



ARC lauds 5 'Developments of Excellence' for 2010

Ken Edelstein Nov 9, 2010

The Atlanta Regional Commission has recognized five 2010 "Developments of Excellence," and at least three of them enjoy some level of green building certification:

- **Southface Energy Institute's Eco Office**, which officially opened last fall near the Atlanta Civic Center, won for "Exceptional Merit for Leadership in Sustainability." The nonprofit group's three-story office and training facility earned LEED Platinum status earlier this year. "At 10,100 square feet, it is the same size as 74 percent of American commercial buildings," according to the ARC, "and is one of the most sustainable office facilities in the world, using 84 percent less water and more than 50 percent less energy than a comparable, code-built facility."
- **Columbia Mechanicsville**, in the Mechanicsville neighborhood just south of downtown, was cited for "Exceptional Merit for Comprehensive Community Revitalization and Design." Units in the project, which was developed by Noel Khalil's Columbia Residential, meet Energy Star requirements. "The multi-family development features rustic, industrial design with modern details set in a walkable community that connects to a local park and an elementary school," according to the ARC.

[editorial]



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• **The White Provision District**, a multi-use project in West Midtown, won the overall “2010 Development of Excellence Award.” The White Provision Development Co. renovated and expanded a former meat-packing plant, to create 94 condominiums, 50,000 square feet of office space, 110,000 square feet of retail space and a parking deck. “By extending 14th Street onto the property, the developer enhanced connectivity to White Provision, giving residents and visitors easy access to I-75 via Northside Drive and Howell Mill Road, and to the downtown connector via 10th Street, 14th Street and 17th Street. A pedestrian bridge over active rail lines provides a connection to an existing retail center.” While the overall development hasn’t attained green certification (Not for lack of trying, by the way; I’ll have more on that later), at least one of its tenants has: the 12,000-square-foot Knoll furniture showroom at White Provision earned LEED–CI Gold.

The awards were presented last week by the ARC and the [Livable Communities Coalition](#) at ARC’s annual [State of the Region Breakfast](#).

“We are proud to recognize developers and local governments that change the way people and businesses in the Atlanta region interact,” said ARC Chairman Tad Leithead. “These projects and their success show us that metro Atlantans want to be able to walk to their shopping and to visit friends and family. They also prove that no matter the economy, consumers and businesses recognize quality development when they see it.”

I haven’t yet received any information on green certifications at the two other winning projects, although both certainly enhance walkability (*I’ll update when the developers get back to me*):



• **The City of Hapeville** won the “Development of Excellence Livable Centers Initiative Achievement Award.” for its 10-year-long redevelopment of the Virginia Park neighborhood. “Craftsman-style homes now stand where once there were vacant lots. The surge of new investment spurred the rehabilitation of existing homes, as well. Soon, the community formed the Virginia Park Neighborhood Association and with the help of the City of Hapeville and a local developer, completed Hapeville’s first streetscape project and significant commercial rehabilitation. In all, 34 new infill homes were constructed in the neighborhood, and countless others were rehabilitated.” The Livable Centers Award is tied to the ARC’s Livable Centers Initiatives, which provides grants to “seed new ideas for more livable, walkable communities throughout our region.” Virginia Park is one of 100 communities to have received LCI grants.

• **Kirkwood Station** was cited for “Exceptional Merit for Neighborhood-Sensitive Infill.” “When the Plinth Group acquired the 1.5 acres now called Kirkwood Station, it purchased four dilapidated commercial structures and two run-down residences. Today, the development includes seven shops, a restaurant, 23 residential units and 63 parking spaces. It has two bus stops and is one mile from the East Lake MARTA station. Within walking distance are a library, police station, elementary school, middle school, YMCA, golf course and plenty of retail opportunities.”

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