

Nomination for The ASLA Community Service Award- 2006

Nominee: Randal Scott Romie, ASLA (ASLA Member since 1987)

Designature

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As a Landscape Architect, Randal Scott Romie has significantly contributed to the advancement of Landscape Architecture and quality of life in the Greensboro area and in North Carolina. Randal's career in Greensboro started at what grew to be a 70-person multi-disciplinary design firm where he worked for 8 years. Due to a slow period he was working reduced hours and therefore decided to spend his time volunteering with his free time. Within months he was laid off and was fortunate to be able to start working for himself. In an attempt to give back for the opportunity to have his own business he committed to continue volunteering as if it was part of his work or calling. Self-employment provided that flexible schedule.

Greensboro Beautiful, Inc., a 36 year old, non-profit all-volunteer group whose mission statement reads: "To conserve and enhance the beauty and ecology of Greensboro through public and private partnerships" became the recipient of his many hours of volunteering. It was a natural fit to be with the group that worked directly with City-employed staff to provide beautification, litter clean-ups, tree-plantings, initiate re-cycling and develop public gardens. As a Landscape Architect Randal was able to provide design services, a big-picture perspective, process, consensus and professional quality input needed to have this group of volunteers utilize their efforts efficiently and productively. Greensboro Beautiful and involvement in his church were like leadership training as he became the Chair of Greensboro Beautiful to start the new millennium and manage their first \$100,000 plus yearly budget.

Simultaneously, he became an important figure in helping the City of Greensboro develop an ordinance for the protection of trees on public property as chair, develop their first Tree Preservation Ordinance, hire an urban forester and create an Advisory Commission on Trees of which he was one of their first co-chairs. Recent city involvement included helping to develop the city's scenic corridor – without billboards - for their outer loop highway and just completed participation in a

landscape ordinance review which included the development of recommendations for single-family residential tree preservation requirements for the upcoming development ordinance re-write.

With the increase and spread of development in Greensboro, tree canopy cover and air quality has been greatly impacted. The city's Urban Forester and Greensboro Beautiful have organized neighborhood tree plantings of which Randal has chaired to help address the problems, provide education and give the public a chance to get involved.

There are three public gardens in Greensboro all of which have benefited from Randal's involvement. The Bicentennial Garden is a formal garden originated in 1976. It has grown to be one of the finest gardens in North Carolina and through Greensboro Beautiful it has stayed under Randal's watchful eye. Many on-going improvements were designed for the garden including the beautiful stone bridge of which Randal orchestrated the design, coordinating with city and state regulations, fund-raising with a private donor, and construction management. The Arboretum displays his consultation for the new Education Building and proposed Winter Gazebo.

The Episcopal Housing Ministry and Habit for Humanity have enjoyed Randal's membership in helping to acquire donated plant materials to landscape new houses and provide residents a chance to improve their surroundings – especially in Eastside Park an older affordable housing neighborhood where he provided the design, coordinating with the city and worked with volunteers to plant a 1.7 acre park in the neighborhood. This effort was featured on the front page of the North Carolina ASLA newsletter; he was Volunteer of the Week in Greensboro and received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Governor of North Carolina.

Other areas of service include assisting for many years here in the North Carolina A&T State University Landscape Architecture Program as a guest critic, Triad Chapter NCASLA Co-Chair, and as a member of the Center City Park Steering Committee providing input and fund-raising efforts to create a signature Park in downtown Greensboro. It is currently under construction.

The following is a history of his involvement and leadership in the community:

1986 – “Outdoor Living” article featured in Golden Triad magazine.

1987 – The firm he was with received an Honor Award from NCASLA.

1992 – Joined the non-profit Greensboro Beautiful, Inc. as a volunteer and worked with NCDOT to provide landscape designs for interchanges on I-40 through Greensboro and for the median in Bryan Boulevard. They were installed the next planting season.

1993 - Received Greensboro Beautiful's Volunteer Service Award for providing landscape plans.

1994 - Worked with the Greensboro Episcopal Housing Ministry summer youth project helping to landscape homes and buildings in a blighted/renovated neighborhood.

1994-1995 – Chair, Task Force on Tree Preservation for the City of Greensboro that determined how the city would handle tree preservation and removal on public property. The recommendations were adopted by City Council.

1995-1996 – Designed, coordinated plant material and supervised volunteer groups and the neighborhood in the installation of 1.7-acre Peachtree Garden in the rehabilitated neighborhood of Eastside Park. Was recognized on a local television station and newspaper as the “Volunteer of the Week” and received a “Certificate of Appreciation” from Governor James B. Hunt Jr. The front page of the Winter '96 issue of NCASLA Landscape Architecture newsletter featured his dedication to this project.

1996-1997 – NC A&T Student liaison to NCASLA Executive Committee.

1996-2006 - On-going involvement at North Carolina A&T State University's Landscape Architecture Program, including guest critic, provided summer internships, and worked with a class for a charette for a new park in Greensboro. Taught Landscape Design for a semester in 2002.

1996–2001 – Member Guilford County Advisory Board for Environmental Quality. A group of twenty people from all disciplines advising the County Commissioners on environmental issues and hearing appeals.

1997-2000 – Member of the Tree Preservation Study Group, a facilitated group of developers and environmentalists that produced the city's first Tree Preservation Ordinance. The recommendations of this group included the hiring of an Urban Forester who would review plans with regard to tree preservation and the

establishment of ACT – the Advisory Commission on Trees, a Commission that advises on tree issues and hears appeals to the ordinance.

1997-present – Vice-Chair, Chair and Past-Chair of Greensboro Beautiful, volunteering over 400 hours a year for the last 6 years and chairing two community tree plantings involving volunteer groups that planted over 500 native trees in the city.

1998 – Co-Chair for NCASLA Triad Section.

1998 - Received Greensboro Beautiful's Volunteer Service Award for work on the Tree Preservation Study Group for the City of Greensboro.

2000-present – First Co-Chair for ACT, the Advisory Commission for Trees, City of Greensboro, a newly-formed Commission that administers and hears appeals to the new Tree Preservation Ordinance.

2001 – Received an NCASLA Award of Merit for a Twelve Step Meditation Trail at Fellowship Hall, an alcohol and drug rehabilitation facility.

2001 – Member Scenic Corridor Study Group – City of Greensboro. The group that brought public input into the establishment of the Scenic Corridor Ordinance for Greensboro's outer loop highway with a prohibition against billboards.

2002-present – Member Center City Park Steering Committee, community leaders group working to oversee the programming, design and establishment of the new downtown Center City Park. Provided design decision-making, fund-raising and consensus-building.

2003-present – Member Landscape and Tree Ordinance review committee - City of Greensboro, worked with City Landscape Planner and Urban Forester, provided recommendations for re-writing the Development Ordinance and developing conditions for residential zoning tree preservation.

2004-2005 – Designed the stone bridge at the Bicentennial Garden in Greensboro, coordinated approvals from the city and state, worked with Greensboro Beautiful to raise private funding and managed construction of the bridge. Received Greensboro Beautiful's Robert S. Garrard Award of Distinction for enhancing the community's appearance and quality of life.

2005 – Received Board Member of the Year Award from Greensboro Beautiful for pro-bono design services for the stone bridge, winter garden gazebo, and proposed Old Mill.

Beside these professional accomplishments, Randal has been his neighborhood association president and is very involved in his church on Parish Council, organizing and running weekend retreats and has taken advanced studies in Lay Ministry through the Catholic Diocese of Charlotte. His firm, *Designature*, specializes in commercial landscapes, and spiritual and therapeutic Gardens.

For 14 years, since 1992, when he received his call to volunteer, Randal has worked to make Greensboro a better place for its citizens, for its trees and has provided his community with his green thumb and the touch of a Landscape Architect. His ongoing volunteer efforts and energy have helped Greensboro to grow and bring people to realize the importance of nature in their lives. Because of all this he is a qualified candidate for The ASLA Community Service Award.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Additional letters and information are being sent by mail.

Perry Howard, FASLA
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North Carolina A&T State University