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2026 AIA Fellowship

Candidate Robby Johnston
Organization The Raleigh Architecture Company
Location Raleigh, North Carolina
Chapter AIA North Carolina; AIA Triangle

Category of Nomination

Object 1 (Design, Urban Design, Preservation) > Design

Summary Statement

By uniting design, craft, and building, Robby Johnston creates an architecture of exceptional resolution and purpose. He transforms overlooked sites into vital urban anchors, proving design's power to strengthen a city's urban fabric.

Education

North Carolina at Charlotte College of Architecture, 1998-2003; Bachelor of Architecture, 2003; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, 2002

Hoger Instituut voor Architectuurwetenschappen Antwerpen, Belgium, Spring 2002

Licensed in:

North Carolina #11330

Employment

The Raleigh Architecture Company & The Raleigh Construction Company, 08, 2012 – present

Clearscapes Art + Architecture, 06, 2010 – 8, 2012

Tonic Design & Tonic Construction, 02, 2005 – 06, 2010

Michael Ross Kersting Architecture, 06, 2003 – 01, 2005

October 7, 2025



Sanford Garner, FAIA
Chair, 2026 Jury of Fellows
The American Institute of Architects

Re: Robby Johnston, AIA – Object 1 - Design

Dear Members of the Jury of Fellows,

Robby Johnston, AIA, is a rare talent in our profession, a designer whose work is guided by a profound conviction that the spaces we inhabit can, and should, enrich the human spirit. His commitment to the city of Raleigh is immense. He came to Raleigh over a decade ago because he saw a need for well-designed projects that stitch together our community. Robby is a designer who sees architecture as a vital tool for renewal, well-being, and connection. He consistently demonstrates how design can solve real-world problems, and he does so with a quiet confidence and integrity that inspires everyone he works with.

Robby's work presents us with a rare fusion of conceptual clarity, material honesty, and profound collective impact. His vision for renewal is so compelling, he has drawn talent from across the country to work with him in Raleigh. Through his design interventions, he makes it evident how architecture, even on the scale of small commercial and residential, can be catalyst for renewal, well-being, and social connection.

What I admire most about Robby is his unwavering energy, enthusiasm, and his fervent refusal to accept the overlooked corners of the city. He has a unique gift for uncovering the inherent potential in a site or structure and transforming it into something extraordinary. A project like Hartwell, which catalyzed renewal of an entire neighborhood, gives one hope that others will follow his lead with similar ingenuity with replicable, beautiful models for "missing middle" housing like Edentwins and Clark Townhomes.

A distinct aspect of Robby's work is how he fuses the design studio with the job site. This direct connection inspires a continuous cycle of feedback, allowing for material experimentation and on-site prototyping that would be impossible in a traditional delivery method. He transforms the act of construction into real-time design research, ensuring the final building is not just a representation of an idea, but the most highly resolved version of it. This drive for experimentation, testing ideas on-site, ensures the result is architecture with exceptional rigor.

In the end, Robby's work reflects his character: thoughtful, purposeful, and deeply humane. He creates a meaningful legacy in his community and provides an inspiring model for how an architect can build better urban places, one project at a time.

It is an honor to sponsor Robby Johnston, AIA, for Fellowship in the American Institute of Architects, and I enthusiastically encourage you to consider him for elevation to the College of Fellows.

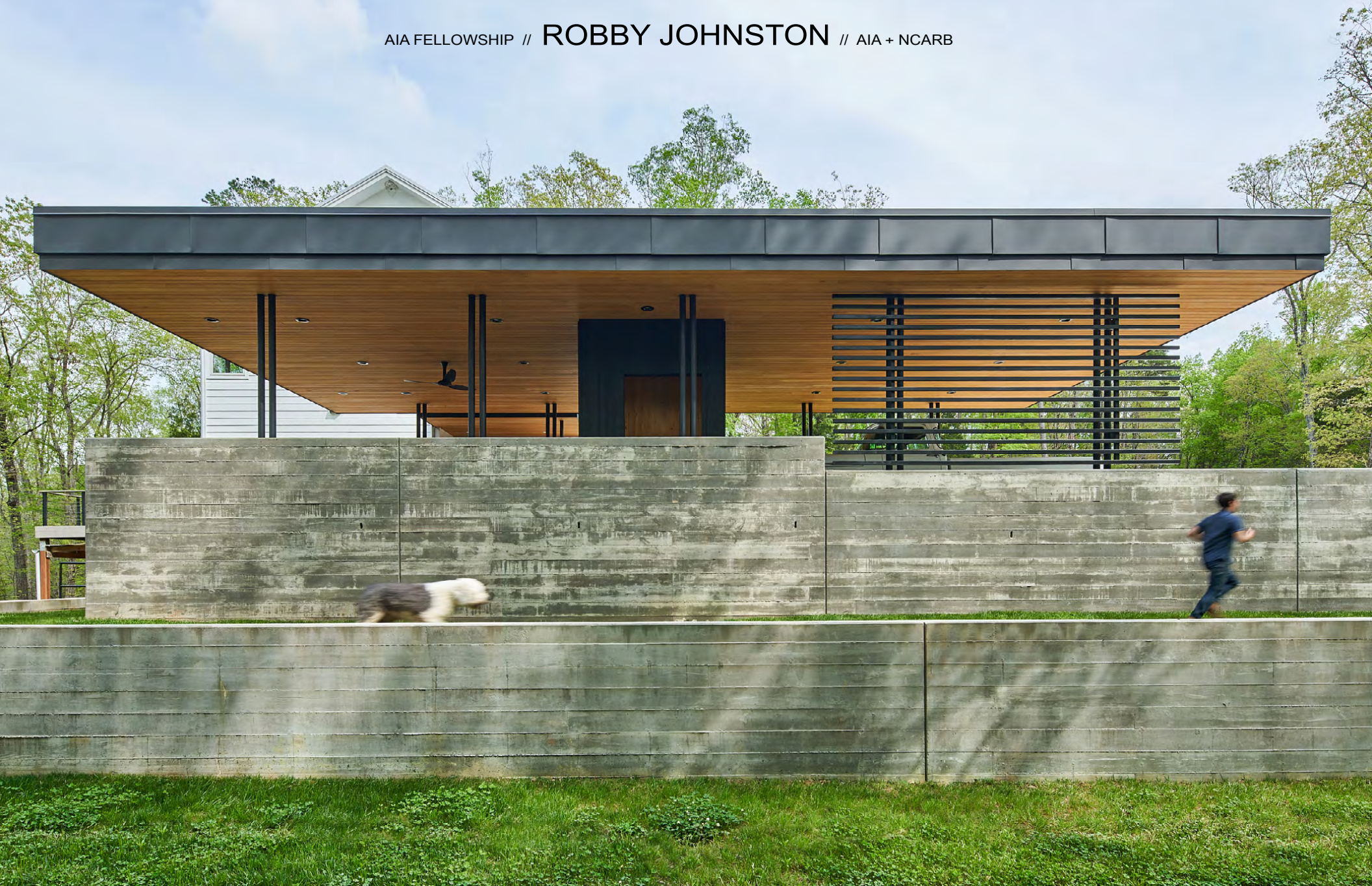
Sincerely,

Dennis E. Stallings, FAIA
Principal | Design Director

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AIA FELLOWSHIP // **ROBBY JOHNSTON** // AIA + NCARB





By uniting design, craft, and building, Robby Johnston creates an architecture of exceptional resolution and purpose. He transforms overlooked sites into vital urban anchors, proving design’s power to strengthen a city’s urban fabric.

Design Enriches Lives

Robby Johnston’s architecture is a direct extension of his conviction that a well-designed environment enriches the human spirit. He believes the spaces he creates profoundly shape everyday existence and well-being. To cultivate optimism and occupant delight, his work is a choreography of light, material, and sequence, transforming daily rituals into moments captured in space and time. Through the variation and articulation of massing, form, hierarchy, and fenestration, Johnston draws natural light deep into interior spaces, dissolving thresholds to the landscape and blurring the line between shelter and site, fostering a harmonious transition from interior life to nature. This holistic integration extends to the building’s performance, where strategies like high-performance envelopes and on-site resource management ensure environmental responsibility and enduring project resilience.

His design ethos is not merely aesthetic, it is rooted in the conviction that well-considered space empowers occupants to be active, aware, and present participants in the places they occupy. This conviction is applied equally between residential settings like **Sycamore Court House** and commercial environments like **Echoview Fiber Mill**, where spatial clarity and exploitation of natural light becomes the foundation of human experience, yielding emotional resilience, physiological health, and cognitive clarity through environments designed to foster joy and nurture people’s lives.

Design as an Urban Catalyst

As a pragmatic problem-solver, Robby confronts the challenges of Raleigh, one of America’s fastest-growing cities, with elegant, context-driven solutions. He chose Raleigh as fertile ground for critical, progressive architecture, building on the city’s modern legacy from NCSU’s School of Design under Henry Kamphoefner. With roots in an agrarian landscape, his early experiences instilled a spirit of purpose and material honesty, shaping a sensitivity to the inherent potential in every site and structure. He applies this lens to transform overlooked buildings and underutilized lots into new social and economic anchors.

By uncovering and amplifying hidden character, his adaptive reuse projects, such as the conversion of a forgotten grocery store into **Hartwell Makers Market**, have catalyzed wider neighborhood renewal. His pioneering **Edentwins** project exemplifies a commitment to gentle density, reaffirming street fronts without displacement and offering a model for infill housing that can be replicated to directly address the city’s unprecedented housing challenges. He expanded on this with developments like **Clark Townhouses** and **Pleiades Modern**, which tackle the “missing middle” crisis. Through meticulous massing, material integrity, and the creation of shared communal spaces, these projects demonstrate that density, when designed with meticulous care, can enhance a neighborhood’s character, offering a model for a rapidly changing Raleigh and for other mid-size cities experiencing similar growing pains.

Innovation through Experimentation

Robby forges a model that collapses the traditional divisions between architect and builder, delivering envisioned aesthetics, spatial relationships, material use, and a heightened sense of place. His work employs a continuous feedback loop between the drawing board and the job site, eliminating the friction that so often compromises architectural vision. This holistic method is design strategy and a stimulus for innovation. It enables material experimentation to become a form of real-time research, elevating craft to a foundational design component. The approach also empowers him to pursue projects the conventional market overlooks, prioritizing long-term architectural integrity and community value. Through rigorous on-site mockups, daily collaboration with tradespeople, and prototyping during design, Robby fuses fabrication with the creative process, ensuring the built reality is true to its conceptual origins. This synthesis culminates in architecture of exceptional resolution, exemplified by the **Edentwins**, where discarded slate roof shingles became textured, layered siding; at **State of Beer**, where a temporary foundry operated outside his shop for a collaboration to cast custom bronze panels; and at **Echoview Fiber Mill**, which used an on-site roll former to shape and adjust three distinct siding patterns. The result of this experimentation is a clear expression of Robby’s belief in achieving design clarity through innovative material exploration and implementation.

“I am fascinated by the confidence Robby has, by some of the things he’s doing. His ability to use simple materials in refined ways. There’s a finesse that comes with his work through a simple strategy of economy of means and materials.”

BRANDON PACE, FAIA | Co-founder, Sanders Pace Architecture | Knoxville, TN

ROBBY JOHNSTON

EDUCATION:

University of North Carolina at Charlotte College of Architecture, 1998-2003
Bachelor of Architecture, 2003
Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, 2002

Honors and Awards:

Thesis Award: Best Architectural Project
Thesis Award: Best Design Representation
Cum Laude

Hoger Instituut voor Architectuurwetenschappen Antwerpen, Belgium, Spring 2002

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

Licensed Architect: North Carolina License #11330
American Institute of Architects
NCARB

EXPERIENCE:

The Raleigh Architecture Company & The Raleigh Construction Company
Raleigh, NC
08, 2012 – present
Co-Founder, Co-Owner

Clearscapes Art + Architecture, Raleigh, NC
06, 2010– 8, 2012
Project Architect

Tonic Design & Tonic Construction, Raleigh, NC
02, 2005–06, 2010
Architect, Design Associate, Construction Project Manager & Superintendent

Michael Ross Kersting Architecture. Wilmington, NC
06, 2003–01, 2005
Intern Architect/Designer





FOMA House

2025 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead

Inspired by the owner's memories of camping on elevated forest platforms as a Boy Scout, the house embraces its wooded cul-de-sac site through a circular form that is the central organizing element of the residence. A 15-foot diameter **oculus skylight**, visible from all levels, anchors the center of the structure and affords sky views. The minimized footprint **preserves surrounding trees**, while solid zinc-clad areas contain service spaces and shield views of neighboring structures. Designed for **Net Zero Energy** and **fossil fuel independence**, the home integrates a **PV array** with battery storage and on-site rainwater management. **Deep foundations** ensure long-term stability, non-combustible materials offer **fire resistance**, and a caretaker suite is discretely incorporated to allow for aging in place.



IDYLE Townhouses

2025 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead

EXHIBIT 3.5

This 10-unit townhouse development is comprised of two five-unit buildings and addresses urban density with **Net Zero Energy use** and **fossil fuel independence**. Informed by traditional brownstone stoops, the open entry stairs rest on an elevated slab that reinforces the sidewalk edge. Each unit incorporates a sculptural interior stair oriented perpendicular to its long axis, helping buffer street activity from the private living and cooking areas. Large windows at the top stair landing frame views and anchor the end facades. Rear decks **prioritize exterior space** and oversee adjacent green space, while roof terraces frame views of the downtown skyline.

RECOGNITION

Net Zero Energy and Fossil Fuel Use
Indoor airPLUS



FPR House + ADU

2025 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead

The compact footprint and **integrated site strategy** maximize usable space while generating privacy and **solar access** in a dense urban context. For its steeply sloped 0.2 acre urban lot, this residence meets a complex program that includes a main house, Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), pool courtyard, garage, and two-car auto court—despite a 25-foot grade change from front to back. The design vertically organizes the home as a plinth at the lower level, supporting cantilevered upper volumes that contain all private spaces, including bedrooms, baths, and office, each with private balconies. The cantilevers frame the auto court entry and provide critical shading for south-facing glazing. The interior spaces connect to a central pool courtyard seamlessly through double height glazing to support **indoor-outdoor** living.



OBERLIN Townhouses

2025 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead

EXHIBIT 3.7

This 11-unit townhouse design **stitches together contrasting urban conditions and zoning**. The project transforms a leftover infill site—a challenging parcel caught between a quiet residential neighborhood and a busy thoroughfare exit ramp defined by irregular geometry and complex adjacencies. Two buildings, one fronting a residential street, the other facing a commercial parking lot, share an internal access drive. The massing reflects the full extent of the buildable envelope in plan and section, resulting in unique trapezoidal units. A robust palette of brick and steel compose the exterior, with **projecting brick coursing** and **steel-shrouded view boxes** adding depth and shadow. Recessed entries, carved rear porches, and elevated roof decks simultaneously create privacy and view opportunities.



SYCAMORE COURT House

2023 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead, Builder



ACBD House

2022 | Cary, NC

Design Co-lead



WOODBURN House

2022 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead



JONES STREET Houses

2021 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead

EXHIBIT 3.4

A stately oak tree on the vacant downtown parcel is the central organizing element of the residence, shaping its profile and demanding a sensitive siting to protect its root and canopy zones. The roof line extends toward corner glazing to view the oak's foliage from the primary bedroom, providing each day's first and last view. The plan layout unfolds from the entry with a corridor intersecting **double-height volumes**. A roof deck over the music and media rooms buffers sound from bedrooms and offers an elevated retreat. The roof slope optimizes solar orientation for the **PV array** and rain capture while wood slats mark time through shadow. An **open joint rainscreen** system provides enhanced resilience to North Carolina's humid subtropical climate.

This design was challenged by goals of intimacy, order, and themes of family influence. The solution employs an axial plan and programmatic massing to organize spaces and to conform to the sloped site. Public spaces are **opened for light, volume, and views** toward the wooded site's backyard stream. Private spaces are positioned at a lower elevation and are wrapped in curves to create softened interiors and exterior facades that **blend with their landscape**. A quilt by the owner's grandmother influenced interior colors and hangs prominently in the kitchen.

RECOGNITION



Honor Award | 2025 AIA NC

RECOGNITION



Honor Award | 2025 AIA Triangle

Honor Award | 2024 AIA NC

EXHIBIT 3.1

Situated in a medium-density neighborhood between a busy thoroughfare and shopping hub, the design positions the residential program into a sloping site to conform to the **scale of the adjacent houses**. To further limit the physical presence of the front facade and frame views over the surrounding tree line, the upper floor is rotated and suspended over the back yard. The theme of minimizing is echoed in **water conservation, energy reduction, and landscape strategies** provided by underground rainwater retention, rooftop photovoltaic, and native plant selection. Continuous walls of glazing **diminish the separation between inside and outside** program.

Three properties from one, four living-units from none, this **urban infill** project balances the priorities of **landscape, site plan, building, and sustainability**. Two lots were created by subdividing an oversized property formed in an early 20th century historic neighborhood. Two single-family houses include **internal ADUs**, connecting family generations. Atypical site arrangements harmonize with radial and angular geometries to **circumvent zoning, environmental, and regulatory restrictions**, creating protected exterior spaces, private views, and abundant **natural light**. An enhanced envelope reduces energy use and a rain garden filters 100% of stormwater on site.

RECOGNITION



Honorable Mention | '24 Chicago Athenaeum

Honor Award | 2024 AIA Aspire

Honor Award | 2024 AIA NC

Honor Award | 2024 AIA Triangle



LOBA WAKOL NA HQ

2021 | Wadesboro, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead

The North American headquarters for German company Loba Wakol transforms a high-visibility site along a busy interstate by replacing the original, dark one-story office building with a new, light-filled two-story structure as a public-facing front to their +150,000 square foot warehouse. The design introduces a **double-height central atrium** beneath a **large skylight**, organizing vertical circulation and **natural light as the nucleus** to all circulation and program elements, including a product display lobby, offices, conference rooms, restrooms, general storage, and an exterior balcony to capture views of the southern horizon and daily logistics activity. Simple fenestration reflects the internal program while the company's own flooring products are both showcased and actively used throughout the space.



HARTWELL Makers Market

2021 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead, Builder

EXHIBIT 3.9

This **adaptive reuse** project reinvents a post-war neighborhood grocer store, transforming its masonry shell into a vibrant community hub for retail and gathering. **Stringent regulatory requirements** necessitated creative conversion of existing interior area into an exterior entry court to position new, exterior vertical circulation and create a **layered entry sequence** from the street. Inside, a warm palette of new materials, colors, and textures contrasts with the original masonry shell. Cedar panels **rescued** from the original produce cooler nod to the building's history and new glazing around the perimeter in tandem with a **central skylight illuminate** the space.

RECOGNITION

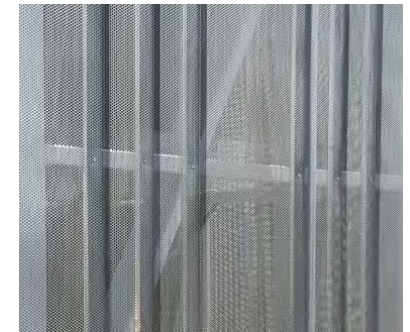


Honorable Mention | '24 Chicago Athenaeum

Honor Award | 2022 AIA Aspire

Honor Award | 2022 AIA North Carolina

Honor Award | 2024 AIA Triangle



GATEWAY PLAZA

2020 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead

Located along one of Raleigh's primary arterial roads, this adaptive reuse project transforms a forsaken 1960s strip mall into a new destination. The project's most visible intervention is a wayfinding and identity tower that reinterprets the familiar shopping center corner element, trading traditional heavy forms for a diaphanous, light-filtering structure.

Perforated cladding wraps the tower, creating a dynamic canvas for shifting light, color, and opacity throughout the day. Each cladding panel, fabricated from raw perforated sheet steel on a CNC break, features a randomized panel width and flange length. Overlapping flanges vary transparency and cast layered shadows across the surface.

On-site mockups guide refinement of responsiveness to context and light. At night, integrated lighting reverses the visual experience, dissolving the solid form into an interior glow that guides evening visitors and activates the corner with a welcoming presence.



CLARK Townhouses

2020 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Lead



FAIRWEATHER

2020 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead



BANBURY House

2020 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Lead



716 OFFICES

2019 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead, Builder

EXHIBIT 3.6

A study of archetypal brownstone typology influenced the scale, arrangement, and sidewalk connection of this multi-family design. This modern evolution relies on **restraint, rigor, and rhythm** to individualize units over excessive material use and garish massing. Brick was selected to convey **permanence** and establish an acoustic buffer between urban environment and private living. The contrasting standing seam metal telegraphs the interior service program and anchors a thin entry canopy. An oversized vertical stair shaft **allows natural light** into the lower levels. **Outdoor spaces on three levels** connect owners to the street, trees, and sky.

This 45-unit **density based infill** project is situated between the central business district and a mid to low-density tree-lined neighborhood. A podium introduces **commercial retail** and **live-work units**. Upper floors house residential units each with **operable windows and occupiable outdoor spaces**. Using grade as an asset, separate on-grade vehicular entries remove the necessity for a ramp and minimize the overall parking footprint. The massing responds to **complex zoning restrictions** and a high-voltage transmission line by stepping up in height and angling in plan. Recessing the podium generates shaded, urban patio space along the sidewalk. Post-tension structure minimizes slab depth to increase floor-to-ceiling heights and **glazing opportunities**. The deployment of masonry and metal siding **eliminate life cycle maintenance demands**.

Designed as a supporting structure to an existing 1960s vintage Fred Carter Williams modernist residence, this new home shares a pool and courtyard with the original house, achieving seamless visual and physical integration as if both were conceived together. A primary challenge was the 15 foot grade difference between the two properties. Balancing the site section was executed to maintain a single-story street elevation to reinforce the **contextual scale and form** continuity. The new residence complements the original through sloping rooflines, durable brick, and expansive fenestration, echoing the original architect's composition of stone and glass.

A mechanic's garage was converted into a commercial office by celebrating the building's original shell and openings **in lieu of razing and replacing**. Large, steel-plate wrappers with direct-set glazing and **operable ventilation windows** were added to consolidate existing garage bays. Where cars once entered, **natural daylight floods in** and views out are unobstructed. Consolidating service areas in the floor plan provides spatial separation without masking the texture and rhythm of the existing double-T roof structure. To bolster community space and soften the pedestrian experience, a courtyard with **shade trees replaced a parking lot** between the sidewalk and building.

RECOGNITION



Merit Award | 2022 AIA Aspire
Honor Award | 2021 AIA North Carolina
Merit Award | 2021 AIA Triangle

RECOGNITION



Merit Award | 2021 AIA Aspire
Honor Award | 2020 AIA Triangle
Honor Award | 2019 AIA North Carolina



CHAPPELL SMITH House

2019 | Raleigh, NC
Partner, Design Lead

An **infill property** was created by subdividing an existing property in a **mixed-use urban neighborhood**. The arrangement of interior spaces and massing provides privacy. The garage, owner entry, and guest suite are set at a lower elevation to create separation from the main living spaces and buffer an adjacent commercial parking lot to the south. Upper level bedrooms and a vertical kitchen cabinetry wall split along an entry axis, yielding a **double-height** living volume with backyard views. **Skylights** enrich the tall space with light and highlight an elevated “catwalk,” while solid walls screen an adjacent residence to the north. Vertical circulation, expressed in the exterior form, completes the composition.

RECOGNITION



Merit Award | 2018 AIA North Carolina



BERTIE Houses

2019 | Raleigh, NC
Partner, Design Co-Lead

310 and 312 Bertie Drive are two single-family **infill** houses challenged by steep slopes and a blue line stream with riparian buffer zones. Careful coordination with environmental consultants ensured compliance with regulations while configuring small house footprints along the edge of buffer limits. Full-height walk-out basements negotiate the grade change and position living spaces to **optimize views and light** on elevation with the tree canopy. The project strikes a delicate balance between environmental stewardship, **regulatory demands**, and practical living, demonstrating how thoughtful design can create sensitive, **contextual responses** on even the most constrained sites.



LAFERA WILSON House

2019 | Raleigh, NC
Partner, Design Lead

This residence is sited along a ridge to mitigate drainage, capture views, and balance grading. Two opposing shed roofs shelter a public and private wing, each appearing “flat” from the street to satisfy the owner’s preference for flat roofs while complying with the design covenant’s prohibition against them. Each wing shifts in opposite directions along an axial spine of continuous casework. One end is indented to shelter entry and the other to frame the owner’s Japanese maple. Roof extensions **thrust the inside out** and provide exterior shelter to spaces. To distinguish volumes, the public wing is articulated with **floor-to-ceiling glazing** and the private wing is more solid with curated window placement.

RECOGNITION



Honor Award | 2019 AIA North Carolina
Merit Award | 2020 AIA Triangle



PLEIADES

2019 | Durham, NC
Partner, Design Co-Lead

This planned development of four houses and a shared pocket park fronting a pedestrian street **connects adjacent residential and commercial neighborhoods**. Easements and deed restrictions were crafted for shared amenities and **increased density** otherwise inhibited by conventional zoning. Ground floor spaces were positioned to provide privacy between houses without **diminishing the visual connection** to the front porch/street and the back porch/pocket park. Two house types differentiated by roof form provide rhythm and diversity along the street, projecting **volume, shadow, and light** from inside spaces.

RECOGNITION



Merit Award | 2021 AIA Triangle
Honor Award | 2020 AIA Aspire
Merit Award | 2019 AIA North Carolina

EXHIBIT 3.3



CARROLL House

2018 | Raleigh, NC
 Partner, Design Co-Lead


In lieu of complete demolition, **all masonry and structurally adequate components were repurposed** from the 1920s era masonry bungalow when re-envisioned as a contemporary home for two large families joining under one roof. The hallway of the original four square plan was replaced with a new open-riser stair and **20' of continuous skylight glazing** above. Ground floor spaces connect through an open floor plan and deploy windows placed carefully to retain privacy. A delicate elevated back terrace gathers breezes. A standing seam metal fascia created in **collaboration between the architect and the roofer** on site extends down to serve as siding and wraps to create a front porch roof unifying the composition.

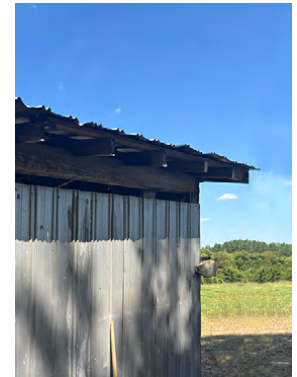


BB House

2018 | Raleigh, NC
 Design Co-Lead

Uniting a couple after years of living in separate houses on the same block required an abundance of ground floor area within **restrictive corner lot setbacks**. The design extends the footprint within the setback boundaries, stacking secondary bedrooms and utility spaces above, and **joins the combined households** under a wrapping roof. Shared public areas connect the separate programs in a **light filled, double-height space** that opens to a private courtyard bordered by a cast-in-place landscape wall to provide retreat and security. The completed design harmoniously unites the two families under one roof.

RECOGNITION 
Merit Award | 2023 AIA Aspire
Honor Award | 2022 AIA Triangle
Merit Award | 2020 AIA North Carolina



CC PAVILION

2018 | Cabarrus County, NC
 Partner, Design Co-Lead

Located on family land in the rural Piedmont region of North Carolina, the client and project team honor a generational legacy of tending the land by sourcing abundant, **renewable materials directly from the site to support construction** and benefit aging structures on the property. Expressive concrete is proposed to fortify connection to the earth and signal the permanence of the pavilion, which adds an outdoor terrace, covered parking, and a shower to an existing residence. Collaborating **closely with skilled concrete tradespeople**, the team felled select pine trees on-site and milled boards to line the formwork used to cast the board-formed concrete. After the pour was complete, the boards were **removed and repurposed** elsewhere on the property to repair structural deficiencies and replace cladding on the farm's barns.



PARKS House

2018 | Raleigh, NC
Partner, Design Lead

After the career stress of owning an urban clothing store, the client sought refuge on a heavily wooded site at the end of a gravel road. The design aims to serve as a transitional threshold between arrival and private forest views. Offset, stacking volumes and subdued materials, **including custom metal siding panels fabricated on the roofer's CNC press break**, blend with the surrounding forest, hiding **light filled volumes** inside. Skewed geometries orient views toward the trees to the east and creek to the west. **Envisioned as a Wunderkammer**, or "cabinet of wonder," the interior spaces strive to be a backdrop for the owner's collection of quirky, treasured objects assembled over decades.

RECOGNITION



Honor Award | 2018 AIA North Carolina



STATE OF BEER

2017 | Raleigh, NC
Partner, Design Co-Lead, Builder

Celebrating the craft of beer making is central to the organizing elements and **material innovations** at State of Beer. As a "left-over" space with minimal frontage and narrow, long suite proportions within a tangled downtown building, the design solutions contended with odd overlapping tenants and fire separations, including an adjacent middle school located both above and below. To design and **cast the custom, bronze panels** that clad the centrally located fountainhead, **a local casting artist built a temporary foundry** in the Raleigh Architecture Company shop. Custom fabricated and installed light fixtures frame the panels. Their placement on each side illuminates the bronze panels and reclaimed maple bowling alley bar unifying them into a singular, luminous focal point.

EXHIBIT 3.8



STANDARD FOODS

2016 | Raleigh, NC
Partner, Design Co-Lead

The all-locally sourced downtown grocery store, butcher shop, market, and restaurant hybrid's uses are delineated by suspended overhead clouds of **reclaimed heart pine** to allow uninhibited spatial flow between functions. The market's tightly organized pattern of aisles is mimicked by strategically placing benches and tables parallel to the shelving units. Rich, earthy interior materials of stone, wood, and **custom cast bronze detailing** supplement the pine to reinforce a concept dedicated to exploring the connection between nature and table. Weathered steel slats on the exterior trace the structure's upper edge and provide shading for windows that **frame views** of the Raleigh City Farm, whose crops supply the kitchen and adjacent community.



POWERS House

2016 | Raleigh, NC
Partner, Design Lead

At a busy intersection near downtown, the design for this **infill residence** responds to the opposing conditions of the client's desire for retreat and joining the urban context. Spaces open in a gradient of layers, from private to public. Bedrooms and office areas tuck away from the street, while a double-height living space with an **articulated steel catwalk, stair**, and large openings connect to an exterior courtyard made private by a slatted screen wall. A projecting roofline, formed by inverted trusses, shelters an upper-level patio and counters the angular geometry of the privacy wall.

RECOGNITION



Merit Award | 2016 AIA North Carolina



EDENTWINS

2015 | Raleigh, NC

Partner, Design Co-Lead, Builder

EXHIBIT 3.2

Two adjacent single-family houses perch above a three-lane, one-way thoroughfare that connects residential neighborhoods with downtown. The design is organized around a **shared central courtyard** that visually and spatially connects the houses and families to one another. Small buildable areas and tight zoning restrictions influenced the compact linear footprints and projecting forms. Front porches, shaded by a cantilevered second floor, link the houses and reinforce the existing vernacular and street edge. Conceived of as fraternal twins, the houses share traits, but retain their own identities.

RECOGNITION



Honor Award | 2016 AIA S Atlantic Region
Honor Award | 2015 AIA North Carolina
AIA Triangle | 2019 Merit Award



ECHOVIEW Fiber Mill

2012 | Weaverville, NC

Design Lead

EXHIBIT 3.10

The first newly constructed textile processing facility in North Carolina in twenty-five years was envisioned as a crossroads for industry and community. The design echoes the process of turning fleece into fiber. Three core-ten steel roof forms, each clad in a subtly different **custom siding profile**, represent the three distinct staples of the alpaca coat, each with a distinct fiber length or texture. Cypress cladding symbolizes the more vulnerable body of the animal with the fleece removed. As they patina, the core-ten and cypress cladding will merge with the vernacular barns and outbuildings of the western North Carolina landscape.

RECOGNITION



Honor Award | 2012 AIA North Carolina
Honor Award | 2012 AIA Triangle
COTE Award | 2012 AIA North Carolina
LEED Gold Certified



NCMA ART AS SHELTER

2008 | Raleigh, NC

Design Co-Lead, Builder

Designed and built as an integral part of the North Carolina Museum of Art's 'art-in-service' program, the structure offers visitors a sheltered place to sit and reflect on a sculpture park and public greenway. Viewed as an object in the landscape or experienced from within, the pavilion offers veiled panoramas of the surroundings. Large clear spans promote use as an indoor/outdoor classroom for art and nature learning. Wrapped in varying widths of **perforated metal bands**, visitor experiences change with the seasons and viewer's vantage point. A metallic "skin" reflects the colors of the surrounding grass and sky dissolving into the natural landscape beyond.

RECOGNITION



Small Project | 2010 AIA National Awards
Honor Award | 2009 AIA S Atlantic Region
Honor Award | 2008 AIA North Carolina
Merit Award | 2009 AIA Triangle Award



A HIKER'S REFUGE

2003 | Great Smoky Mountains, NC

Design Lead

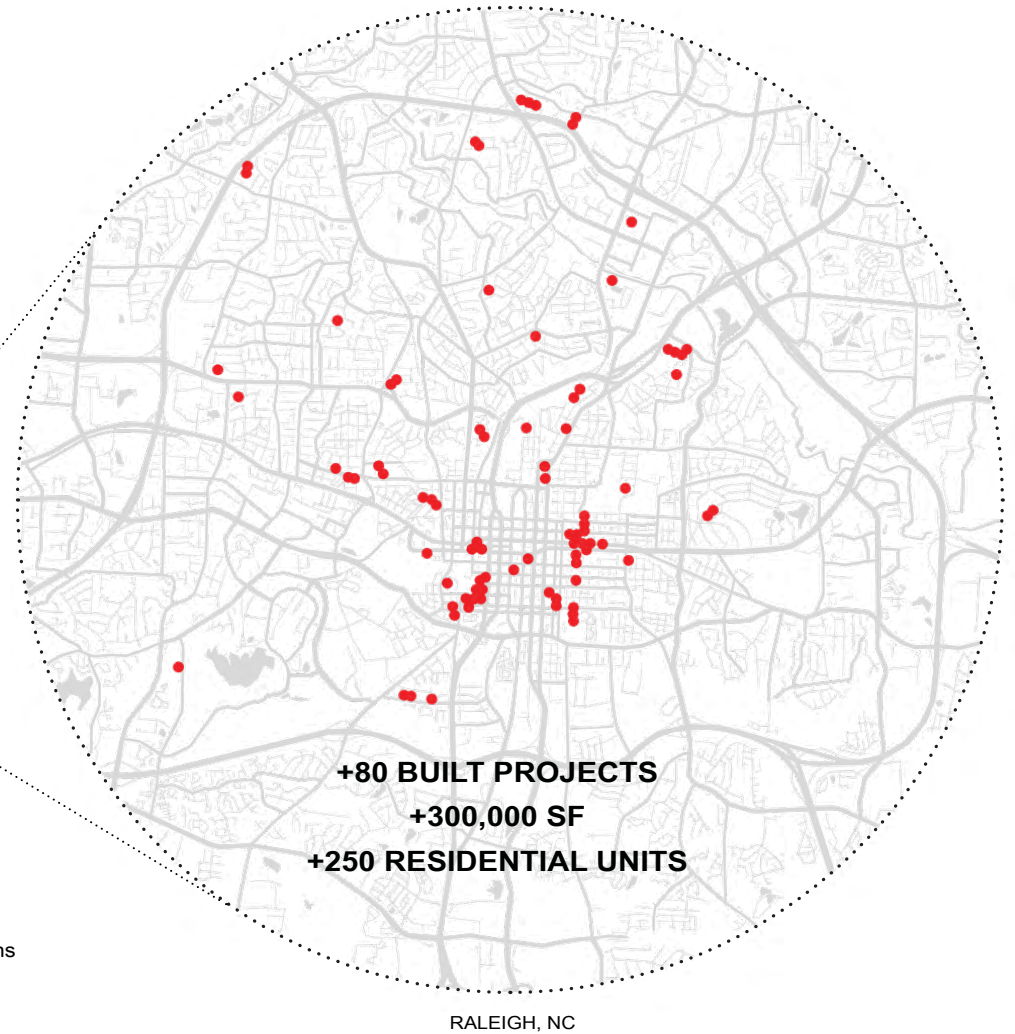
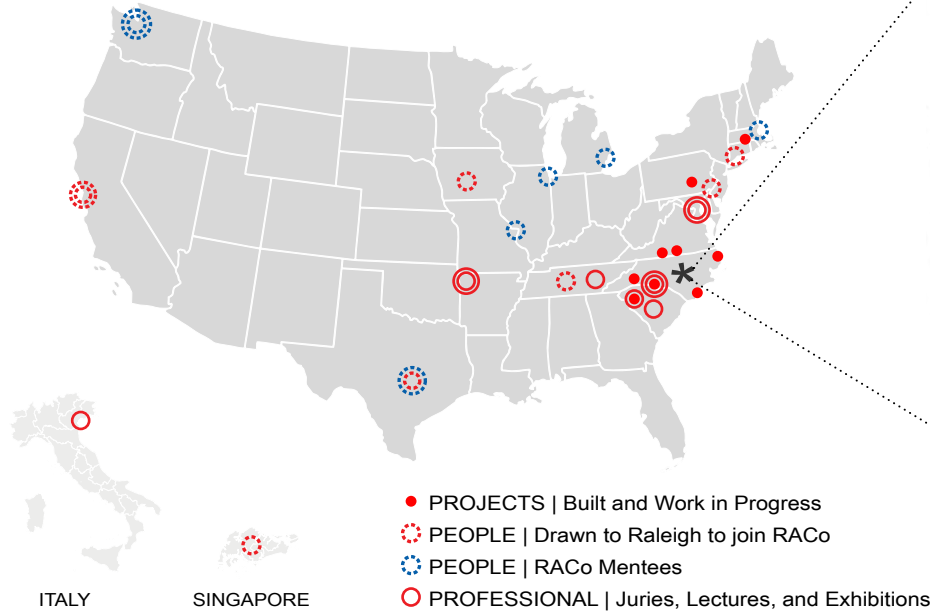
A Hiker's Refuge redefines the overnight shelter as both destination and communal ritual. Perched on Mount Buckley along mile 199 of the Appalachian Trail, the structure is built by those who use it, each thru-hiker carrying a single building module from nearby Kuwohi (formerly Clingmans Dome). This **material innovation** fosters a collective construction process, deepening the connection between user and place. The trail passes along and through the heart of the building, opening to a view platform that captures sweeping vistas. Solar power, rainwater harvesting, and sand filtration enable **off-grid functionality**. More than shelter, the refuge becomes a shared space of reflection, resilience, and restoration.

RECOGNITION

Thesis Awards:
Best Project | '03 UNCC COA
Best Design Representation | '03 UNCC COA

“Firms like Robby’s are making a difference because they are showing how we can do things appropriate to our place that inspire other places. Thank you for making Raleigh and North Carolina a better place.”

FRANK HARMON, FAIA

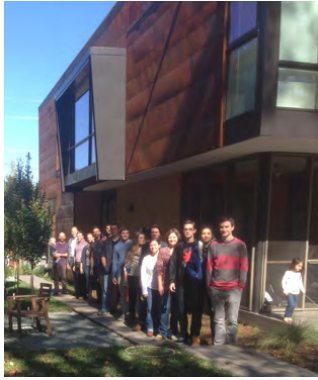


REACH & RETURN

As co-founder of The Raleigh Architecture Company, a small firm in Raleigh, NC, Robby Johnston leads a practice known for progressive, **architecture rooted in place, craft, and material innovation**. Since its founding in 2012, the firm has built a diverse portfolio spanning single-family, multi-family, hospitality, recreation, and workplace typologies. Robby’s work has earned over seventy design awards and continues to be featured in exhibitions, lectures, and publications around the world. His leadership **attracts national talent** and helps position Raleigh as a sought-after hub for architectural practice. Through public lectures, academic involvement, and ongoing mentorship, Robby extends the firm’s influence beyond the region while actively nurturing a vibrant local design community.

PLACE CATALYST

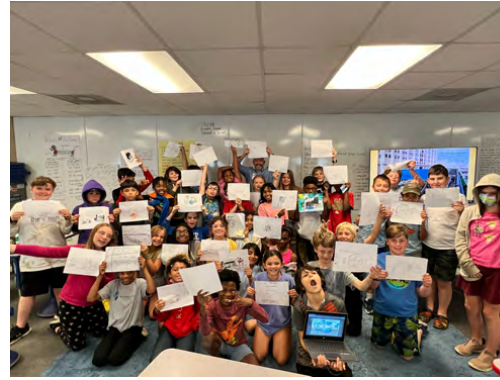
Robby has methodically reshaped Raleigh’s urban fabric by orchestrating the completion of over **80 projects** within the city’s inner beltline since 2012. His focus on adaptive reuse and strategic infill has activated or introduced **over 300,000 square feet** of development and **250 residential units**, all accomplished without displacing existing residents or structures. From revitalizing key corridors like New Bern and Edenton to catalyzing growth on West South Street, his work thoughtfully activates underutilized sites, enhances connectivity, and reinforces Raleigh’s identity as a vibrant, livable city. This deep civic commitment is embodied in his firm’s very name, a promise to the city he helps to build.



UNCC COA student tour



Presenting to US Modernist nonprofit



Volunteering at a local elementary school



Diversity Architecture [DA] Fellows

CIVIC SERVICE

Community Participation

2012-Present

As an architect, Robby believes the buildings he creates should serve their place, culture, and the people who live there. As an extension of this value, his firm, The Raleigh Architecture Company (RACo) is named to reflect a commitment to local identity and impact. He has served on the **City of Raleigh** Design Review Commission and on **Habitat for Humanity** of Wake County's Construction and Land Committee. Robby regularly partners with **local elementary schools** to introduce young students to architecture and hosts **high school students** for intensive shadowing opportunities. In addition to regularly serving as a guest critic at North Carolina State University's **College of Design**, Robby contributes time and sponsorship to **Real Matter Workshop**, an annual two-week intensive studio focused on architecture, urban design, and civic engagement for college students. Each spring and fall, RACo hosts scholarship fellows from **Diversify Architecture [DA]** to support the affiliation's mission to help expand BIPOC representation in the profession. Extending his reach beyond design, Robby has held a **governor-appointed** position on the **North Carolina State Board** of Athletic Trainers, worked in support of **Urban Ministries** of Wake County in their mission in crisis to provide food, medicine, and shelter and traveled to Honduras to assist **Montana de Luz** in their efforts to provide safe environments and healthcare to individuals affected by HIV/AIDS.

"We have been honored by the whole-hearted involvement of Robby and his team in the work of [Diversify Architecture]. Beyond the significant financial commitment his firm has made to our mission, he has given his time, energy, and encouragement to so many of our students and Fellows. His commitment to serving our community and to bolstering the future of our profession is a shining example of the kind of citizen an Architect should be."

JAKE HEFFINGTON, [DA] Founder



“The project brings a time honored typology, the row house, to an area not familiar with such housing, but its introduction and the skillful way the architect treated the units is a benefit for the surrounding community.”

SUSAN BARNES, Skylab Architecture, Jury Chair
2022 AIA North Carolina Design Excellence Awards
Clark Townhouses (right)

HONORS AND AWARDS

International (01):

2021 **Venice Biennale of Architecture**, Venice, Italy, “A South Forty” Exhibition

AIA Chapter Awards (02):

2023 **Henry Kamphoefner Prize**, AIA North Carolina Chapter Award
2022 **Firm of the Year Award**, AIA Triangle

National (06):

2025 **America’s Best-In-State Residential Architects**, Forbes Magazine
2024 **Merit Award**, American Architecture Awards, Vault Craft, Chicago Athenaeum
Honorable Mention, American Architecture Awards, Jones Street, Chicago Athenaeum
Honorable Mention, American Architecture Awards, Hartwell, Chicago Athenaeum
America’s Top 200 Residential Architects, Forbes Magazine
2010 **Small Projects Award**, Art as Shelter, AIA National

Regional (09):

2024 **Honor Award**, Jones Street Houses, AIA Aspire
2023 **Citation Award**, BB House, AIA Aspire
2022 **Honor Award**, Hartwell, AIA Aspire
Merit Award, Vault Craft, AIA Aspire
Merit Award, Clark Townhouses, AIA Aspire
2021 **Merit Award**, 716 Offices, AIA Aspire
2020 **Honor Award**, Pleiades, AIA Aspire
2016 **Honor Award**, Edentwins, AIA South Atlantic Region
2009 **Honor Award**, Art as Shelter, AIA South Atlantic Region



State (17):

2025 **Honor Award**, Sycamore Court, AIA North Carolina
2024 **Honor Award**, ACBD House, AIA North Carolina
2023 **Honor Award**, Jones Street Houses, AIA North Carolina
2021 **Honor Award**, Clark Townhouses, AIA North Carolina
2020 **Honor Award**, Greene Klem House, AIA North Carolina
Merit Award, BB House, AIA North Carolina
2019 **Honor Award**, 716 Offices, AIA North Carolina
Honor Award, LaFera Wilson House, AIA North Carolina
Merit Award, Pleiades, AIA North Carolina
2018 **Merit Award**, Chappell Smith House, AIA North Carolina
Honor Award, Parks House, AIA North Carolina
Merit Award, Hungry Neck House, AIA North Carolina
2016 **Merit Award**, Powers House, AIA North Carolina
2015 **Honor Award**, Edentwin, AIA North Carolina
2012 **Honor Award**, Echoview Fiber Mill, AIA North Carolina
COTE Award, Echoview Fiber Mill, AIA North Carolina
2008 **Honor Award**, Art as Shelter, AIA North Carolina



2.2 // AWARDS, HONORS, & RECOGNITION

“This is artful design. The jury appreciated the playful, well proportioned composition of space light and material. The thoughtful detailing results in a casual sophistication that compliments the buildings siting and indoor/outdoor connections.”

MELISSA FARLING, Principal at Multistudio, Jury Chair
2022 AIA North Carolina Design Excellence Awards
ACBD House (bottom right)

Local (18):

- 2025 **Honor Award**, ACBD House, AIA Triangle
- 2024 **Honor Award**, Hartwell, AIA Triangle
 - Honor Award**, Jones Street Houses, AIA Triangle
- 2022 **Honor Award**, BB House, AIA Triangle
- 2021 **Merit Award**, Clark Townhouses, AIA Triangle
 - Merit Award**, Pleiades, AIA Triangle
- 2020 **Honor Award**, 716 Offices, AIA Triangle
 - Merit Award**, LaFera Wilson House, AIA Triangle
- 2019 **Merit Award**, Edentwins, AIA Triangle
 - Jury Selection**, Residential Architecture Tour, Greene Klem House, AIA Triangle
 - Jury Selection**, Residential Architecture Tour, LaFera Wilson House, AIA Triangle
- 2016 **Merit Award**, Hungry Neck House, AIA Triangle
- 2015 **Jury Selection**, Residential Architecture Tour, Hungry Neck House, AIA Triangle
- 2014 **Jury Selection**, Residential Architecture Tour, Edentwins, AIA Triangle
- 2013 **Honor Award**, Echoview Fiber Mill, AIA Triangle
- 2010 **Merit Award**, GREENville House, AIA Triangle
 - Gail Lindsey Award**, GREENville House, AIA Triangle
- 2009 **Honor Award**, Art As Shelter, AIA Triangle

Other (26):

- 2025 **Sir Walter Raleigh Community Appearance Award**, Jones Street Houses
 - Selection**, Modapalooza Fall Tour, Idyle Townhouses, NC Modernist
- 2023 **Anthemion Award**, Capital Area Preservation, Vault Craft
- 2023 **Selection**, Modapalooza Spring Tour, Jones Street Houses, NC Modernist
 - Selection**, Modapalooza, Spring Tour, Woodburn House, NC Modernist
- 2022 **Environmental Award**, Urban Adaptive Reuse, 716 Offices, City of Raleigh
 - Sir Walter Raleigh Community Appearance Award**, Vault Craft
 - Sir Walter Raleigh Community Appearance Award**, Hartwell
- 2020 **Sir Walter Raleigh Community Appearance Award**, Clark Townhouses
 - Sir Walter Raleigh Community Appearance Award**, Gateway Plaza
 - Sir Walter Raleigh Community Appearance Award**, Trophy West Morgan

- 2019 **Selection**, Modapalooza Spring Tour, Chappell Smith House, NC Modernist
 - Selection**, Modapalooza Fall Tour, Bertie Drive Houses, NC Modernist
 - Sir Walter Raleigh Community Appearance Award**, 716 Offices
- 2018 **Selection**, Modapalooza Spring Tour, Carroll House, NC Modernist
 - Selection**, Modapalooza Spring Tour, Parks House, NC Modernist
 - Selection**, Modapalooza Fall Tour, BB House, NC Modernist
 - Selection**, Modapalooza Fall Tour, Moseley House, NC Modernist
- 2017 **Selection**, Modapalooza Spring Tour, Tarboro House, NC Modernist
 - Gold Award**, Hungry Neck House, Greater Triangle Stewardship
 - Matsumoto Prize**, Second People's Choice, Hungry Neck House, NC Modernist
- 2016 **Sir Walter Raleigh Community Appearance Award**, Hungry Neck Urban Infill
 - Selection**, Modapalooza Fall Tour, Wynne Street Houses, NC Modernist
- 2012 **LEED Gold Certified**, Echoview Fiber Mill
- 2010 **LEED Silver for Homes**, GREENville House
- 2008 **Sir Walter Raleigh Community Appearance Award**, Art as Shelter

Academic (04):

- 2021 **Distinguished Alumni Award**, UNC Charlotte School of Architecture
- 2003 **Thesis Award, Best Architectural Project**, UNC Charlotte College of Architecture
 - Thesis Award, Best Design Representation**, UNC Charlotte College of Architecture
- 2002 **Antwerp Belgium Exchange Award**, UNC Charlotte College of Architecture



2.3 // PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA

Residential Design Magazine

ACBD House Feature
January 2026

Forbes Magazine

America's Top Residential Architects,
Best in State
September 2025

Architect Magazine Online

Featured Homes, Edentwins
June 2016-Present

Forbes Magazine

America's Top 200 Residential Architects
October 2024

AN Interior

Good Form
October 2024

Residential Design Magazine

Pro-File Design/Build:
The Raleigh Architecture Company
February 2024

Triangle Home Design and Décor

Self-Guided
September 2023

Raleigh Magazine

Meet at Madre
July/August 2023

Raleigh Magazine

Oh, Mother
March 2023

Triangle Business Journal

People On The Move
September 2022

Architectural Digest

Today's Raleigh Modernist
May 2022

General Contractors Magazine

The Best Multifamily Architects – Durham
November, 2024

Home Builder Digest

The 18 Best Residential Architects North Carolina
August 2024

General Contractors Magazine

The 9 Best Multifamily Architects – Raleigh, North Carolina
January 2022

General Contractors Magazine

Top Residential Architectural Firms – North Carolina
November 2021

ModLust

September 2021

Oxford American

A South Forty
Summer 2021

Triangle Business Journal

Raleigh Condos Ready
August 2010

Walter Magazine

The Carolina School
January/February 2020

Raleigh Magazine

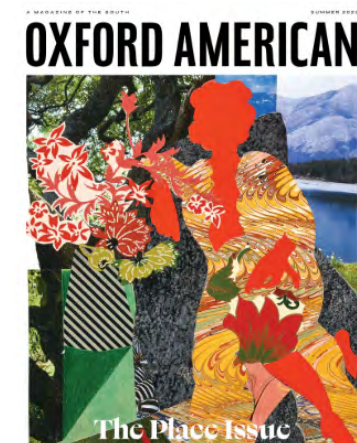
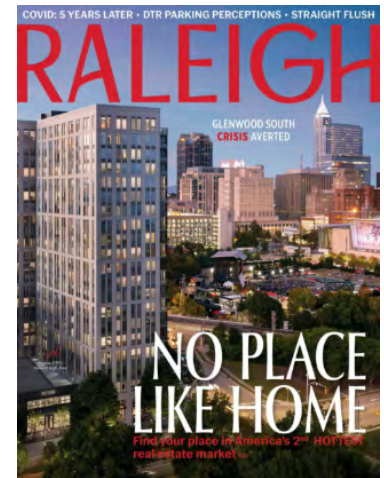
Raleigh's Iconic Architecture: Past, Present and Future
February 2020

Our State Magazine

Capital Cool
September 2019

Raleigh Magazine

Old House, New Rules
March 2019



A Modern Touch
Raleigh Magazine
August 2018

Architects + Artisans
Connections from Old Raleigh to New
January 2016

Walter Magazine
Fraternal Twins:
A Shared Future, a Modern Heritage
February 2016

Bit & Grain
Building Raleigh
December 2015

Inhabitat
Two Compact Modern Homes
Fill Challenging Lots In An Old,
Urban Neighborhood
November 2015

Triangle Business Journal
Raleigh Architects Honored for 'Edentwins'
October 2015

Curbed
How Modern Style & Matching Buildings
Re-Energized a Raleigh Neighborhood
October 2015

ABC 11 Eyewitness News
Modern Homes Come to Downtown Raleigh
October 2015

Design-Milk
Edentwin: A Compact Pair of Houses in
Downtown Raleigh
October 2015

Arch Daily
Compact Modern Duo
September 2015

Triangle Downtowner Magazine
Sustainability + Vision + Passion = RACO
August, 2015

The News & Observer
Housing Stock Near Downtown Gets a Jolt of
Modernism
July 2015

The News & Observer
Lessons from a Dream Kitchen
June 2015

The News & Observer
East of Edenton: Modernist House at Work in the
Inner City
February 2015

Huffington Post
Modern Design for Downtown Raleigh
February 2015

Architects & Artisans
A Pair of Aces for Downtown Raleigh
November 2014

The News & Observer
Modernism Without a Fuss
November 2014

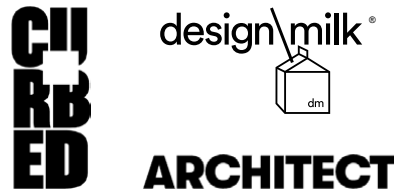
Contemporist
Dasgupta-Saucier Residence
August 2014



Oxford American
A South Forty
Summer 2021



Residential Design Magazine
Pro-File Design/Build:
The Raleigh Architecture Company and
February 2024



International Presentations & Exhibitions (01):

2021 **Selected Exhibitor**, Venice Biennale of Architecture, Venice, Italy,
"A South Forty" Exhibition

National Presentations & Exhibitions (02):

2025 **Selected Exhibitor**, The National Building Museum Exhibition, Washington, D.C.
"A South Forty" Exhibition

2022 **Selected Exhibitor**, Northwest Arkansas Exhibition, Fayetteville, AR
"A South Forty" Exhibition

Professional Juries (14):

2025 **Jury Member**, AIA Greenville, SC Design Excellence Awards
Selection Committee, Kamphoefner Prize

2024 **Jury Co-Chair**, AIA Maryland Design Excellence Awards
Selection Committee, Kamphoefner Prize

2016 **Jury Member**, AIA East Tennessee Design Excellence Awards
Jury Member, South Atlantic Region Student Design Excellence Awards

2015 **Awards Committee Member**, City of Raleigh Design Review Commission
Jury Member, Greater Triangle Stewardship Development Awards Program

2014 **Awards Committee Member**, City of Raleigh Design Review Commission
Jury Member, Greater Triangle Stewardship Development Awards Program

2013 **Awards Committee Member**, City of Raleigh Design Review Commission

2012 **Awards Committee Chair**, AIA Triangle Residential Tour

2011 **Awards Committee Member**, AIA Triangle Residential Tour

2010 **Jury Member**, AIA Columbia, SC Design Excellence Awards

Academic Juries:

Real Matter Workshop Studio:

2021–2025 **Guest Critic**, Real Matter Workshop Studio

North Carolina State University, College of Design Studios:

2007–2025 **Guest Critic**, Studios D101 – D502

University North Carolina at Charlotte, School of Architecture Studios:

2007–2025 **Guest Critic**, Studios Arch 3102, 7103



2024 Excellence in Design Awards

Meet the Jury

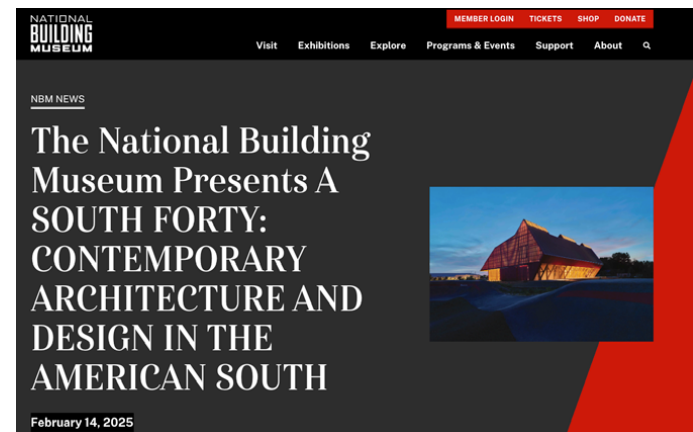
Co-Chairs



Katherine Hogan, FAIA
Katherine Hogan Architects



Robby Johnston, AIA
Raleigh Architecture Company





Professional and Academic Presentations (22):

- 2024 **Presenter**, AIA Maryland Design Excellence Awards
- Panelist**, UNC Charlotte School of Architecture, House(ing)
- Selected Exhibitor**, UNC Charlotte School of Architecture Symposium, House(ing)
- 2020 **Guest Lecturer**, UNC Charlotte School of Architecture Materials & Assembly Arch 4301
- Guest Lecturer**, NCSU College of Design Tectonics and Craft ARC 530
- 2019 **Tour Leader**, UNC Charlotte School of Architecture "The Fairweather" Raleigh, NC
- Guest Lecturer**, AIA East Tennessee Design Feed Lecture Series
- Guest Lecturer**, UNC Charlotte School of Architecture Materials & Assembly Arch 4301
- 2018 **Guest Lecturer**, UNC Charlotte School of Architecture Materials & Assembly Arch 4301
- 2017 **Guest Lecturer**, UNC Charlotte School of Architecture Materials & Assembly Arch 4301
- Guest Lecturer**, NCSU Triangle Modern Architecture Bryan Bell
- Panelist**, Urban Land Institute
- 2016 **Presenter**, South Atlantic Region Student Design Excellence Awards
- Guest Lecturer**, UNC Charlotte School of Architecture Materials & Assembly Arch 430
- Selected Exhibitor**, UNC Charlotte School of Architecture
NAAB Accreditation Alumni Exhibition
- Guest Lecturer**, Create Your City, Think and Drink Lecture Series, Greensboro
- 2015 **Guest Lecturer**, AIA Winston Salem
- Panelist**, Urban Land Institute
- 2013 **Guest Lecturer**, AIA Charlotte Section Meeting
- Guest Lecturer**, AIA Asheville
- Presenter**, City of Raleigh Emerging Entrepreneurs
- 2011 **Guest Lecturer**, AIA Charlotte Section Meeting





“Following Robby Johnston as a student, intern, and now creator/owner of a highly successful architecture company comes as no surprise considering his creative spirit, ingenuity, and deep care for how design can improve both individuals and context. His work is widely recognized for its clarity of intent, composition of materials and form, and sensitive human dimension.”

KEN LAMBLA, FAIA Emeritus, Dean Emeritus UNCC School of Architecture

3.0 EXHIBITS

3.1 JONES STREET HOUSES

2021 | Raleigh, NC

3.2 EDENTWINS

2015 | Raleigh, NC

3.3 PLEIADES

2019 | Durham NC

3.4 SYCAMORE COURT HOUSE

2023 | Raleigh, NC

3.5 IDYLE TOWNHOUSES

2025 | Raleigh, NC

3.6 CLARK TOWNHOUSES

2020 | Raleigh, NC

3.7 OBERLIN TOWNHOUSES

2025 | Raleigh, NC

3.8 STATE OF BEER

2017 | Raleigh, NC

3.9 HARTWELL MAKERS MARKET

2021 | Raleigh, NC

3.10 ECHOVIEW FIBER MILL

2012 | Weaverville, NC



3.1 · JONES STREET HOUSES

2021 | Raleigh, NC

Design Firm: The Raleigh Architecture Company

AOR: The Raleigh Architecture Company

Candidate Role: Partner, Design Co-Lead

Recognition:

Honorable Mention | 2024 American Architecture, Chicago Athenaeum

Honor Award | 2024 AIA Aspire

Honor Award | 2024 AIA NC

Honor Award | 2024 AIA Triangle

Situated on the western boundary of Raleigh’s historic Oakwood neighborhood, a 19th-century district known for its tree-lined streets, the Jones Street Houses design subdivides an oversized corner parcel into three conforming lots. The new lots mirror a unique condition: a long, narrow property that creates the only house with block frontage. This prompts siting and scale to respond to contextual cues from homes on adjacent streets. The solution required garnering neighborhood support and navigating a restrictive sanitary easement. This context provides an opportunity to study how architecture can coexist, bound by respectful scale, reinforced street edges, and integral landscapes.

To deliver the client-requested program, two single-family homes integrate ADUs to achieve multi-generational living and minimize footprint in response to the new, urban-appropriate lot sizes. Respective radial and angular geometries harmonize with the site’s minimal and irregular buildable area. These shifts reveal spatial logic to frame private views, draw light deep into interiors, and situate personal outdoor spaces as extensions of interior program. The design’s intersection with the site slope reduces scale and maximizes thermal efficiency in tandem with a high-performance envelope. To enhance community, the design introduces a full-block sidewalk, preserves mature trees, adds over 20 new trees, and manages stormwater through a 10,000-gallon rain garden.

FRAMEWORK:

Wellness: 100% access to natural daylight, abundant glazing, natural ventilation throughout, and fully electric houses

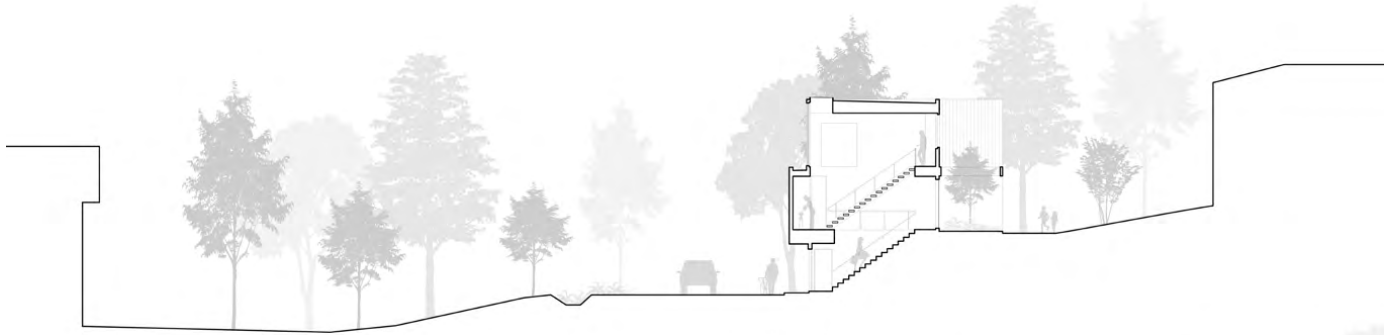
Efficiency: Solar PV, exceeds energy code by 60%, continuous thermal envelope with exterior rigid insulation, orientation to harness light and reduce solar heat gain, recycled fly ash siding, +99% reflective roof

Place: Vacant lot creation and infill, 100% stormwater management on site, new block-length sidewalk, improved walkability

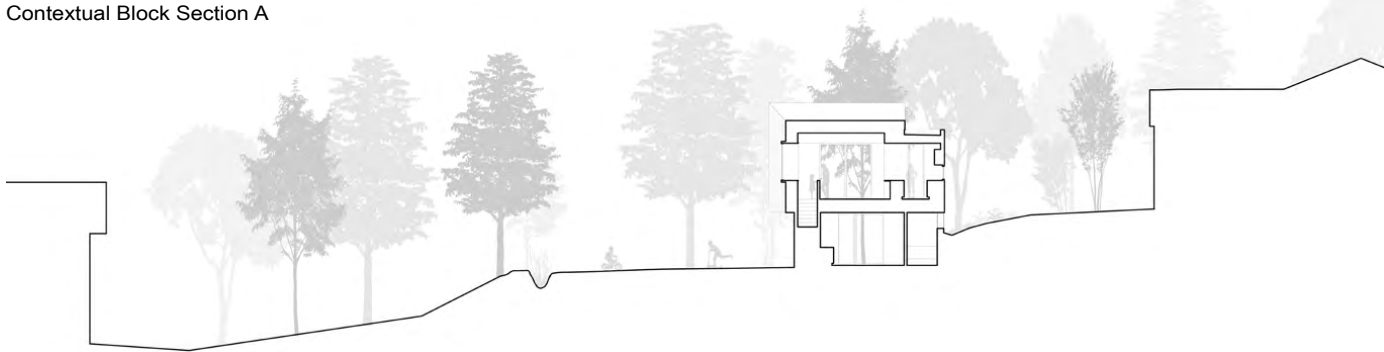
Experience: +4 living units, native, drought tolerant plantings and turf, pollinator garden, enhanced streetscape environment

*I have personal knowledge of the nominee’s responsibility for this project, in which he was largely responsible for design. **Matthew Muñoz | Owner, Client***





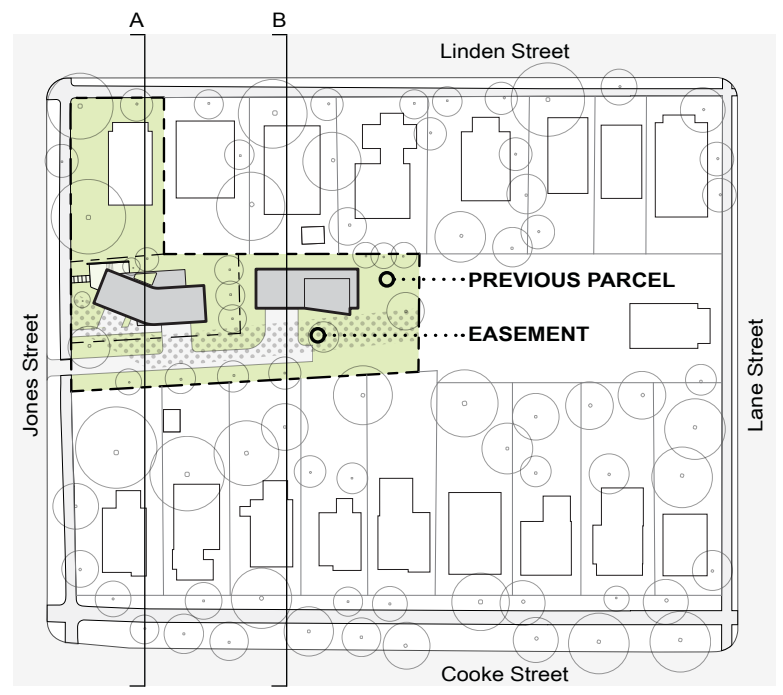
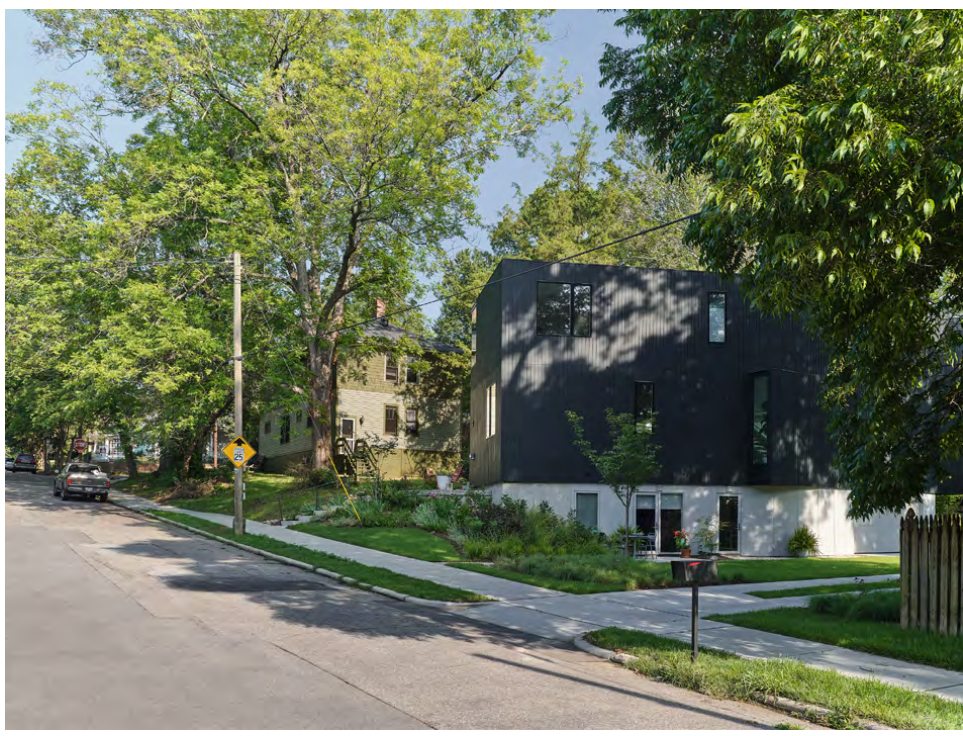
Contextual Block Section A



Contextual Block Section B

“Working with Robby showed us that great design weaves together aesthetics, deep listening, and fearless problem-solving. He transformed an overlooked urban lot into our family’s home base we use 100% of everyday where natural light choreographs our connection to the neighborhood beyond.”

MATT MUÑOZ and LARA O'BRIEN, Owners | Clients



New lots create the only frontage along Jones Street, prompting the design to take contextual cues from the siting and scale of houses on adjacent streets

“Robby gave us the warning: Great architecture changes residents. For this we are grateful. The clean lines and intentional design, the natural light and uncluttered spaces, all have permeated the way we live. After more than a decade, it still feels like a new home, but with roots.”

NABARUN DASGUPTA & ROXANNE SAUCIER | Owners, Clients

3.2 · EDENTWINS

2015 | Raleigh, NC

Design Firm: The Raleigh Architecture Company

AOR: The Raleigh Architecture Company

Candidate Role: Partner, Design Co-Lead, Builder

Recognition:

Merit Award | 2019 AIA Triangle

Honor Award | 2016 AIA South Atlantic Region

Honor Award | 2015 AIA North Carolina

Edentwins marks the start of Robby’s holistic practice focused on challenging the conventions of single-family infill, where each decision, from site acquisition to material detailing, emerges from his sense of logic, construction experimentation, and the effects of views and light on occupants.

The site organizes around a shared central courtyard to foster communal connection between two single-family dwellings and provide visual and acoustic refuge from the adjacent inbound Raleigh corridor. The two houses occupy tight lots, with windows carefully placed to avoid direct sightlines between them without diminishing access to light, air, and green space. 20-ft wide sections are articulated by steel staircases that rise through central double-height spaces, crowned by skylights equal to the building width. Infill on these previously vacant lots mends the street front with renewed walkability and visual cohesion.

Working simultaneously as architect and builder, Robby leveraged the project as a laboratory for experimentation and innovation. Reclaimed slate shingles, salvaged from a nearby historic roof, are reimagined as facade cladding through material diligence and rigorous on-site mockups. At the sister house, weathering steel panels were site-fabricated in collaboration with a roofer to synchronize proportions, alignments, and edge conditions.

FRAMEWORK:

Wellness: 100% access to natural daylight, abundant glazing, natural ventilation throughout

Efficiency: Solar PV, high SEER ducted mini splits, continuous air barrier and thermal envelope, orientation to harness light and reduce solar heat gain, recycled slate shingles, recycled content weathering steel, +99% reflective roof

Place : Vacant lot infill, enhanced streetscape, improved walkability

Experience: +2 living units, native, drought tolerant plantings and turf, enhanced streetscape environment

I have personal knowledge of the nominee’s responsibility for this project, in which he was largely responsible for design. Nabarun Dasgupta | Owner, Client

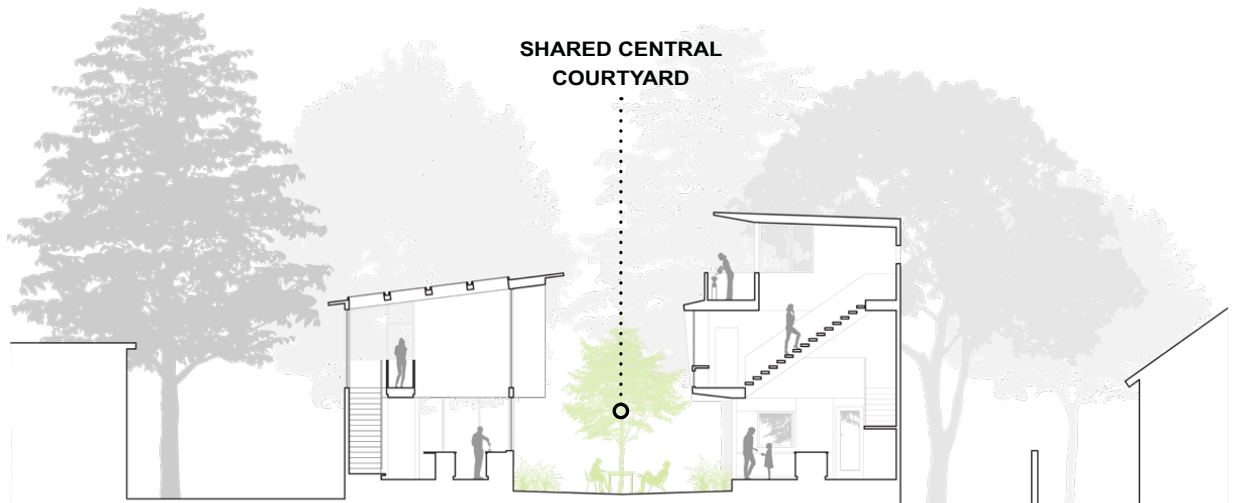




Discarded slate roof shingles repurposed as siding



Custom, site formed weathering steel panels



“With Robby’s vision we managed to creatively utilize the limited avenues within the Durham Zoning Code to create the first cohesive, intentionally planned and architecturally design forward pocket neighborhood in the city.”

STUART CULLINAN | Developer, Client



3.3 · PLEIADES

2020 | Durham, NC

Design Firm: The Raleigh Architecture Company

AOR: The Raleigh Architecture Company

Candidate Role: Partner, Design Co-Lead

Recognition:

Merit Award | 2019 AIA North Carolina

Honor Award | 2020 AIA Aspire

Merit Award | 2021 AIA Triangle

Pleiades disrupts zoning conventions to deliver urban infill that fosters community. The design optimizes by-right density on partially vacant parcels along a dead-end road where residential and commercial districts collide on Durham’s downtown fringe. Lots were recombined into three parcels along critical zoning boundaries allowing subsequent subdivision into nine lots without exceeding allowable density.

Four houses in the first phase are strategically placed on each lot to allow driveways to straddle opposing property lines via cross-access easements, paired with no-build easements to maintain required separation between structures. The rear of each lot is deeded to the community to form an equitably available and accessible shared pocket park.

Each house is identical in plan but alternates shed and gable forms that cantilever over front porches to continue a familiar residential rhythm. Ground-floor spaces connect to the outdoors via large front and rear openings, balancing privacy through solid service areas. Skylit stair volumes draw natural light into both levels, extending the modest footprints.

FRAMEWORK:

Wellness: 100% access to natural daylight, abundant glazing, natural ventilation throughout

Efficiency: Solar PV, continuous thermal envelope, orientation to harness light and reduce solar heat gain, +99% reflective roof (shed)

Place: Vacant lot infill, enhanced streetscape, improved walkability

Experience: +6 living units, native, drought tolerant plantings and turf, enhanced streetscape environment

I have personal knowledge of the nominee’s responsibility for this project, in which he was largely responsible for design.

Stuart Cullinan | Developer, Client



PHOTOS:

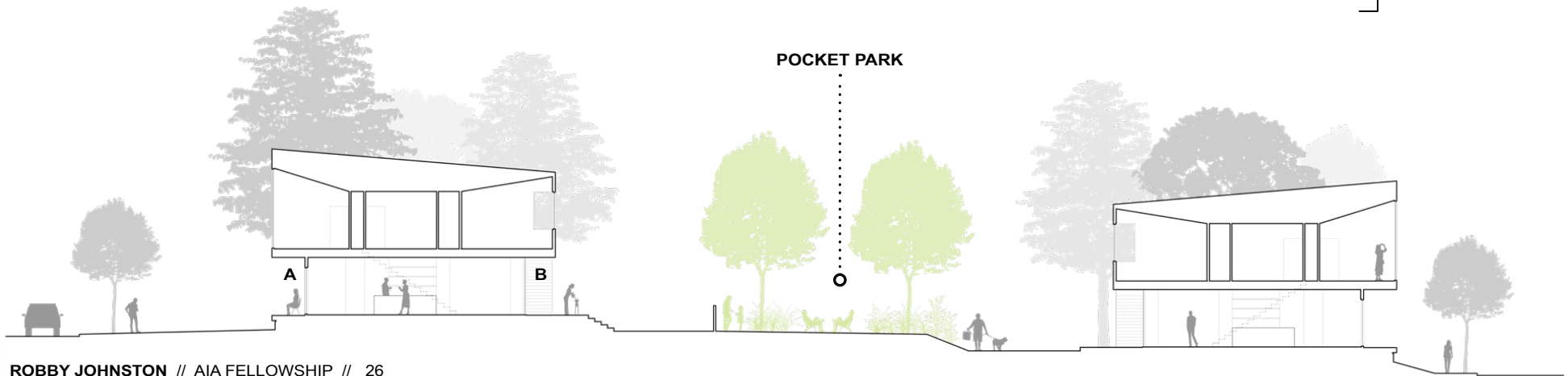
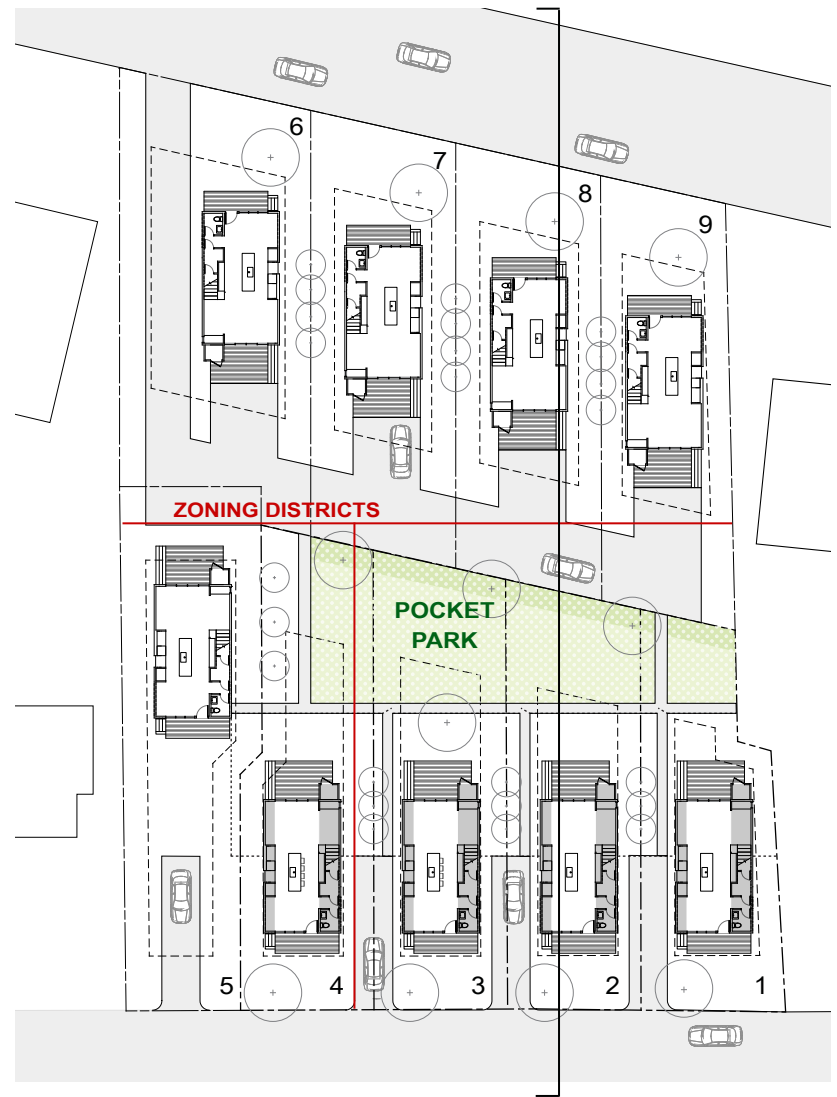
Above: Covered front porches engage street and each other

Above, Corner: Private exterior spaces commingle with the communal pocket park

Left: Large glazing direct views to the communal pocket park

DIAGRAMS:

Nine (9) new lots are formed from three, tripling density. (A) Covered front porches reinforce the existing street vernacular while (B) personal outdoor space and a shared pocket park anchor the center of the site.





3.4 · SYCAMORE COURT HOUSE

2023 | Raleigh, NC

Design Firm: The Raleigh Architecture Company

AOR: The Raleigh Architecture Company

Candidate Role: Partner, Design Co-Lead, Builder

Recognition:

Honor Award | 2025 AIA North Carolina

The design centers on a stately oak tree the clients have nurtured for years. The tree informs the architecture, shaping the building's profile and requiring sensitive siting to protect its root and canopy zones.

The roofline extends toward corner glazing in the primary bedroom, framing views of the oak's foliage as the first and last sight each day.

A meandering path beneath the tree canopy connects to a long, narrow entry corridor to contrast scale and create separation from the double-height, light-filled central volume. An uninterrupted wall of floor-to-ceiling glass opens the main interior living spaces to a private rear patio and garden. A continuous ribbon of oak casework stores the owners' day-to-day possessions and displays their most cherished objects: custom Lego sets assembled by father and daughter, a vinyl record collection, and rare crystals.

A step down in the massing yields a roof deck over the music and media rooms, buffering sound from bedroom spaces while offering an elevated outdoor retreat. The roof slope is shaped to optimize solar orientation and rain capture. An open-joint rainscreen of thermally modified, FSC-certified radiata pine is detailed to enhance resilience to North Carolina's humid subtropical climate and transition to flush perimeter slats on the east, south, and west elevations. These slat installations are highlighted on a large northwest-facing window, where they filter afternoon light and cast shifting shadows across a west-facing double-height wall at sunset, a daily effect that brings both comfort and quiet delight to the owners.

FRAMEWORK:

Wellness: 100% access to natural daylight, abundant glazing, natural ventilation throughout

Efficiency: 9,673 kWh solar PV, EV charging, battery storage, continuous air barrier and thermal envelope with subslab insulation, orientation to admit light, reduce solar heat gain, +99% reflective roof

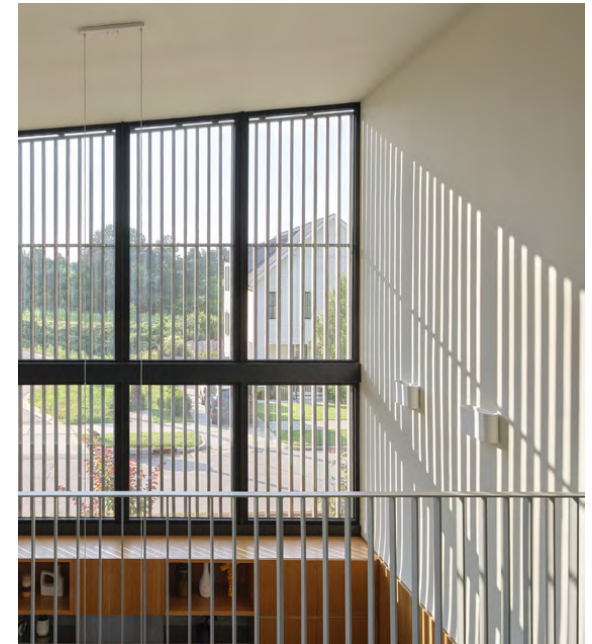
Place: Vacant lot infill, 2,150 gallon below-grade cistern, on-site landscape irrigation, 100% on-site stormwater management, improved walkability

Experience: Native, drought tolerant plantings and turf, pollinator

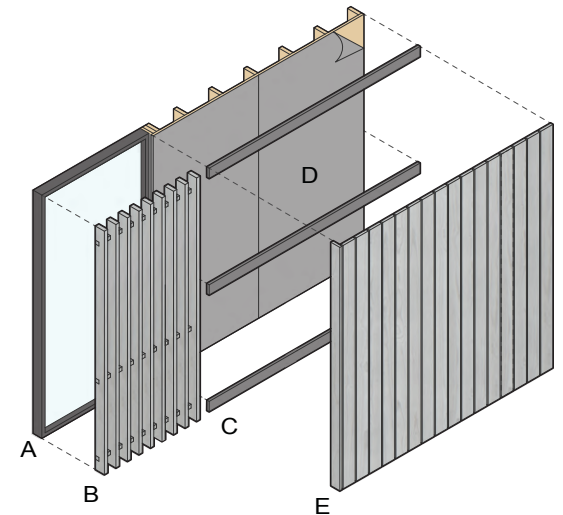
I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for this project, in which he was largely responsible for design. Katie Thompson | Owner, Client

“The house breathes together with the day as sunlight casts shadows, always surprising with new shapes, celebrates the transition of golden hour and cradles us overnight. Living in this house has generated a sense of harmony that I didn’t realize was missing.”

KATIE THOMPSON | Owner, Client



Slats are positioned to cast shadows to track the sun’s path



Glazing, Slat, Rainscreen Assembly Detail

- A High efficiency glazing
- B Site Fabricated FSC wood slatted panel
- C Permeable furring strip
- D VaporShield WRB
- E Open joint rain screen





"Robby is the first to successfully apply the principles of Raleigh's longstanding Modernist architecture tradition to urban infill and multi-family, residential design. His thoughtfully rigorous designs not only elevate the everyday experience of families and individuals; they contribute to the urban context in ways that enrich our entire community."

KENNETH LUKER, FAIA
 Founder - Studio ArchiBene | Durham, NC

3.5 · IDYLE TOWNHOUSES

2025 | Raleigh, NC

Design Firm: The Raleigh Architecture Company

AOR: The Raleigh Architecture Company

Candidate Role: Partner, Design Co-Lead

Recognition:

Net Zero Energy and Fossil Fuel Use

Indoor airPLUS

Sited on the fringe of Raleigh's Prince Hall Historic District, these ten net-zero townhouses mark a transition from single-family neighborhoods to the downtown core. Considering past and future, the project offers a model of urban density that emphasizes connection and environmental stewardship.

Two mirrored buildings stretch across a corner parcel, activating the sidewalk with a rhythmic sequence of elevated planters, entry stairs, and warm-toned front doors, each spaced to mimic adjacent homes. Photovoltaic arrays are expressed as part of the architecture, suspended above roof decks to provide shade while generating energy. Each unit operates entirely without fossil fuels, provides on-site stormwater management, and delivers healthy indoor air certified through EPA Indoor airPLUS.

Beyond performance, the project elevates the everyday by offering a progressive housing solution that strengthens the block, encourages street-level activity, and contributes to a more connected and vibrant edge of downtown.

FRAMEWORK:

Wellness: 100% access to natural daylight, abundant glazing, natural ventilation, fully electric houses

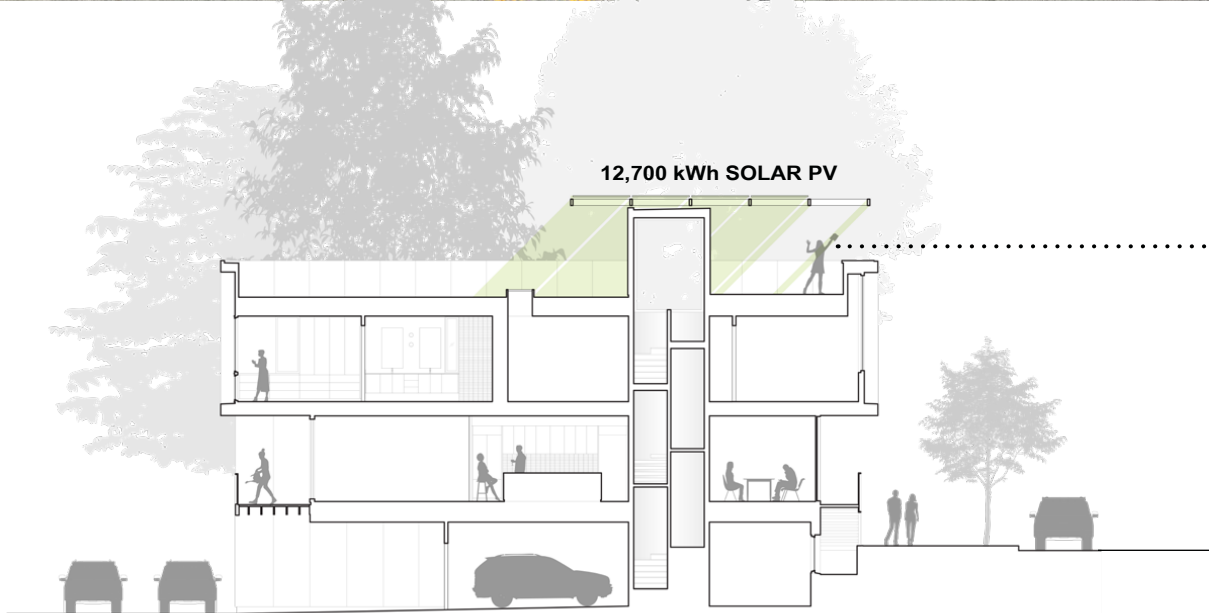
Efficiency: Net-Zero Energy & Fossil Fuels, Solar PV, continuous air barrier and thermal envelope with exterior rigid insulation, orientation to harness light and reduce solar heat gain, +99% reflective roof

Place: 100% stormwater management

Experience: +7 living units, native, drought tolerant plantings and turf, enhanced streetscape

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for this project, in which he was largely responsible for design..

Johnny Chappell | Developer, Client



Top: Vertical circulation terminates with views of horizon

Bottom: Roof decks shaded by overhead solar panels connect users with city views

“Robby’s work, energy, and passion for design have had a massive impact on Raleigh. He designs beautiful mid-scale housing in a challenging, developer-driven context. There is no colleague in our city I respect more for a consistent pursuit of design excellence across this project type.”

MATTHEW GRIFFITH, FAIA
Founder - in situ studio | Raleigh, NC



3.6 · CLARK TOWNHOUSES

2020 | Raleigh, NC

Design Firm: The Raleigh Architecture Company

AOR: The Raleigh Architecture Company

Candidate Role: Partner, Design Lead

Recognition:

Merit Award | 2022 AIA Aspire

Honor Award | 2021 AIA North Carolina

Merit Awards | 2021 AIA Triangle

The 11-unit townhouse introduces transitional density, contextual massing, and familiar rhythm to stitch together a void in the streetscape between an existing retail hub and residential neighborhood.

Archetypal brownstone elements influence the sidewalk connection, rhythm, and materiality. The elevated main living spaces are accessible by a stoop that works in tandem with an adjacent sunken terrace to negotiate an 8-ft elevation change across the depth of the site. Brick is selected to convey permanence and to perform as an acoustic buffer between the urban environment and private living. The masonry masses envelop the living and sleeping areas. A contrasting, recessed standing seam metal siding is solid and telegraphs the interior service rooms while anchoring a thin entry canopy. Alternating these restrained materials and their depth creates repetition and establishes unit autonomy.

To diminish the boundary between interior and exterior, the masonry is perforated with large window openings, and an oversized vertical stair allows natural light into the lower levels. Outdoor spaces on three levels connect owners to the street, tree canopy, and sky. The project’s use of mass and material contrast demonstrates how density can be sensitively integrated into an existing neighborhood to enhance its character and catalyze urban vitality.

FRAMEWORK:

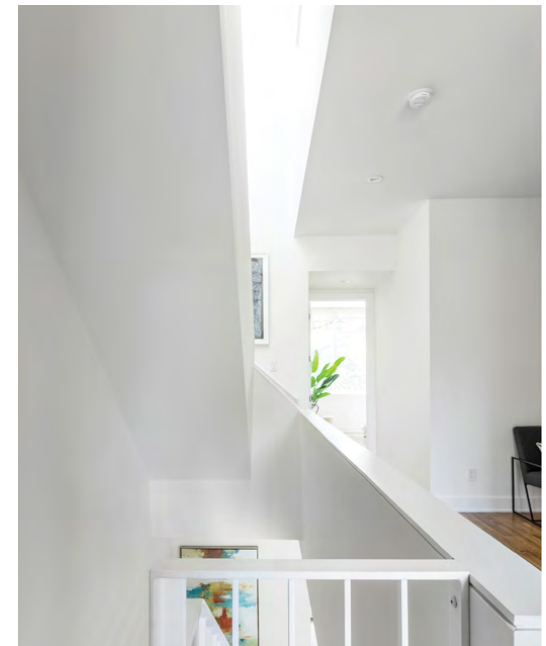
Wellness: 100% access to natural daylight, abundant glazing, natural ventilation, connection to multiple outdoor spaces

Efficiency: Durable resilient materials, orientation to harness light and reduce solar heat gain, +99% reflective roof

Place: 100% stormwater management on site, improved walkability

Experience: +7 living units, native, drought tolerant plantings and turf, enhanced streetscape environment

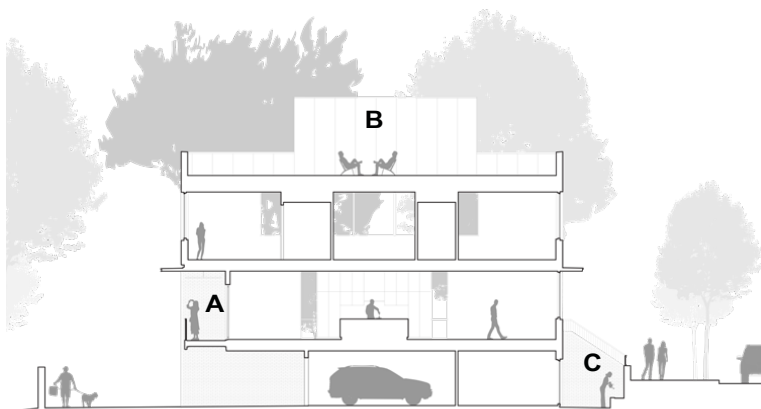
I have personal knowledge of the nominee’s responsibility for this project, in which he was largely responsible for design. Henry Lambert | Developer, Client



Oversized stair shafts channel daylight into central areas typically lacking natural illumination.



A



(A) Rear decks on the second level connect to the adjacent green space. (B) Roof decks offer views of the nearby Village District. (C) Embedded patios on the lower level provide respite and opportunities to engage with the streetscape.



B



C

“Robby Johnston and his team transformed a fragmented infill lot into a cohesive community, using privacy, rhythm, and inventive brick detailing to create calm, light-filled homes that connect to the street, enhance walkability, and strengthen the site’s relationship to its surroundings.”

JOHNNY CHAPPELL | Developer, Client



3.7 · OBERLIN TOWNHOUSES

2025 | Raleigh, NC

Design Firm: The Raleigh Architecture Company

AOR: The Raleigh Architecture Company

Candidate Role: Partner, Design Co-Lead

The challenge of this 11-unit townhouse project is creating a cohesive, livable environment on leftover property wedged between a commercial parking lot and a collector road off-ramp. The awkward site is reconciled by exploring privacy thresholds and responding to context. These strategies introduce domestic scale to interior and exterior spaces within a building volume that precisely abuts the horizontal setbacks.

The design divides the massing into two buildings bisected by an internal driveway. Building One fronts a high-volume local street. Recessed walk-up entries pair with projecting steel window boxes to generate rhythm and define unit scale. Building Two creates an intimate entry path through dense buffer landscaping that follows the angled property line adjacent to a commercial parking lot. Offsets between units mark entries and reduce the scale. Brick is the dominant material across both buildings. Shadow, texture, and banding emerge from the back with projecting flat soldier coursing to establish composition and proportion. Roof decks span front to back, capturing both the western horizon and eastern city views.

FRAMEWORK:

Wellness: 100% access to natural daylight, abundant glazing, natural ventilation throughout

Efficiency: Durable, resilient materials, orientation to harness light and reduce solar heat gain, +99% reflective roof

Place: 100% stormwater management on site, improved walkability

Experience: +9 living units, native, drought tolerant plantings and turf, enhanced streetscape

I have personal knowledge of the nominee’s responsibility for this project, in which he was largely responsible for design.

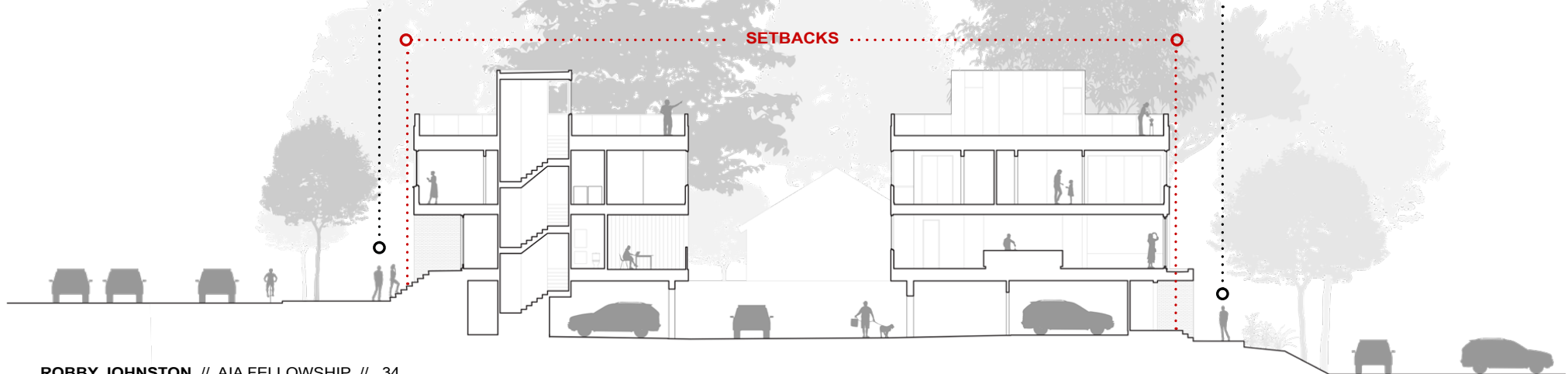
Johnny Chappell | Developer, Client



PUBLIC WALK-UP ENTRIES

PRIVATE ENTRY PATH

SETBACKS





3.8 · STATE OF BEER

2017 | Raleigh, NC

Design Firm: The Raleigh Architecture Company

AOR: Maurer Architecture

Candidate Role: Partner, Design Lead, Builder

A remnant urban space, narrow and deep, tangled within an existing building and spatially interwoven with an adjacent middle school, becomes an opportunity for experimentation. The design transforms the leftover site into a celebrated addition to the downtown streetscape.

In a testament to the belief that architecture's greatest impact lies in its material honesty, the design centers on a functional yet luminous element: an installation of custom bronze panels above the beer taps. To design and cast the panels, Johnston established a hands-on collaboration with a local artisan, constructing a temporary foundry within the The Raleigh Architecture shop. His commitment to craft continues with custom-fabricated lighting fixtures that illuminate the taps and the reclaimed maple bar below. Its salvaged wood came from a beloved bowling alley, adding an irreplaceable layer of material warmth and history to the space. The solution to the complex site challenge embraced the need for spatial ingenuity and the chance to create a rich celebration of local culture and craft.

FRAMEWORK:

Wellness: Access to natural daylight, natural ventilation

Efficiency: Durable, resilient materials, recycled content material finishes

Place: Activated vacant tenant suite, sidewalk adjacent courtyard, transparent street facade

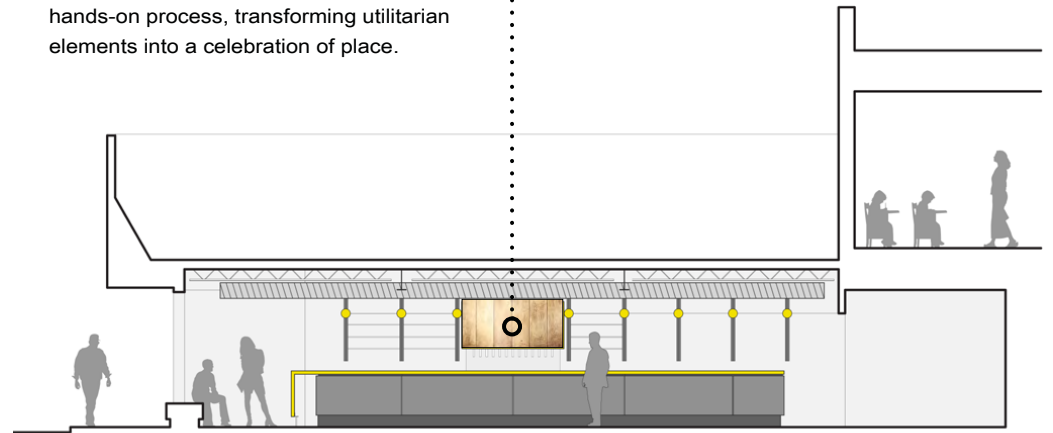
Experience: Sidewalk patio, enhanced streetscape

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for this project, in which he was largely responsible for design.

Chris Powers | Owner, Client



Custom bronze panels cast in a temporary foundry and a maple bar retooled from a beloved bowling alley anchor the space in craft, material honesty, and local history. Lighting fixtures and finishes echo the hands-on process, transforming utilitarian elements into a celebration of place.



“Robby’s originality was infused into a historic structure using innovative materials and a unique design that makes Hartwell stand out from other buildings in the city. His creative, thoughtful, and dedication to the design process was instrumental in overcoming complex zoning hurdles.”

CAITLIN WARD | Owner, Client

3.9 · HARTWELL MAKERS MARKET

2020 | Raleigh, NC

Design Firm: The Raleigh Architecture Company

AOR: The Raleigh Architecture Company

Candidate Role: Partner, Design Lead, Builder

Recognition:

Honorable Mention | 2024 American Architecture, Chicago Athenaeum

Honor Award | 2024 AIA Triangle

Honor Award | 2022 AIA Aspire

Honor Awards | 2022 AIA North Carolina

Hartwell sits along a former bustling retail strip on the edge of Raleigh’s Historic Boylan Heights neighborhood. Working closely with the granddaughter of the original shopkeeper, this adaptive reuse effort transforms a dilapidated shell into a vibrant hub to honor family legacy and facilitate retail, events, and community.

The primary strategic decision was to convert existing interior space into an exterior entry court. This satisfies stringent zoning requirements and provides the area necessary for a new sculptural stair to the roof deck without increasing the building’s footprint. Unnecessary waste is reduced by repurposing the shell, primary roof structure, and all structural steel elements. The intermingling of past and present convey in contrasting new iconic elements clad in perforated aluminum against the original masonry shell. A bold color assignment communicates a new era and cheerful optimism of Hartwell’s mission. Service areas are organized at the rear of the interior, giving way to open, fluid space at the front capable of accommodating a flexible program including live music, weddings, comedy nights, yoga classes, craft instruction, pop-up markets, and more. Expansive storefront on the front facade connects the interior to the newly formed entry court and sidewalk patio to reactivate the streetscape and restore the building’s civic presence.

Through these moves, Hartwell proves that architecture centered on human experience can become a new center of gravity, sparking renewal and connection throughout its community.

FRAMEWORK:

Wellness: 100% access to natural daylight, natural ventilation

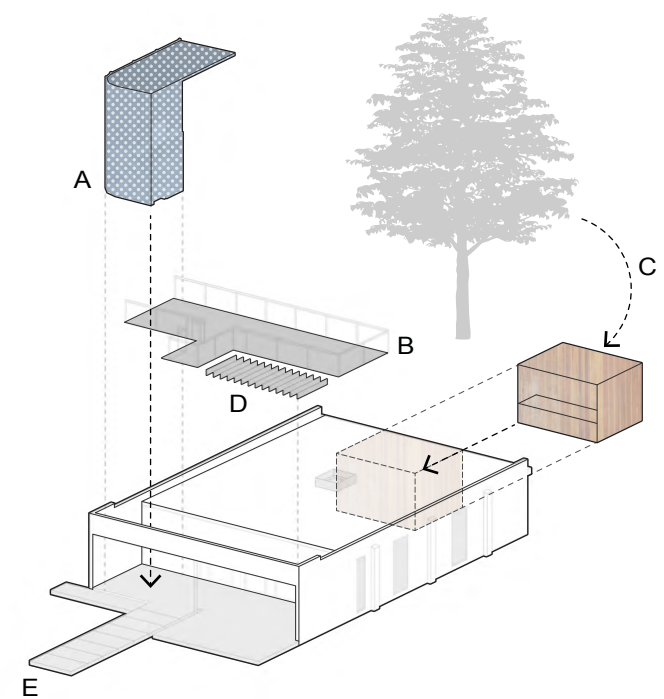
Efficiency: Durable, resilient materials, orientation to harness light and reduce solar heat gain, +99% reflective roof

Place: Adaptive reuse, street front courtyard, transparent street facade, flex use space

Experience: Native plantings, enhanced streetscape, improved walkability

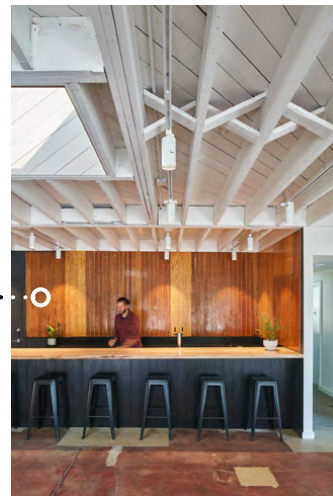
I have personal knowledge of the nominee’s responsibility for this project, in which he was largely responsible for design. Caitlin Ward | Owner, Client





New Interventions

- A Stair Clad in Perforated Aluminum
- B Roof Deck with City Views
- C Felled Tree Milled for Bar Top
- D Previous Roof Structure Exposed as Exterior Slats
- E Street Front Patio



Right: Original dimensional framing lumber was uncovered, refinished, and left exposed to express a commitment to structure's vintage. Its directionality encourages views toward the new glazed street-facing facade, reinforcing the building's renewed connection to the public realm.

Left: The produce cooler original to the grocery was carefully salvaged, deconstructed, and reassembled as paneled cladding behind the bar, preserving material memory.



“Every day, our team works in a space filled with natural light and views to the landscape. It’s a work environment that truly supports well-being; empowering, calm, and inspiring. Robby designed a space people love being in.”

JULIE JENSEN | Owner, Client



3.10 · ECHOVIEW FIBER MILL

2013 | Weaverville, NC

Design Firm: Clearscapes Art + Architecture

AOR: Clearscapes Art + Architecture

Candidate Role: Design Lead

Recognition:

Honor Award | 2012 AIA North Carolina

Honor Award | 2012 AIA Triangle

COTE Award | 2012 AIA North Carolina

LEED Gold Certified

Echoview Fiber Mill is the first manufacturing facility in America to receive a LEED Gold rating. Located in rural Buncombe County, NC, the client sought to mix industry and community in an iconic facility with a minimal environmental footprint.

The building reflects the transformation of fleece into fiber through its material and formal language. Weathering steel emulates local agrarian vernacular, and its evolving patina signifies the annual shearing cycle. Three volumes, each articulated with a distinct custom panel pattern, recall the unique textures of alpaca fiber staples. In collaboration with the roofer, Robby developed a cladding system on site using a roll former to shape raw coil into three unique panel profiles. Inside, the spatially generous processing room is centered among the roof forms and illuminated through continuous clerestories and glazing.

Geothermal heat pumps, an expansive PV array, process water reuse, rainwater collection, and daylight harvesting quietly reduce operational resources and waste, and support an empowered work environment that reflects the craft and care of making fiber.

FRAMEWORK:

Wellness: 100% access to natural daylight

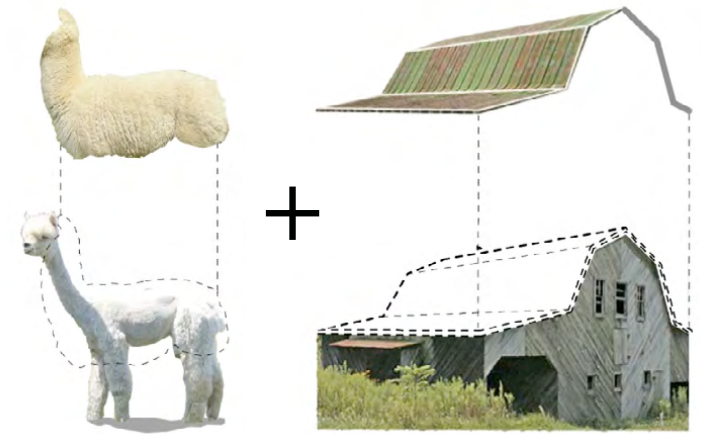
Efficiency: Solar PV, Solar Thermal, geothermal heat pumps, daylight harvesting

Place: 100% stormwater management on site, process water capture and reuse, rain water capture and on site irrigation

Experience: Native, drought tolerant plantings and turf, community spaces

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for this project, in which he was largely responsible for design.

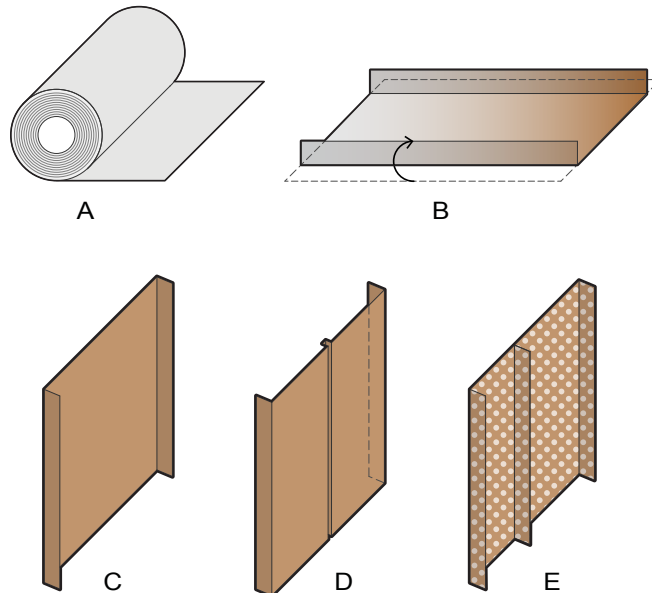
Julie Jensen | Original Owner, Client



Conversations with alpaca farmers about the shearing process, in tandem with a survey of local structures, inspired a design that connects animal, building, and place through material expression.

Weathering Steel Siding Development

Working closely with skilled tradespeople and using roll former equipment on site, raw coil material was shaped into three distinct custom siding panel profiles. This hands-on approach reinforced the building's connection to product production, local craft, and agrarian heritage while reducing costs and material waste by avoiding the need to order custom panels from manufacturers.



- A A606 Weathering Steel Raw Coil
- B Profile Extrusions Shaped by Roll Former
- C Standing Seam Siding, Profile No. 1
- D Flat Lock Siding, Profile No. 2
- E Perforated Siding, Profile No. 3

