



SCASLA

March 17, 2004

Mr. Rodney Swink, FASLA
Chair, Honors and Awards Advisory Committee
C/O ASLA
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

SOUTH CAROLINA
CHAPTER

AMERICAN
SOCIETY OF
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS

RE: ASLA LaGasse Medal for a Landscape Architect

Dear Rodney,

It is both an honor and a privilege as Trustee for the South Carolina Chapter of the ASLA and as a proud citizen of the City of Charleston for me to nominate Steven D. Livingston, ASLA for the LaGasse Medal for a Landscape Architect.

Steve is Director of the Department of Parks for the City of Charleston, South Carolina and as such is responsible for and has made notable contributions to the management and conservancy of natural resources and public lands for the past twenty-six years.

Steve graduated with a BLA from the University of Georgia in 1975 and after a few years in public and private practice, came to the City of Charleston in 1978 where he initially served as Landscape Architect for the Department of Public Service. His responsibilities in that role included the planning, design and implementation of park, playground and streetscape projects from conceptual sketches and cost estimates through contract drawings and specifications, to the management of design and construction contracts and final inspections.

He was also responsible for project coordination with consultants retained by the City to perform design services. In addition, he was responsible for directing the Construction Division and coordinating efforts between subcontractors and in-house construction capabilities. His responsibilities also included providing site planning and landscape architectural design services for the construction of public facilities within the city.

In 1983, he became Director of the Department of Parks, where he is responsible for the design, construction and maintenance of all city gardens, parks, playgrounds, other public open spaces, and buildings. He is also responsible for the management and coordination of the Grounds Maintenance, Urban Forestry, Facilities Maintenance, Electrical, Construction, Horticulture and Capitol Projects Divisions. He is responsible for directing a staff of over 150 people, including four other landscape architects and manages 1,200 acres.

In addition, Steve is Chairman of the City's Design Review Committee. This committee is responsible for the review and approval of all design of city public spaces and facilities.

Steve is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the American Public Works Association, and the National Parks and Recreation Association.

Steve works with great dedication and with great conviction but also with great humility. He has not sought out or has he received much recognition for the great work that he does. This was illustrated to me best the day local Landscape Architects met for a ceremony at the Charleston Waterfront Park. The park, designed by Sasaki Associates and Edward Pinckney Associates, was one for which Steve had worked tirelessly for many, many months. It is one of the best public open spaces in the country and it had recently received a Centennial Medallion from the ASLA. The City and the South Carolina Chapter of ASLA met in the park to celebrate the accomplishment. When we all gathered for a group picture, Steve stood off to one side, reluctant to join in and be a part of the spectacle. Only with friendly prodding from his colleagues, and the Mayor, did he agree to join in for the photograph. This typifies his approach to his career. His approach is one of quiet strength, a presence and a force, not in the limelight but there when you need him, providing critical leadership and support.

The parks and open space system in the City of Charleston and the City's approach to preservation and revitalization are an example to the entire country. It is something from which an entire country can also take great pride. This extends to other great facilities where Steve had primary responsibility, like the Charleston Aquarium and the Family Circle Tennis Complex on Daniel Island.

In a role unique for a Landscape Architect, Steve managed the design and construction of the South Carolina Aquarium, located in downtown Charleston. During this process, routine soil borings to determine the capability of the soil to support the structure revealed significant contamination. Steve brought in the EPA and DHEC and other experts and found that the City had a potential Superfund site. His challenge was to determine how to build a building that was two-thirds in the water on a contaminated site without that contamination being released into either the river or into the water table. This turned out to be a rigorous legal and technical process that delayed construction of the aquarium for several years. The results, however, were well worth the wait and the struggles.

On the tennis complex project, where my firm (Seamon, Whiteside & Associates) did the master plan and were the landscape architects, our staff worked directly and very closely with Steve to finish a great project in a very short period of time. The fact that the project was finished in time for the first tournament is a testimony to his leadership and dedication.

The City of Charleston is one of five cities recognized by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as a city that is "successfully designing active living into the daily lives of their residents" and Steve Livingston is integral to the efforts the city is making in that regard. I am certain that as a citizen of Charleston, South Carolina, my quality of life is greatly enhanced by the work this quiet man has done for the City over the last twenty-six years. All I have to do is walk out my front door and down the street to the West Ashley Greenway that runs through my neighborhood to see that his work has an impact on my life. I can also walk through dozens of other beautiful parks throughout the City and see the emphasis on excellent design and management. These are parks that are visited by thousands of tourists each year but I know that the parks, although enjoyed by visitors, were built for people like me, the residents of this great City.

However, Steve's work is not complete and he will not be resting on his laurels. There is still much to do and as Steve himself said, in reference to the completion of a new piece of the City of Charleston's riverfront walkway, "There's still more pieces to the total puzzle, and the more pieces we put together, the stronger it gets". I have total confidence that he will continue to build that puzzle, making Charleston an even more wonderful city.

Because of his significant and consistent contributions to the management and conservancy of natural resources, parks, open space, and public lands for the past twenty-six years and because of the national importance of the City of Charleston, I believe Steven D. Livingston, ASLA is very deserving of the honor of receiving the LaGasse Medal and I wholeheartedly put forth this nomination on behalf of the South Carolina Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William T. Eubanks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "W".

William T. Eubanks, ASLA
Trustee, South Carolina Chapter