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Advocacy Site Tour Presentation in Chester, VT

WINTER 2025-2026 NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

EMILY LEWIS, ASLA
VTASLA CHAPTER PRESIDENT

Winter 2025/2026 - President's Message

For the majority of my career, I've had to explain landscape architecture to most people I encounter– family members, clients, even coworkers – and nearly every landscape architect I know has had to do the same. In college, our student society even made shirts that said "No, I Won't Mow Your Yard." This is even more apparent in a state like Vermont, with few large cities. In fact, the driving reason I joined VTASLA was to meet other landscape architects when, at the time, I was the only one at my firm and likely the only one in my small town.

Despite this, moving to Vermont reignited my passion for landscape architecture. I've seen how LAs across all parts of our field tangibly improve lives and land from the smallest towns to the biggest cities. We work as solo entrepreneurs, for LA-specific and multi-disciplinary consulting firms, at regional planning commissions and state agencies, in universities, at non-profits, for developers, and in design-build. Our diverse projects include incredible residential landscapes, local and state recreation facilities, solar installations, sidewalks and trails, corporate campuses, and so much more. We tackle challenges from climate resiliency to stormwater management to the housing shortage.

Part of my goal through VTASLA is to promote the breadth of landscape architecture throughout the state, not just in our biggest cities and towns. We began Landscape Architecture Site Tour Day to showcase the diversity of LA work to legislators and state and local leaders, showcasing Northfield in 2024 and Chester in 2025 (stay tuned for 2026!). For State House Advocacy Day this January, we developed an interactive map of LA projects across Vermont, showing our elected officials that no matter where you live, a landscape architect has worked there. While much of our membership is based in Chittenden County, we're trying to expand our event offerings to other places in Vermont to provide more equitable opportunities for involvement.

I'm excited to continue meeting all of you and helping VTASLA find ways to engage with our members and non-member LAs alike. Let's continue promoting the marvelous things landscape architects do throughout our Brave Little State! If you have ideas for how VTASLA can support you or are passing through Randolph and want to say hi, please reach out at any time.

Onward!

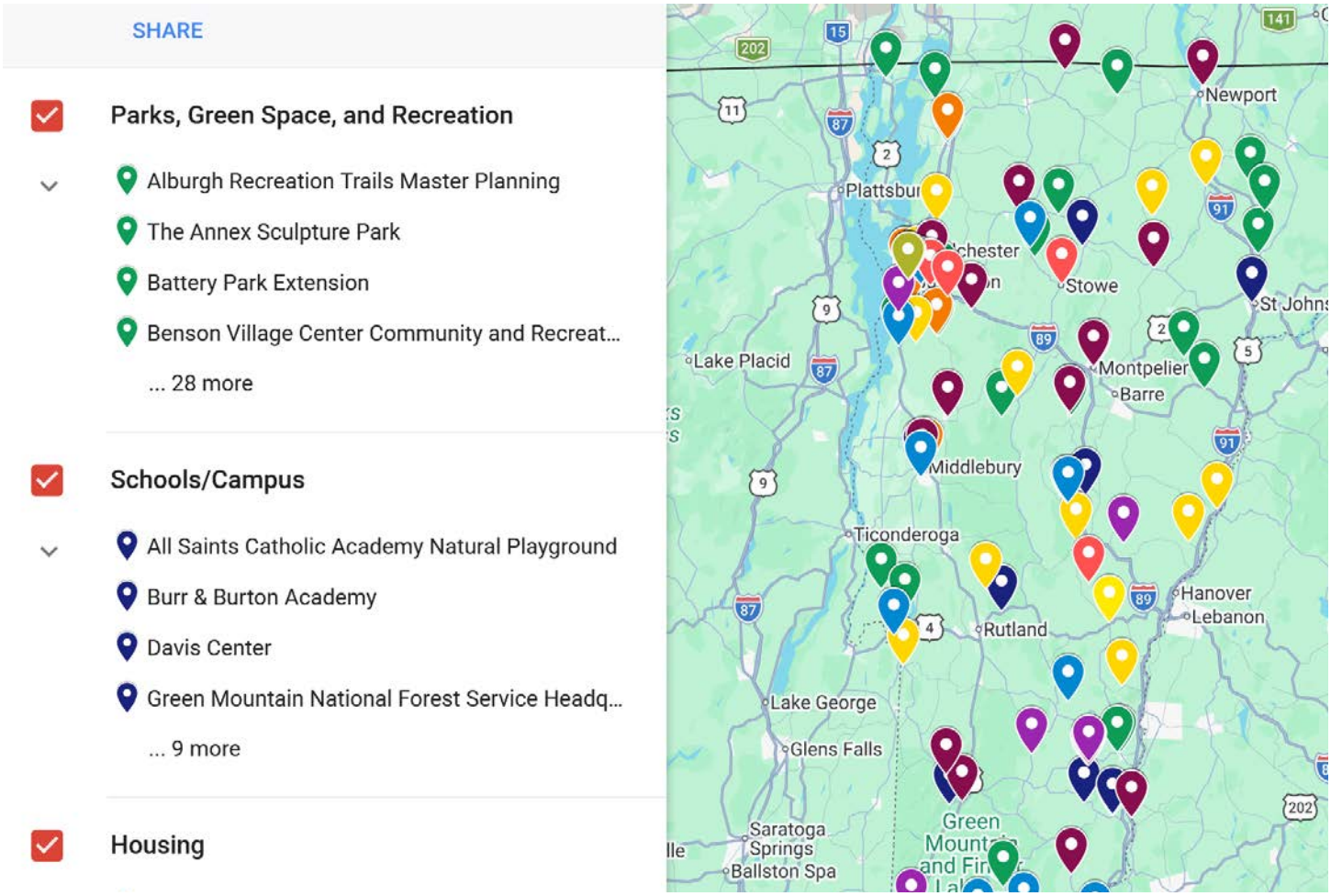
Emily Lewis, PLA, ASLA
elewis@dubois-king.com

STATE HOUSE ADVOCACY DAY

State House Advocacy Day was held a bit earlier this year, in mid-January. Five VTASLA members met with legislators over coffee and pastries outside the cafeteria for several hours on a Friday morning. We advocated for our work around energy, housing, and climate resilience and encouraged support for the Urban and Community Forestry programs and initiatives. We beta-tested an interactive map of landscape architecture projects across the state, so that we could more directly discuss LA impacts in the legislators' districts. Since Vermont legislators don't have staff and are limited in their time, one of the most important ways we can support them is by offering our expertise on state issues.

MAP FOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE ACROSS VT

NEW INTERACTIVE MAP MADE TO HIGHLIGHT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PROJECTS



To support Advocacy Day, VTASLA kicked off an initiative to create a map of landscape architecture projects across the state with the goal of at least one in every legislative district. The map is intended to be updated annually, at a minimum, and landscape architects can submit projects via this form to be included, or reach out to vtasla@gmail.com to learn more.

Check out the map here!

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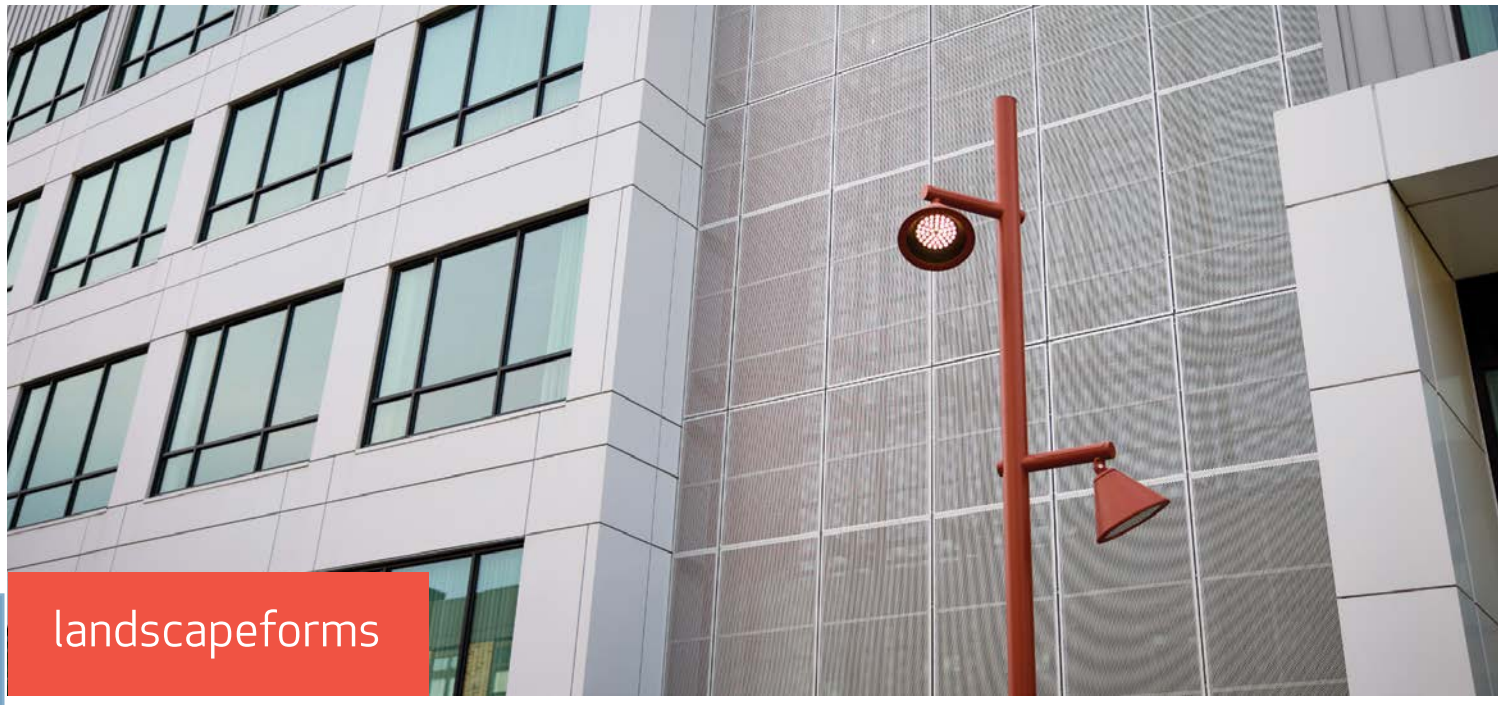

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VERMONTERS RECOGNIZED BY ASLA NATIONAL

AWARDS GIVEN AT THE 2025 CONFERENCE ON LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

We celebrate the American Society of Landscape Architects recognition of Vermonter's contribution to the profession! Please congratulate Gail Henderson-King and Devon Coleman for national acknowledgement of their contributions to landscape architecture at the 2025 Conference on Landscape Architecture held in New Orleans, LA, this past October.

COUNCIL OF FELLOWS NOMINATION IN LEADERSHIP/ MANAGEMENT - GAIL HENDERSON-KING

GAIL HENDERSON-KING, PLA, FASLA, EDFP
Henderson-King Consulting, Burlington, VT

Gail is now one of 1,593 Fellows elected since 1899. ASLA elevated 50 members from across the country as Fellows for their exceptional contributions to the profession and society at large. This honor is among the highest that the ASLA bestows based on their works, leadership/management, knowledge, and service.

"The 2025 Class of ASLA Fellows reflects the very best of landscape architecture—visionary leaders whose work uplifts communities, restores ecosystems, and advances climate-ready design," said ASLA President Kona Gray, FASLA, PLA. "Their careers are defined by excellence, service, and a deep commitment to shaping a more inclusive, resilient, and beautiful world."

"It feels incredible to be a Fellow. I have had this as a goal for a long time and it's awesome to finally be part of the Fellows club! The nicest thing a friend said to me about it was acknowledging my completely different trajectory in the profession was my strength, and I have had so many positive ways I've impacted the profession. It really meant a lot to me. The honor was actually quite humbling for me. To be part of the group of ASLA Fellows who have all contributed to the profession in their own ways is incredible. I will continue to use my influence as a landscape architect in my work and volunteer activities to help broaden and support the profession. Walking with my escort Jim Donovan was the best moment. He has supported me throughout my nomination process. Having him by my side at the stage was very reassuring as I was so nervous." G.H-K.

For over thirty-five years, Gail Henderson-King has been a driving force in advancing the profession through her visionary leadership, meticulous project management, and unwavering commitment to service. Whether leading transformative projects in the public and private sectors or dedicating her time to mentorship and volunteerism, she has challenged conventional practices, expanded the influence of landscape architecture in planning, transportation, and development, and inspired the next generation of professionals. Early in her career, she worked as the planning director for the Town of Milton where she successfully promoted pedestrian and bicycle-friendly design and streetscape improvements—then a new concept for Vermont. At Lamoureux & Dickinson Consulting Engineers, Gail led transportation enhancement projects, continually pushing the design envelope to benefit communities' health and wellbeing. At White + Burke Real Estate Advisors, her design background and exceptional project management skills benefited numerous commercial and institutional projects of statewide importance. Perhaps Gail's most profound contribution to the profession was to lead the state's successful ef-

fort to secure professional licensure for landscape architects. Since 2016, she has chaired VTASLA Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) Committee, which has resulted in the documentation of over ten Vermont historic landscapes. She also led efforts to mount exhibitions in Vermont about renowned landscape architects Daniel Urban Kiley and Frederick Law Olmsted. Through her visionary leadership in development, Gail has reshaped how communities, institutions, and private developers incorporate landscape architecture into planning and project execution. Her ability to merge design thinking, regulatory expertise, and strategic vision has left an enduring legacy—transforming development practices across Vermont and influencing best practices on a national scale.

ASLA HONORARY MEMBERSHIP - DEVIN COLMAN

DEVIN COLMAN, HONORARY ASLA
Director of Historic Preservation Program, Lecturer, University of Vermont
Image Credit: Andrew Cate

Devin is recognized by ASLA for achievements of national significance by someone outside of the profession. Honorary Membership recognizes folks other than landscape architects whose achievements have provided notable service to the profession of landscape architecture.

"Thank you to VTASLA for nominating me for this honor. Attending the conference was a great experience, and everyone was welcoming and interested to hear about my interest in the identification and preservation of cultural landscapes. Although my time at the conference was limited, I was able to participate in a day-long photography workshop that took place at multiple sites around the city. For someone used to shooting buildings with nice clean edges, turning the lens onto landscapes was a real challenge! But it forced me to study and appreciate how landscaped spaces are organized and designed. Being inducted as an ASLA Honorary Member has been a great experience, and I'm looking forward to establishing more relationships within the landscape architecture community." - D.C.

Devin Colman is the Director of the University of Vermont Historic Preservation Program, and teaches courses on American architectural history, cultural landscapes, historic site research and documentation, and historic preservation policy and planning. Prior to his current position, Colman worked for 18 years at the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, most recently as State Architectural Historian. He earned a M.S. in Historic Preservation at the University of Vermont, and a B.A. in Art History at Colby College. His primary research focuses on modernist design, inclusive of both buildings and landscapes, and the preservation of significant examples of 20th century modern sites. More broadly, he is interested in exploring the overlap of historic, cultural, and natural resources in the built environment. His short format historical report on the Justin Smith Morrill Homestead in Strafford, Vermont, earned an Honorable Mention in the 2016 HALS Challenge.

Immediate Past-President Kona Gray presenting the award

ASLA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

VTASLA TOGETHER IN NEW ORLEANS

VTASLA members gathered in New Orleans with our North American colleagues to learn, teach, and explore. Some key takeaways from the CPC and BOT meetings were [insert something here]. New Orleans is a true example of ongoing resiliency, both for the environment and its diverse residents. This integration of people and place is perhaps more apparent here than many other places, as seen so prevalently during Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath, with that work continuing robustly today.

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VTASLA HOLIDAY PARTY

AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF A NEW LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

VTASLA celebrated our annual Holiday Party at Shelburne Vineyards with a delightful time spent with Landscape Architects, related professionals, and families! Many thanks to our sponsor, Landscape Forms. Emily Lewis, VTASLA President, presented the following awards in recognition of their contributions to the Chapter and the profession. The President's Award: Jim Donovan, FASLA, Service Award: Elena Juodisius, ASLA , ASLA Olmsted Award: Gail Henderson-King, FASLA

At the 2025 VTASLA Holiday Party, Michael Buscher shared an early announcement regarding the formation of a new initiative to support the advancement of landscape architecture in Vermont. This effort, now formally established as the Vermont Landscape Architecture Education Fund (VLAEF), has been created as a separate nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding educational access and strengthening the profession statewide.

The idea of establishing a scholarship fund for Vermont residents pursuing degrees in landscape architecture has been discussed for many years. VLAEF will work toward that goal while also supporting VTASLA's educational programming and contributing to public outreach and public-facing initiatives that elevate awareness of the profession.

The founding board, Michael Buscher, Jim Donovan, and Tom Hand, is currently focused on organizational development and securing initial seed funding. Additional information, including opportunities for broader support, will be shared as VLAEF prepares for the public phase of its capital campaign in early 2027. In the meantime, anyone interested in learning more about the effort is welcome to reach out to Michael, Jim, or Tom.

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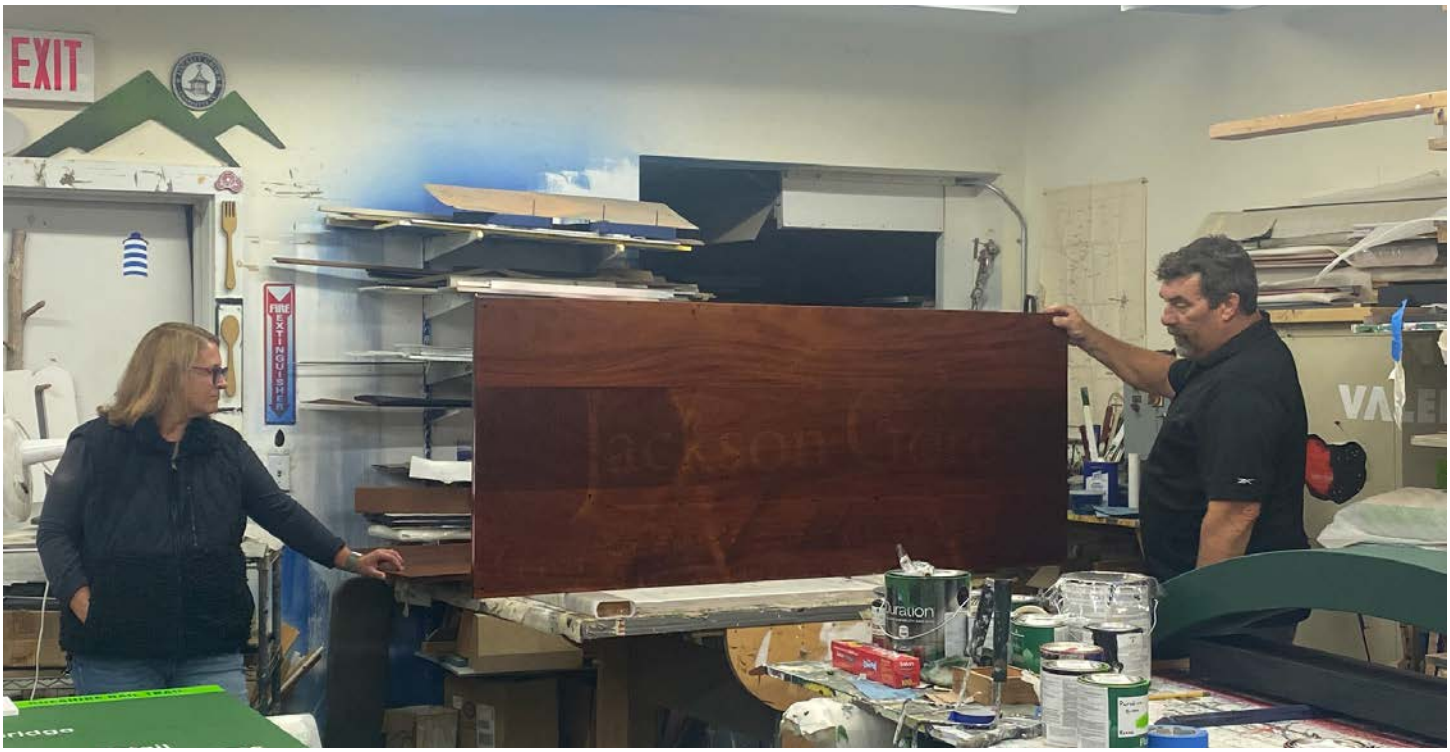
WOOD & WOOD SIGN TOUR

VTASLA hosted a tour of Wood & Wood Signs and Design in Waitsfield, VT in October 2025. Owner Erik showed us through all parts of their studio, including design, painting, and fabrication, and explained the details of the custom sign fabrication and construction process. The shop features tool and expertise to make wayfinding and location signs from wood, composite, and metals. A takeaway all landscape architects can relate to is to get your sign designer involved early on in the project. Their work can be seen across all of Vermont as well as out to Colorado and beyond! You can see their work on the website and Facebook page.

The event was followed with a social hour at Lawson's Finest Liquids, thanks to our event sponsor Maglin Site Furniture.



ADVOCACY SITE TOUR - 2025

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE SITE TOUR AND PRESENTATION

On Thursday, August 21, 2025, VTASLA hosted its second annual site tour and presentation in Chester, Vermont. The focus of the event was to share the projects that have been done by landscape architects in this rural community over a period of decades, and which helped the improve the Chester Village streetscape for residents and visitors alike. From master planning efforts to construction details and financial arrangements, the hour-long presentation highlighted 15 projects that contributed to small-town revitalization.

VTASLA President Elect Emily Lewis of DuBois & King delivered opening remarks to the attendees, who included municipal leaders, planners, legislators, and public works officials. Chester's Town Manager Julie Hance then shared how she helped facilitate the projects and contracts. SE Group's Senior Associate for Landscape Architecture Patrick Olstad discussed the wayfinding he designed throughout Chester, including some which was being installed on the day of the talk.

The event concluded with Owner Scott Wunderle of TERRIGENOUS Landscape Architecture, Trustee for VTALSA, sharing background information about how the various improvements were envisioned, and then detailing aspects of planning, design, and construction. In addition to the wayfinding and master planning, other projects included:

- Flood mitigation plantings
- A "pocket" park near the Williams River
- Seating benches throughout town
- A tree canopy master plan and resultant street tree plantings
- Gardens
- Renovations to historic buildings

After viewing slides of the physical projects, Ms. Hance shared creative funding approaches for community projects—a combination of public funds and private donations--and tips for execution that supported each phase of the projects and that helped keep the work moving forward. Once the presentation ended, lunch was shared and guests were invited to visit the different project sites and find inspiration to bring back to their own communities.

Thus far, VTASLA has hosted Site Tours in Northfield in 2024, Chester in 2025, and Lake Willoughby coming up in June 2026. Email Advocacy Chair Emily Lewis to get involved!

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DOUG CROWELL LECTURE

CREATING FLOATING WETLANDS

The Vermont American Society of Landscape Architects presented the 2025 Doug Crowell Lecture:

'Creating Floating Wetlands'

The lecture was given by Jason Castillo, PLA, ASLA and Amelle Schultz, PLA, LEED AP from Ayers Saint Gross

The National Aquarium has an ambitious mission to inspire conservation of the world's aquatic treasures. With a prime location in Baltimore's Inner Harbor and a goal of transforming their campus into a Chesapeake Bay demonstration landscape, the aquarium worked with Ayers Saint Gross to produce a sustainable and high-performing floating wetland to expand habitat on their campus. Located between Piers 3 and 4, the Harbor Wetland is a free exhibit on the National Aquarium campus. The 10,000 square foot habitat allows visitors to immerse themselves in a salt marsh habitat like those that existed in this space hundreds of years ago. In addition to describing the project, the speakers will talk about what they learned during and after the project, and provide insights that can guide the creation of floating wetlands in other locations fresh and saltwater locations.

If you missed it, watch the recording at VTASLA's youtube channel.

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