

AIA LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2025
KERRY BARTINI AIA

This year WMAIA chapter president Kerry Bartini AIA represented us at the AIA Leadership Summit 2025, which was held February 25-26 in Washington DC. The leadership Summit is the premier advocacy and leadership training event for AIA chapter leaders.

Some of the day one AIA Leadership Conference highlights included hearing speeches from the candidates for At-Large Director, Treasurer and President Elect; the lively and entertaining keynote speaker Baratunde Thurston; and the various sessions offered to participants on topics ranging from One Good Idea that can enhance your work and your life, to Balancing Leadership (led by Emily Grandstaff Rice FAIA!), to an Architect Mayor's Panel, and more.

Day two brought over 400 architects to Capitol Hill to meet with politicians and discuss Design Freedom for Federal Architecture, Arbitrary Fee Limitations for Federal Contracts, Housing, Community Resiliency, and Tax Incentives.

The Massachusetts delegates Kerry Bartini AIA (President, WMAIA), Sean Brennan AIA (President, AIA MA; Central MA), Paige Johnston (BSA), Alison Nash AIA (President Elect, BSA), John Nunnari (Executive Director, AIA MA), Danyson Tavares (Executive Director, BSA), and Carole Wedge FAIA (BSA, AIA Board) met with the aids of Senators Edward Markey and Elizabeth Warren.

Subsets of the delegates met with House Representatives.



Keynote speaker Baratunde Thurston



Six of the Massachusetts Delegates with Kerry Bartini AIA far right

AIA25 Conference on Architecture & Design
BOSTON
JUNE 4-7

IN THIS ISSUE:

ONE AIA LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2025 / AIA NATIONAL 2025

TWO COVER STORY: MOHAWK THEATER MARQUEE RESTORATION

THREE + FOUR ORCHARD HILL PAVILION - SIGRID MILLER POLLIN FAIA

FIVE + SIX IN THE WORKS: KUHN RIDDLE ARCHITECTS + DESIGNERS

SEVEN + EIGHT FEATURED ARTISAN: STEELHEAD STUDIOS

TEN NCARB UPDATE

TWELVE UMASS AIA STUDENT CHAPTER UPDATE

FOURTEEN THINGS TO DO + SEE IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

FIFTEEN WMAIA PROGRAMS: SPRING 2025

THE WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

THE WMAIA NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR. IT IS CIRCULATED TO ALL MEMBERS, ADVERTISERS AND SUBSCRIBERS. PLEASE DIRECT ALL NEWSLETTER CORRESPONDENCE TO RACHAEL CHASE, AT EDITOR@WMAIA.ORG. ARTICLES, PHOTOS, NOTICES OF EVENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION ARE WELCOME. OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THE NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE WMAIA. THE EDITOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT OR REVISE MATERIAL AS SPACE AND SUBJECTIVE OPINION PERMIT.

COVER PHOTOS: NICK MANTELLO

COVER STORY

The Mohawk Theater by E.M. Loew was opened originally on November 5, 1938. Bradley Architects, Inc. spearheaded the design of the restoration of the original Marquee with the City of North Adams to restore the Marquee to its original grandeur.



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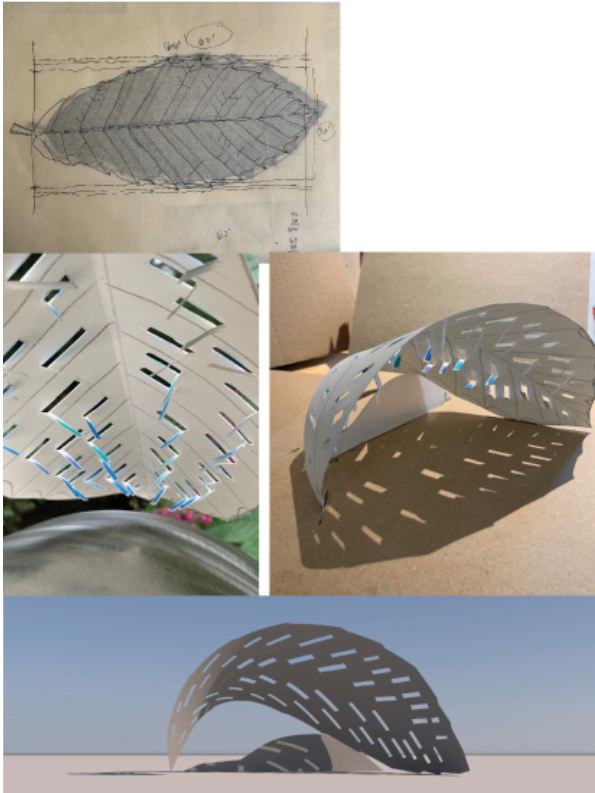
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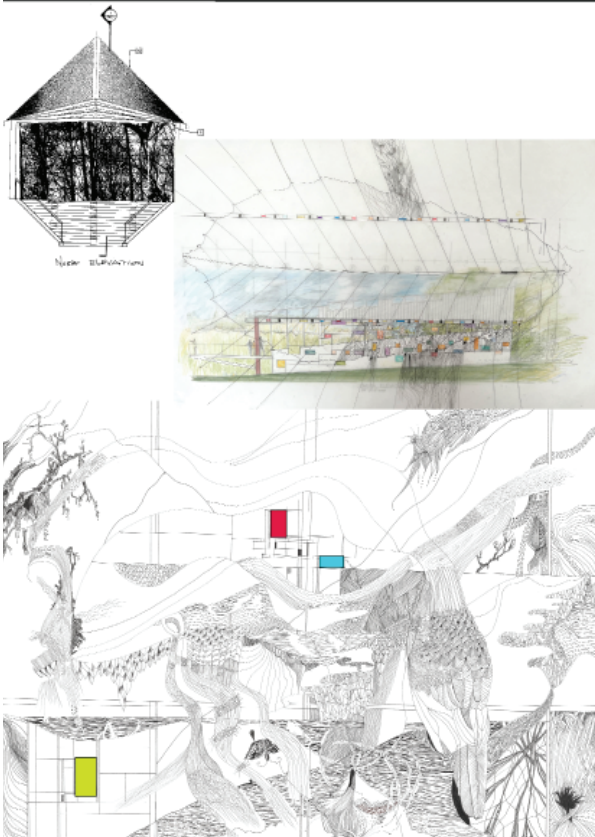
JILLIAN DECOURSEY AIA

SIGRID MILLER POLLIN FAIA

Leaf Structure with Central Vein/Spine and Naturally Created "Structural Bays" Thoughts About Color Light Perforations



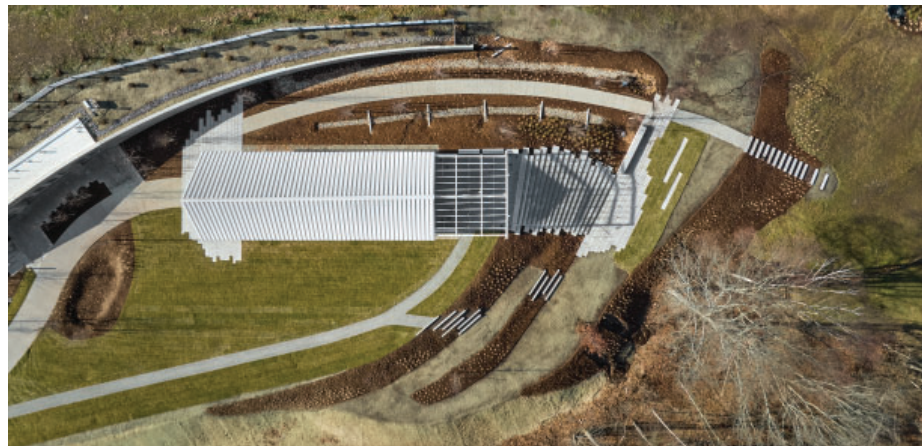
Orthogonal and Organic Geometries Coupled



Orchard Hill Pavilion University of Massachusetts Amherst
Project Architect: Sigrid Miller Pollin FAIA
General Contractor: Suffolk Construction
Landscape Architect: Stimson
Photos: Robert Benson Photographer

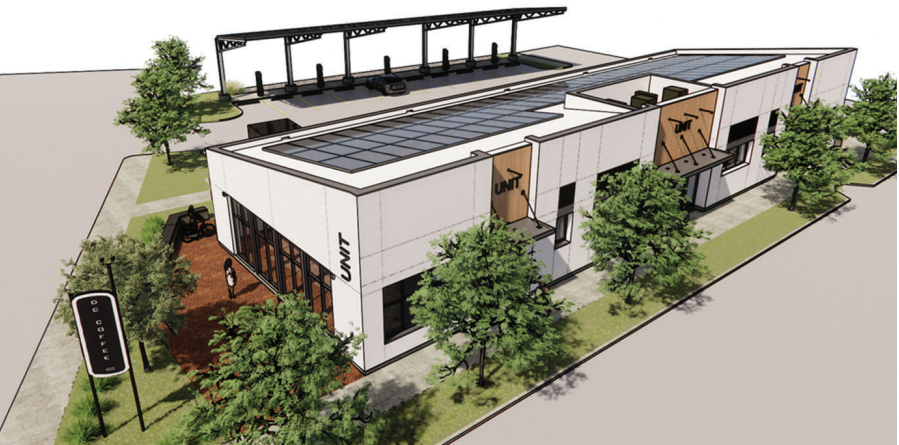
Orchard Hill Pavilion is sited in a park-like setting at the eastern edge of the UMass Amherst campus. The pavilion, opening this spring, will provide a covered but open space for a wide range of scheduled events such as small concerts, weddings, and conferences. It will also serve as a place for casual opportunities to enjoy beautiful distant views of the hilly terrain beyond the campus.

A sloping retaining wall anchors support facilities in the landscape while cradling a level area for the pavilion structure. Architecturally, a traditional gable form sheathed in channel glass morphs into a gently sloping pitched roof that terminates in a trellised terrace. Wide granite steps that can double as a small amphitheater cascade from the pavilion floor to a northern patio. A variety of trees, shrubs and perennials will populate the multiple terraced green areas intended for the outdoor enjoyment of campus and community.



ORCHARD HILL PAVILION





DC COFFEE & CHARGING STATIONS
 This site has had a long history with cars, at one time being a gas station and then Pleasant Journey Used Car sales. Understanding that reducing the use of fossil fuel transportation will aid in the goals to reduce global warming, our client wants to create a space that encourages the use of Electric Vehicles (EVs). As a whole, this project focuses on sustainability & modern aesthetics, while creating a vibrant gateway to Northampton, Massachusetts. The development will include 4800 SF of retail for up to three businesses, including a coffee shop, and 10 High Speed EV charging stations covered by a solar canopy. A place where both people and their cars can get charged up for the journey ahead!



45/55 SOUTH PLEASANT STREET Mixed use renovation and addition to the historic Hastings Building in downtown Amherst, currently in construction. The first floor of the existing building has been renovated into the Amherst College store. Renovations to the upper floors and a major addition at the rear will create 22 apartment units tucked behind the historic building. The design of the new addition is intended to frame and highlight the historic structure.



422 AMITY STREET The project is located on University Drive next to the main entrance to the UMass Amherst Campus. The proposed 5-story building includes ground-floor commercial space and 77 apartments. The building massing has been broken up both with horizontal offsets in the façade and vertical setbacks to create a vibrant pedestrian scaled streetscape. This project will occur in tandem with the strategic roundabout coordinated by UMass Amherst & the Town of Amherst.

FEATURED ARTISAN STEELHEAD STUDIOS

HOW DO YOU WORK ON YOUR CRAFT WITHIN THE WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY?

The name Steelhead Studios was originally conceived to encompass the art of working with steel and new ways to use the material. Studios, plural, references the work created in our studio in collaboration with other artisans. From the start, Steelhead Studios has been about working with people.

We do a lot of work locally for architects, designers, contractors, homeowners and artists. Working with clients to achieve their vision usually requires teaming up with other local artisans and vendors to actualize the vision. Western Massachusetts has a lot of specialized talent and quality services that have been a pleasure to work with over the years: From working with larger metal fabrication shops, finishing specialists and glass companies, to teaming up with other artisan friends who work with steel, concrete and wood. Not to mention the people who assist in the shop through the dirty nitty gritty metal fabrication process. All this local talent has helped elevate the quality of the work that Steelhead Studios can offer.

HOW DOES SUSTAINABILITY PLAY A ROLE IN YOUR BUSINESS?

Steelhead welcomes the opportunity to repurpose materials. Striving for sustainability has resulted in really efficient material use. Typically these pieces get utilized in smaller furniture pieces and sculpture but recently we had a commission for a public sculpture of a super sized boot that we were able to build with collected scrap, which feels good.

IS THERE A WAY IN WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE TO WORK WITH LOCAL ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS THAT HASN'T HAPPENED YET?

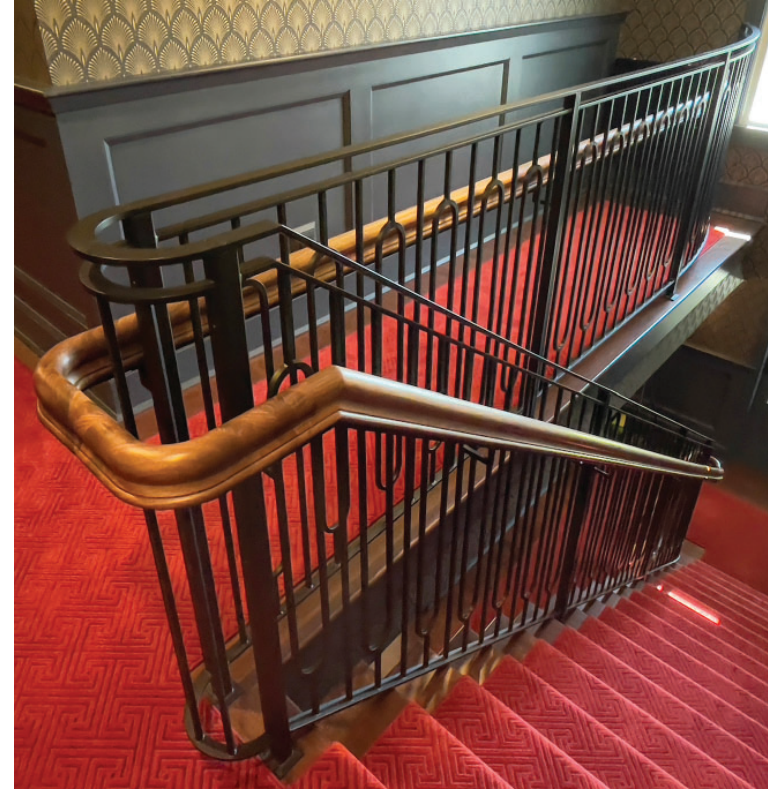
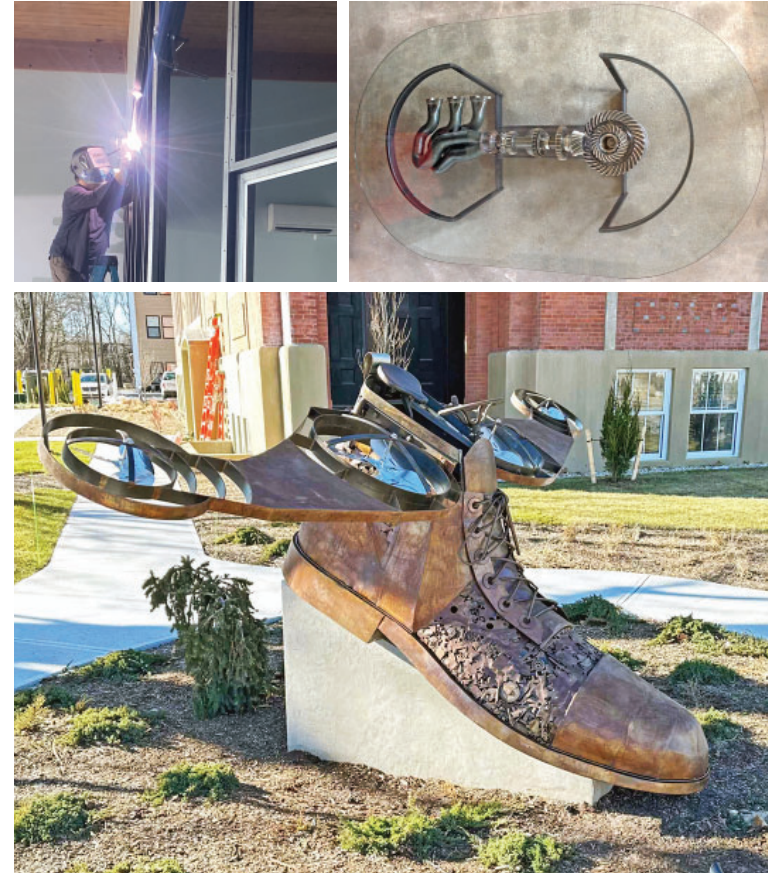
More recently Steelhead Studios has been taking on more outdoor public sculptural pieces. Although none of them have been local yet, we are looking forward to the opportunity to work with local architects, designers and artists to build just about anything that can be imagined.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART OF YOUR CREATIVE PROCESS? CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PROCESS?

When working with architects and designers, the creative process often becomes about innovation in order to actualize the design. Creative thinking allows us to find the most efficient path to the imagined end result.

When working with steel, materials have to be assembled and welded correctly the first time, otherwise a world of pain and regret can ensue. Sometimes the creativity comes in designing the most efficient and effective way to rig up an assembly and restrain it from deflecting or warping while you change its molecular structure through welding it all together.

Favorite projects involve an opportunity to envision and execute a project using Steelhead's unique combination of art, design, construction and fabrication skills.



FEATURED ARTISAN STEELHEAD STUDIOS





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RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL & INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRUCTION

Since being released in October, the new Competency Standard for Architects has created some buzz. At its core, the competency standard establishes a framework moving forward for informing NCARB's programs, such as the AXP and ARE. The competencies that are required at the point of initial licensure have been organized into 16 knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors. These buckets will help inform the future evolutions of the AXP, ARE, and multiple pathways to licensure. According to the NCARB website, "The Competency Standard will ensure that licensing boards can be confident in architects' competence when it comes to the public health, safety, and welfare, no matter the pathway they took to demonstrate that competence."

Currently, the AXP (Architectural Experience Program) focuses on 96 tasks across 6 practice based areas. The ARE (Architectural Registration Examination) then tests capabilities in those 6 areas. In the next 18 months, these programs will start to be looked at through the lens of the Competency Standard. To be clear, neither of these programs is being discontinued or drastically altered because of the Competency Standard. It's also important to note that the Competency Standard is not, and will not become, its own stand alone program. It's simply meant to inform programs. Equally important to stress is that the 16 KSAs will not result in 16 AXP or ARE divisions. The structures for both programs will remain intact. Candidates can expect business as usual and any modifications will be rolled out with coherent transitions and significant notice.

So what are the 16 Competencies? They are organized into three domains:

DESIGN & DOCUMENTATION

- + Assess regulatory design requirements
- + Evaluate existing project conditions
- + Develop a program that establishes project criteria
- + Create design solutions that support public + environmental well-being
- + Integrate socio-demographic considerations & universal design principles
- + Create design solutions that address project requirements
- + Create deliverables that convey a design solution
- + Coordinate the integration of building systems into a project design

CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION

- + Prepare and administer documentation of the construction phase
- + Evaluate the progress of construction for conformance with contract documents and design intent

PRACTICE & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- + Execute contracts for professional services
- + Implement a work plan according to a project's scope, schedule, & budget
- + Organize and coordinate an interdisciplinary project team
- + Understand statutes and regulations that govern architectural practice within U.S. jurisdictions to provide services legally
- + Understand ethical and professional standards that govern architectural practice
- + Understand foundational business principles to operate a practice

NCARB has released several statements and helpful Q&A on their website ncarb.org on the Competency Standard for Architects. Please visit for more information.

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The UMass AIAS Chapter is working on a few community projects:

The first project in progress is designing and building a Free Little Library to be implemented at University Village (a community specifically for University students with Children).

Our other project is partnering with Stavros, to sponsor and build a residential accessibility ramp for a community member in need.

We are also taking the students in the chapter to visit Architectural Record in the Empire State Building!

Hector Martinez AIAS
Class of 2025

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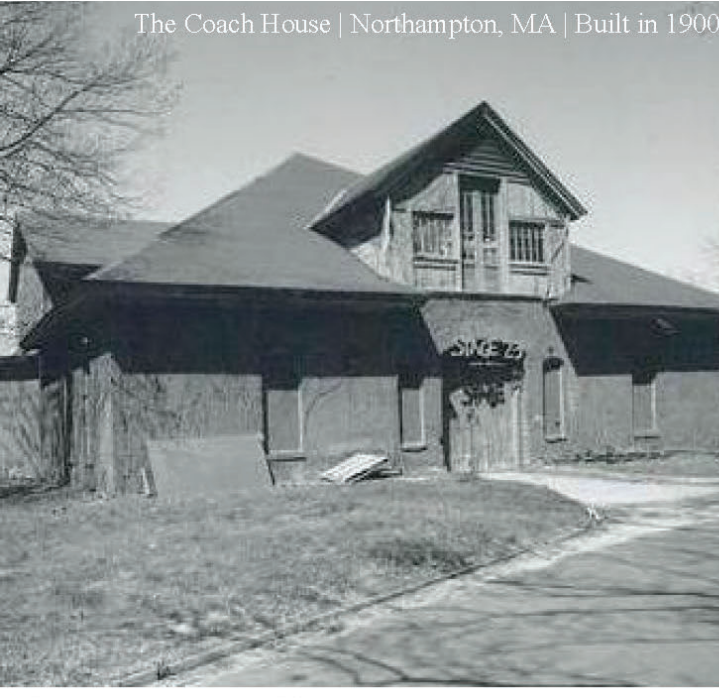
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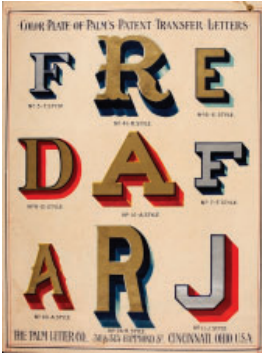
THINGS TO DO + SEE IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS



MASS MoCA LIKE MAGIC On view through September 2025

In times of uncertainty, people often turn towards technologies of magic for solace and strength. These technologies are not the props used for stage magic (rabbits in hats, scarves hidden up sleeves) but rather are tools (devices, talismans, rituals, incantations) created by humans to help them survive and thrive in a chaotic world. The exhibition Like Magic brings together artists who employ technologies of magic to resist systems that attempt to surveil and control people's lives and stories, often because of their race, ability, sexuality, gender identity, indigeneity, or immigration status.

THE CLARK



Paginations is a new series of year-round public installations featuring works drawn from the Clark library's extensive holdings and presented in a newly designed area of the Manton Reading Room. The initial display, A-Z: Alphabetic Highlights from the Library's Special Collections, celebrates the building blocks of type and text, the letters of the alphabet, and showcases examples from 1488-2024 in which the letters themselves take center stage.

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— Scott Landry, Architect and Owner, Studio 101 Designs

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WMAIA COMMUNITY SPRING 2025



SPRING IN THE BERKSHIRES!
SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR ANNUAL
SPRING IN THE BERKSHIRES PROGRAM
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 2025:
**TOUR OF
GREYLOCK GLEN
OUTDOOR CENTER
ADAMS MA**

REGISTRATION WILL OPEN SOON!

Designed by
Vermont Integrated Architecture
Maclay Studio

Photo: Ben Garver, Berkshire Eagle

Check **WMAIA enews** to see upcoming WMAIA programming!

A note about WMAIA's enews:

Are you receiving our regular enews?

The enews is sent several times a month and is used to communicate information about programs and other opportunities. If you are not receiving this information, please contact director@wmaia.org