

# ASLA Honorary Membership

Nominee: **Mark Zelonis**

Nominee's Address: Indianapolis Museum of Art  
4000 Michigan Road  
City/State/Zip: Indianapolis, Indiana 46208  
Phone: (317)923-1331

Nominator: David Gorden, ASLA  
Indiana Chapter Trustee

The professional career of Mark Zelonis has been dedicated to managing, preserving, enhancing and promoting historic landscapes. He does this daily in his position with the Indianapolis Museum of Art (IMA) as well as by serving enthusiastically on several garden related Boards and Committees. He is a strong proponent of the work of landscape architects and works tirelessly to increase recognition of their design achievements.

Since 1997 Mark has been on the staff of the IMA where he is the Ruth Lilly Deputy Director of Environmental and Historic Preservation. His title is lofty, but his mission simple...To oversee the wonderful gardens, grounds and historic structures of the IMA. They are vast and diverse and make the IMA a unique institution among its peers. Its combination of world class art collection and distinctive gardens are unrivaled in the country. Mark never hesitates to credit the numerous landscape architects whose fingers of creativity have touched the museum and whose visions he strives to preserve.

- The Museum's main 26-acre campus. Originally designed by Sasaki, Dawson, DeMay & Associates, it has subsequently been altered and improved by a variety of notables, including Johnson, Johnson & Roy, Browning, Day, Mullins & Deardorf, and Claire Bennett, FASLA (past ASLA president). Mark is currently facilitating new campus improvements as well as a new land use plan.
- The adjoining "Oldfields", a 26-acre American Country Place estate including the French chateau style mansion of the Lilly family (of Eli Lilly & Company) and surrounding landscape and gardens designed in the 1920's by Olmsted associate Percival Gallagher. Oldfields is recognized as a National Historic Landmark and in 1999 Mark accepted for the IMA, an ASLA Centennial Medallion, recognizing it as one of the most important works of landscape architecture in Indiana. Mark has coordinated the renovation of Oldfields' Ravine Garden, Orchard, Four Seasons Garden and Allee Pool and Fountain and oversees its constant care, improvements and preservation.

- The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park: 100 Acres. Opening in 2010 it is located adjacent to the Museum's main campus and is one of the country's largest museum art parks, featuring ongoing commissions of temporary, site-responsive artworks. Mark helped select and worked closely with project landscape architect, the late Edward Blake, in creating a place where, as the Wall Street Journal stated, "Art and nature walk hand in hand."
- The J. Irwin Miller House and Gardens in Columbus, Indiana. This iconic Modernist residence was acquired by the IMA in 2009 and opened to the public. Mark oversees the care of its Dan Kiley landscape designed in 1955. Also a National Historic Landmark, Kiley considered this his best work. Others feel that it was at the Miller House that the Modernist era in landscape design was born.

Because of his intimate involvement with Kiley's Miller House, Mark is often called upon to speak about both the house and its landscape designer, including for the Cincinnati Preservation Association, at the 2013 Annual Conference of The National Trust for Historic Preservation and as part of The Cultural Landscape Foundation's currently touring exhibit, "The Landscape Architecture Legacy of Dan Kiley".

Mark's involvement with historic landscapes extends beyond the IMA though, both regionally and nationally. He is a member of the Historic Landscape Committees of both Indiana Landmarks and the American Public Gardens Association. He is also a ten year member of the Board of Trustees of the Library of American Landscape History (LALH) with its mission to "foster understanding of the fine art of landscape architecture and appreciation for North America's richly varied landscape heritage..." It was in his capacities with both the LALH and IMA that the museum hosted in 2013, "Masters of Modern Landscape Design", a national two day conference organized by the LALH. Distinguished speakers discussed the lives and work of Thomas Church, Ruth Shellhorn, Garrett Eckbo, James Rose, Lawrence Halprin, Robert Royston, A.E. Bye and Kiley. A trip to the Miller House led by Mark was of course included. He was also responsible for the IMA hosting the LALH touring exhibition, "A Genius for Place" in 2004. LALH Executive Director Robin Karson states, "Mark's enthusiasm, support, and deep knowledge have been key to the growth and success of LALH. I regard him as one of the key members of his profession, as well as a great supporter of landscape history and design".

Mark is a good friend and supporter of the Indiana Chapter of ASLA. He has served on several local design juries and is regularly hosting landscape architects as speakers in the series of lectures he coordinates at the IMA. He collaborated with the Indiana Chapter in hosting a public screening of the film "Women in the Dirt: Landscape Architects Shaping our World" and corresponding panel discussion in 2012. Through the variety of IMA programs he presents he is a valued source of continuing education activities for local landscape architects as well as a promoter of the profession to the public.

Prior to his position at the IMA, Mark served as Executive Director of the Heritage Trust of Rhode Island (now called "Preserve Rhode Island") where he managed four historic sites including Blithewold Mansion and Gardens. He was also director of Fuller Gardens in North Hampton, New Hampshire with its Olmsted Brothers original design.

Landscape architecture – its practitioners and their creations – could ask for no finer advocate than Mark Zelonis.



ASLA Board of Trustees  
Carolyn Mitchell, Honors & Awards Coordinator  
636 Eye St. NW, Washington, DC 20001

Nominee: Mark Zelonis, Deputy Director for Environmental and Historic Preservation  
Nominee's Address: Indianapolis Museum of Art, (IMA) 4000 Michigan Avenue,  
Indianapolis IN 46208, Phone: 317-923-1331  
Nominator: David Gorden, ASLA  
Supporter: Patricia M. O'Donnell, FASLA

Mark Zelonis is an advocate for landscapes and horticulture at the Indianapolis Museum of Art and throughout the Midwest. In his role as Director for Environmental and Historic Preservation he has advocated within IMA and in the broader society for the value of designed landscapes to the Midwestern region. Mark also serves ably on the board of the Library of American Landscape History aiding in efforts to publish scholarly works and republish out-of-prints text of important to the landscape architecture profession. Through service on effective committees, advocacy groups and organizations Zelonis has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to the professional works of landscapes architects as valued assets of communities.

Mark and I collaborated in the late 1980s and 1990s on the preservation and reconstruction of the Ravine Garden and a number of related projects addressing both Oldfields and the innovative Art and Nature Park at IMA. With our assistance, Zelonis' deft positioning of Oldfields as an important IMA asset, led to the recognition that this 25-acre estate designed by the Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, with Percival Gallagher as principal in charge, received recognition as the largest curatorial object in the museum collection. This acknowledgement of the value of a designed landscape as a cultural asset to be curated was a first among museums and influenced the extension of the museum grounds to the Art and Nature Park as IMA holds a unique position with over 100 acres of property that augment its art collections.

**H e r i t a g e L a n d s c a p e s L L C**  
P r e s e r v a t i o n L a n d s c a p e A r c h i t e c t s & P l a n n e r s  
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Zelonis ASLA Nomination Support Letter,  
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I fully support the nomination of Mark Zelonis, as an individual who should be recognized as an ASLA Honorary Member for his professional work and advocacy for designed landscapes throughout the Midwest region, and through his contributions to LALH nationwide, over some twenty years.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Patricia M. O'Donnell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Patricia" and last name "O'Donnell" clearly legible.

Patricia M. O'Donnell, FASLA



# REMENSCHNEIDER ASSOCIATES, INC.

landscape architecture & planning

Honorary Membership Nomination  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Nomination of Mr. Mark Zelonis for Honorary Membership within our Association

Dear ASLA Nomination Committee,

It is a privilege to submit this letter in support of the nomination of Mark Zelonis for Honorary Membership within the American Society of Landscape Architects. For over 20 years, Mark has successfully managed and nurtured the landscapes and historic resources of the Indianapolis Museum of Art's 152 acre campus in his role as the Ruth Lilly Deputy Director of Environment & Historic Preservation. I first came to know Mark while chair of the Museum's Horticultural Society's benefit auction. For a period of ten years, I worked very closely with Mark and his horticultural staff to plan and stage the Horticultural Society's benefit.

Previously, Mark held directorships at the Heritage Trust of Rhode Island and the Blithewold Mansion and Gardens in Bristol, Rhode Island. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of New Hampshire and his Masters of Science at the Longwood Program in Public Horticulture Administration, University of Delaware.

Mark's current responsibilities at the IMA include managing and overseeing a diverse array of museum landscapes including: Oldfields – a National Historic Landmark of the American Country Place Era designed by Percival Gallagher of the Olmsted Brothers office; the IMA primary campus; the Virginia B. Fairbanks Art and Nature Park, locally known as 100 Acres and the iconic Dan Kiley landscape of the J. Irwin Miller house and gardens, a mid-century modern National Historic Landmark.

Mark has a deep appreciation for our field of landscape architecture and it shows in many ways. Allow me to cite a few examples: Our Horticultural Society board hired Patricia O'Donnell, ASLA, with Heritage Landscapes to prepare a feasibility study for the restoration of the Gallagher estate design, which, at the time, was falling into ruins. Mark shepherded that study during development and then promoted its recommendations to the IMA administration and ultimately to the board of directors, conducting a presentation on the significance and importance of this historic landscape. When the Board of Directors did not include the restoration funds in the following year's IMA budget, Mark advocated for the project until he found an IMA member willing to fund the entire restoration. Upon the completion of the restoration, the museum administration and the board of directors were surprised to realize that much of recent increased traffic to the IMA was attributable to the restored Olmsted Brothers landscape. The value of a restored historic landscape was now understood by museum leadership. Soon thereafter, the IMA introduced a new promotional brochure entitled: *Visit the IMA – Art, Inside and Out!*, which featured the restored landscape and the legacy of the Olmsted office.

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Over the years, Mark has played a significant role in guiding IMA leadership decisions when various portions of this growing museum campus were preparing for facilities expansions as well as new site and garden amenities. His leadership and guidance as Director of Environment and Historic Preservation has repeatedly assured the engagement of local, regional and national landscape architects in the ever evolving IMA campus. The most recent IMA project, 100 Acres, was a design collaboration of landscape architect, Ed Blake, President of The Landscape Studio and landscape architect, Eric Fulford, President of Ninebark Studio. This project, adjacent to the museum's primary campus, includes woodlands, wetlands, meadows and a 35 acre lake. 100 Acres is one of the largest museum art parks in the country and one of only a few to feature ongoing commissions of temporary site responsive artworks.

Mark serves as the IMA advisor to the Horticultural Society, an affiliate organization of the IMA that raises funds for museum gardens, maintains the largest horticultural and garden design library in the state and plans tours of local, regional, national and international of interest to IMA members. Mark is the tour guide for nearly all Horticultural Society tours, including last July's tour of Scotland art galleries, architectural monuments, sculpture parks, and, of course, gardens. His thorough advance preparations, love and interest in history, knowledge of design techniques employed and appreciation of landscape architecture as a whole, combine to make each excursion a uniquely enjoyable experience for Society members and guests. His ability to point out the details of a design that make up the whole experience, as well as his capacity to help tourists appreciate the original designer's vision, truly add to the layperson's appreciation of our field of landscape architecture.

Therefore, I enthusiastically recommend that our Association recognize Mark's appreciation, advocacy and promotion of the field of landscape architecture by bestowing upon him an American Society of Landscape Architecture Honorary Membership.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Remenschneider', with a stylized, flowing script.

Kenneth J. Remenschneider, President  
Remenschneider Associates, Inc.



February 27, 2015

Executive Committee  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
Honorary Membership Selection

Committee Members,

I fully support the nomination of Mark Zelonis to become an honorary member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. I have known Mark for many years. He is a tremendous asset to our profession, and in so many ways has shown that he not only understands landscape architects and landscape architecture, but is also a model “steward” of the landmark landscape for which he is responsible. Oldfields, the landscape home of the Indianapolis Museum of Art is an Olmsted Landscape, an historic designed landscape dating to the 1920’s located within the remnants of the planned residential subdivision of Woodstock. The Indianapolis Museum of Art relocated to a portion of this Woodstock subdivision in the 1960’s, while additionally preserving the Oldfields estate and its Olmsted Brothers/Percival Gallagher landscape of allees, working gardens, formal and rock gardens. The IMA has cultivated this setting by successive master plans for the property, and through the support of a professional horticultural staff. As deputy director of environmental and historic preservation for the IMA, Mark Zelonis serves as the expert and professional manager of this significantly designed place, including portions of the grounds not only designed by the Olmsted Brothers, but also by noted Louisville historic landscape architect Anne Bruce Haldeman, and more recent designed landscapes including those by JJR, Claire Bennett, and Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf. In addition to this expert management of the IMA historic landscape, Mark provides additional oversight to the historic Miller House and its Dan Kiley designed garden in Columbus, Indiana. Mark has played an integral role in the preservation of this historic landscape since the property was acquired by the IMA in 2009.

I have had the pleasure of working with Mark Zelonis in a variety of ways, including my own historic landscape research, HALS project work undertaken by Ball State landscape architecture students, organizing a regional historic landscape preservation conference, “Hidden Treasures” in Indianapolis, and joint events hosted by the Indiana Chapter ASLA and the IMA. I have both participated and attended events hosted by the IMA’s Horticultural Society which Mark also directs. In every instance Mark Zelonis has been an outstanding supporter, promoter, and patron of the work of the landscape architect.



I know Mark to be active in his own professional societies. Our country's public gardens and botanical gardens and arboreta reflect the best of partnerships between professional horticulturalists and landscape architects. The listing of Oldfields as a National Landmark is testimony to the appreciation of this expert design and horticultural partnership. I believe an honorary membership in ASLA would be an excellent way to recognize the relationship of horticulture and landscape architecture that Mark Zelonis represents.

I currently serve on a newly formed Historic Landscape Committee of Indiana Landmarks, Inc. Mark is also a member of this committee, and has already begun to make significant contributions to the group as we formulate a mission, direction, and early initiatives. Mark is fully aware of the realm of landscape architecture, has served as a tremendous agent for the protection of significant works of landscape architecture, and has been an effective protector of the historic landscape of the IMA/Oldfields, in addition to supporter of the of the best work of contemporary practitioners as this cultural landscape evolves.

It would be my pleasure and honor to see Mark Zelonis' efforts in all of these areas recognized by this offer of honorary membership in ASLA. This list of honorary members is impressive, and I believe Mark's credentials would be a significant addition to this distinguished category of ASLA membership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Malcolm Cairns", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Malcolm Cairns, FASLA

Professor