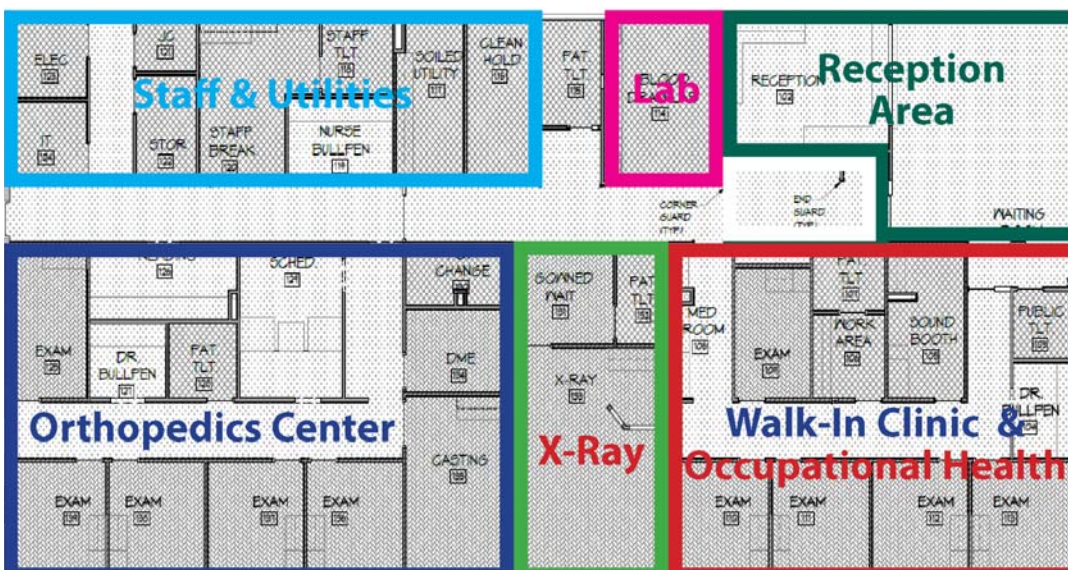
J.C. BLAIR CONVENIENT CARE CENTER,
HUNTINGDON, PA

This project re-purposed a 6,200 square foot vacant building space in the Raystown Shopping Center into a walk-in medical center. Colorful signage clearly identifies the Center. Flooring, walls, ceiling, exam rooms, bathrooms, lab and x-ray facilities are all new and equipped with new equipment and furnishings.

The Convenient Care Center is open 7 days a week and employs nearly 40 people, from medical assistants to orthopedic surgeons. The Center includes ten patient exam rooms, a blood draw lab, X-ray facilities, physician offices and a nursing station. Nearly 30,000 patients have utilized this facility since it opened on May 19, 2015.

This Convenient Care Center, the first and only service of its kind in Huntingdon County, has exceeded all projections for use, indicating the need for such a service in our community. This facility meets the triple aim of improving access, quality, and affordability of healthcare for all residents of Huntingdon County.

Creation of the Convenient Care Center embodies this Award, filling a need in the community by improving access to healthcare for everyone and by contributing to economic development growth in the County.



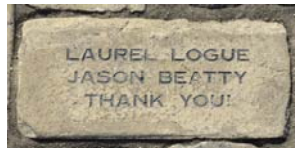
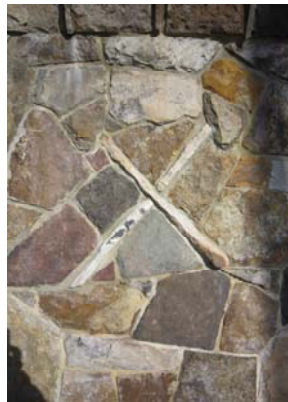
Special Merit Award

FIRST RESPONDERS MONUMENT, HUNTINGDON, PA



The First Responders Monument is located on Penn Street, at the entrance to Huntingdon Borough, near the Gateway Garden. The intent of this project was to "Save the Bell", referring to the 1797 bell that is the first fire responder notification to volunteer fire fighters in the Borough.

The Bell was placed on the first fire station on Washington Street and was moved to the Mifflin Street location when the fire company moved. In 2012, the Mifflin Street building was sold and the bell had to be removed. The Fire Company agreed to allow a project to "Save the Bell." During this same time period, the historic brick Bryan Street entrance to J.C. Blair Hospital was being redone. These Bryan Street bricks were saved for future use in the Borough.



Huntingdon Borough Mayor Brown met with local stone mason Ken Evans to design the monument. The bell now sits atop a four-sided stone monument, and designs on the sides, carved out of stone, represent tools used to fight fires. The top four corners of the monument hold American Flags. A Time Capsule was placed inside the Monument with current date information and paraphernalia. Surrounding all four sides of the Monument is a brick layout and walkway made of Bryan Street bricks. These bricks have been purchased in recognition of past firefighters and responders. Names on the bricks indicate who sponsored the bricks and who is being recognized.

Originally, the monument was to be a fireman's monument, but the Huntingdon Regional Fire and Rescue requested that it be called a First Responders monument in recognition of all those who respond to emergency calls in Huntingdon Borough - the 911 Center, Police, Ambulance and Volunteer Fire Fighters. The Monument now recognizes a portion of Huntingdon Borough history and the many years of volunteer service provided by residents.

The Frank P. Hommon American Legion Post #24 provided all of the funding for this project.

Huntingdon Borough recognized the importance of preserving history, and the First Responders Monument embodies this Award by preserving history and honoring all emergency responders.



Photo courtesy of April Feagley, *The Daily News*

Community Improvement Awards

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