

AIA Richmond Chapter 2006 Design Awards

Merit Award Winner

Project: Carole and Marcus Weinstein Jewish Community Center

Owner: Carole and Marcus Weinstein Jewish Community Center, Richmond, Virginia
Architect: BCWH Architects, Richmond, VA
Location: Richmond, VA
Completion: Fall 2005
Building Type: Recreation and meeting center

Jury Comments:

- One of the more difficult projects considering the starting point.
- An irregular plan that has had several additions over the past two decades.
- Lobby linked to an interior street gives order and orientation to a multi centered plan.
- Clearly defined entries on each side bring the users to a central point and distribute them along a well defined path.
- In an agglomeration of past parts, the new building demonstrates a simple modern restraint to materials and detailing.

Owner's Program:

The Carole and Marcus Weinstein Jewish Community Center is a multi-use facility serving the Richmond community at large as well as acting as a cultural, educational and recreation center for Richmond's Jewish community. Since the original building was constructed in 1958, the Center has grown by a series of additions and renovations which left the building disjointed and uninspiring, with uninviting spaces and tired, dated finishes. More importantly, the building no longer appropriately served the important role as an intergenerational meeting place for the area's Jewish Community. A planning study rejected the idea of a new, relocated facility and initiated a renovation/ addition to the current facility on Monument Avenue.

Completed in the spring of 2004, the modernization of the existing Jewish Community Center created an expanded and ordered facility to accommodate a variety of community programs and functions and was undertaken while the building remained occupied. The 10.3 acre site is bounded by Monument Avenue on the north and residential neighborhoods on three sides. Limited site expansion capabilities added to the challenge given the expansion in program and amenities.

The Jewish community desired a renovated facility which would accommodate expanding programs and organize the many functions which this facility serves. The Center's program, includes approximately 106,000 SF (30,000 SF New) to house The Jewish Community Center and its offices, and multifunction auditorium, Preschool Program, After school Program, Jewish Federation of Richmond Offices and a Fitness Center.

Design Solution:

The most important feature of the renovation was to expand the main lobby into a central gathering place, or "Street", and to provide orientation from that central space into the varied program areas. The main public area accommodates community gatherings, art shows, the gift shop and acts as an intergenerational living room for the community center. The existing exterior brick walls were left exposed and Jerusalem stone was incorporated into new walls to acknowledge the history of the Center and its Jewish heritage. The roof/ceiling heights were raised to increase the public scale of the room and to allow natural light from clerestory windows to be continuous throughout the space.

Overall the exterior additions were respectful of the existing materials palette and designed to reinforce the original building's Modernist heritage. Similar brick was selected in shapes which were larger than the original to change the scale of the building at the entry points. Large brick shafts or 'chimney's' mark the main entrances at the north and south ends of the main 'street'. Selected areas included Jerusalem stone accents which further link the entrances with the interior and the Jewish heritage of the Center.

The tight site was reorganized to provide more safety for its members and pre-school students in terms of vehicular and pedestrian circulation and play areas, expanded parking, and a new landscaped entry, more inviting to the neighborhood at large.

Details:

A key part of the program was integrating the gift shop. Glass cases and display areas were incorporated into the wall dividers and surfaces. Natural materials provide the backdrop for changing exhibits and gift item display, which also serves as a teaching opportunity by displaying many objects of the Jewish culture and religion. Jerusalem Stone was incorporated in both rusticated and antiqued finishes to reference the Center's Jewish heritage.

Credits:

Owner: The Carole and Marcus Weinstein Jewish Community Center
5403 Monument Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23226

Architect: BCWH Architects
1840 West Broad Street, Suite 400
Richmond, VA 23220
804-788-4774
Mr. Rob Comet, AIA - Principal in Charge, Mr. Jack Hasten, AIA - Project Manager, Mr. Bo Fairlamb, AIA, Project Manager, Rob Parise, Gillian Ward, Yumi Tsiuki, Leah Harrison, Charles Tilley, Laura Battaglia

Civil Engineer: Foster & Miller, PC
1670 Mountain Road
Glen Allen, Virginia 23060-4206
Mr. Spud Meister

Landscape: Wm. H. Spell. LLC
513 Forest Avenue
Suite 201
Richmond VA 23229
Mr. William H. Spell

Foods Service: Food Service Consultants Studio
15405 Broad Creek Lane
Montpelier, Virginia 23192
Mr. Larry Huber

Structural: Fox & Associates
1006 Pump Road
Suite 200 A
Richmond VA 23233
Mr. Clive Fox, PE

Mechanical/Electrical: Matthew J. Thompson III, Consulting Engineers
9308 Warwick Boulevard
Newport News Virginia 23601
Mr. Kevin Allen, PE

Environmental: Industrial Training Company
10821 Trade Road
Richmond VA 23236
Mr. John R. Hart

Weinstein Jewish Community Center – Page 3

- Pool Consultant: Pool Design Consultants, Inc.
5946 Millbury Court
Charlotte, NC 28211
Mr. Gary W. Alden
- Geotechnical: Virginia Geotechnical Services, PC
8211 Hermitage Road
Richmond VA 23228-3031
Ms. Marcia Prowell
- Roofing Consultant: PSI
Professional Service Industries, Inc.
2930 Eskridge Road, Suite B
Fairfax, Virginia 22031
Mr. Joseph B. Gough
- Signage and Graphics: John Grogan Design, Inc.
185 Avery Drive
Atlanta GA 30309
Mr. John T. Grogan
- Building Contractor: Witing-Turner Contracting Company
9210 Arboretum Parkway, suite 290
Richmond, Virginia 23236



View of new addition from main parking lot



View of new reception area



View of new reception area