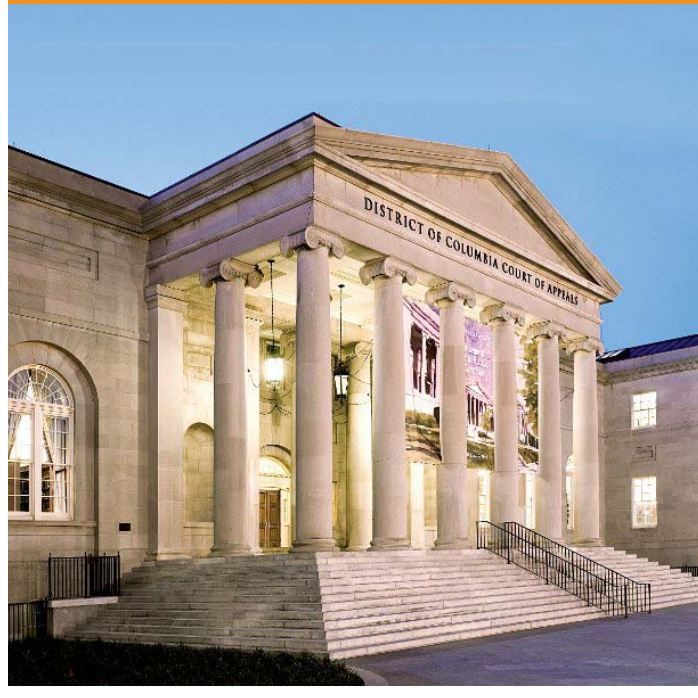


## SPRING 2011

### HISTORIC DC COURTHOUSE WINS ACCLAIM



The Historic DC Courthouse in Washington, DC, was recently recognized with a 2010 GSA Design Award and a citation and profile in the AIA's *Justice Facilities Review (JFR)*. We teamed with Beyer Blinder Belle on the complex preservation and modernization project, which, according to *JFR*, "re-greened and revitalized the site with harmonious landscaping" and a new plaza and pavilion that "engage with the surrounding ensemble of civic buildings."

[Read more](#) about the GSA Design Award and the *JFR* Citation.

### COMMUNITY PLANNING: A FOCUS ON HEALTH



The *Port Towns Sector Plan* addresses urban design and revitalization within a historic community set along the Anacostia River in Prince George's County, Maryland. Working closely with the public, we explored ideas to enhance the concept of "community wellness" through personal health, environmental health, and economic recovery. This collaborative effort was recently presented by a panel led by Deana Rhodeside at both the New Partners for Smart Growth Conference and the Prince George's County Speaker Series. The panel also included Celeste James of Kaiser Permanente; Sadara Barrow of the Port Towns Community Development Corporation; and Adam Ortiz, the Mayor of Edmonston, Maryland.

### SUSTAINABLE & SECURE



"Net zero" water management, secure site design, use of native materials and craftsmanship... over the past ten years, we have supported breakthrough US Department of State (DOS) initiatives for more than 30 US embassies and consulates around the world.

Our professional team is well-versed in the complexities of planning and design for American diplomatic properties overseas, requiring sophisticated perimeter and site security measures while projecting a welcoming and engaging presence for visitors. Working closely with our teaming partners, we study context carefully and take cues from local culture, history, architecture, materials, and ecosystems.

Recent projects address new DOS Overseas Building Operations standards for secure mini-compounds, advanced measures for stormwater management and long-term site sustainability, and preservation of historic and archeological resources. We currently have work underway in Africa, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asia.

For more information on our DOS work, contact Faye Harwell at [fayeh@rhodeside-harwell.com](mailto:fayeh@rhodeside-harwell.com) or visit our [Portfolio](#).

### 25TH ANNIVERSARY PROFILE: DEANA RHODESIDE, PH.D.



Deana Rhodeside, Ph.D. holds a Doctorate of Philosophy from MIT in Urban Studies and Planning, as well as degrees from Temple University and the City College of New York. Her award-winning professional career has focused on enriching people's lives through the collaborative process of planning and design.

*Many of the planning projects you direct are quite complex in scope. What value do you place on the community participation during these efforts?*

Community participation is key to achieving a successful planning process—you can plan the best plan but without community support, it won't become a reality. You have to understand community priorities and visions. You need to bring people along and educate them about how the plan responds to those priorities and enhances the community beyond what they typically might expect. The process should not simply echo back community input but respond and educate.

*What do you consider the most important components of a successful plan for community growth or revitalization?*

Understanding current growth patterns and the reasons behind those patterns is imperative. Second, defining the key elements that create incentives for desired growth. Third, the process must include working with the community—elected officials, staff, the development community, and the public—to understand the meaning of change and how to shape it through the planning process, rather than just letting it happen. Finally, a plan must address and alleviate community concerns and build on community visions.

*What challenges are many communities addressing today that can be aided by a forward-thinking planning process?*

The first is financial. You have to plan realistically, and phase your plan accordingly so that it addresses what the jurisdictions and the market can accommodate in the short, mid, and long terms. Energy consumption and sustainability are also challenges. It's imperative to think about practical ways to approach environmental sustainability and community sustainability. You need to consider growth in terms of how much is needed to accommodate multi-modal transportation in order to move away from a heavy reliance on single-occupancy cars. Another challenge is the need to sustain economic and age diversity within communities by providing affordable and diverse options for all segments of the population.

*When founding Rhodeside & Harwell 25 years ago, what did you envision for the practice? What has surprised you?*

As a multidisciplinary team, we always thought that planning, landscape architecture, and urban design went together well and could build on each other. The surprise has been that although issues have shifted over time, that team approach is still valid—planning, landscape architecture, and urban design work well together. Each has a different approach toward a solution.

*What has been your most memorable project?*

Most recently, Bailey's Crossroads has been a memorable project. Fairfax County had been trying to move this urban revitalization effort forward for over a decade. This is an area that had always been centered around a suburban shopping center. Residents had a lot of concerns about traffic, density, and the loss of a diverse environment. Within a two-year period, however, we were able to get unanimous approval from the County Board of Supervisors with an enormous amount of community support at the public hearing. We were able to demonstrate why a new Bailey's Crossroads would be advantageous for all.

*The most unusual or interesting project?*

The Four Mile Run Restoration Master Plan, since this was a project that was jointly directed by two jurisdictions – Arlington County and the City of Alexandria. It presented the challenge of creating a new "front door" amenity area out of a corridor that is largely a utility channel at this time. We worked closely with the communities from both jurisdictions to create a master plan for the corridor that will transform it into a regional asset over time. We also developed the design guidelines that can direct the project as it is completed in phases.

*What are you currently working on?*

Our current work includes collaboration with the Commonwealth of Virginia to implement its Urban Development Areas, which respond to new legislation requiring communities that have grown by 15% or more in the last decade to create more dense UDAs in their jurisdictions to accommodate this growth. It's exciting because it brings a new model of development to these communities. The process provides an opportunity to present concepts such as Traditional Neighborhood Development—TND—to these jurisdictions and to demonstrate why these are both relevant and appropriate within a range of community types. Some of these communities are very small—perhaps anticipating an increase of 400 people over 20 years. Others are much larger, and may grow by 40,000 people in ten years. You have to start to think about what "urban" means for each of these communities.

I'm always surprised by, and appreciative of, the variety of viewpoints that we hear from different communities—the education goes both ways. With the UDA project, we thought people might be concerned about increasing densities in urban communities, but when you start exploring what density really looks like, people are surprised. They start to understand the benefits of more compact communities in terms of alleviating traffic pressures and overall infrastructure costs, and creating a healthier environment in which to live.

### OUR NEWEST SITE

Visit our website at [www.rhodeside-harwell.com](http://www.rhodeside-harwell.com), where you'll find all of our news, a gallery of our latest projects, and much more.

### NEXT ISSUE

The latest on Washington-area office/mixed-use projects, and a 25th anniversary interview with Faye Harwell, FASLA.

### PAST ISSUES

[Plan&Place](#), Fall 2010