

WOMEN
WHO
LEAD
US 2020



MELANIE HARTWIG-DAVIS

AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C

Principal / CEO

HD Squared Architects, LLC

86 Maryland Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21401
www.HD2Architects.com



Those who truly know Melanie Hartwig-Davis reflect that as an architect activist, she has a keen intellect and earnest desire to leave the world around her a better place. She passionately advocates for resilient and sustainable design and seeks to improve the lives of others through creativity and purpose at every scale - from a community level to the homes in which we live.

Resiliency is the ability to adapt to changing conditions. Integrating resilient and sustainable design strategies ensures that communities will thrive for generations to come. Melanie believes that redevelopment, historic preservation and the improvement of existing structures should be priorities in efforts to strengthen our resiliency.

This core belief leads to success, as illustrated by being awarded the first ever Sustainability Award as well as a Merit Award from the AIA Chesapeake Bay Chapter for her Riverside project. This project responds holistically to resiliency and sustainability starting with her site design that expands the living area of the modest home (1200 sq ft) while capturing stormwater via tiered rain gardens and a planted roof. Melanie, with her team at HD Squared Architects, superbly executed the architecture and interior design at every level of detail down to the efficient fixtures and non-toxic material selections.

At a community scale, Melanie was selected to represent the Environmental Communities as an At-Large member on the AACo Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) of the General Development Plan 2040 (GDP). Melanie also advocates for forest conservation through the Conservation Committee of the Neighbors of Mayo Peninsula and through her role as a board member of the Maryland League of Conservation Voters.

Ms. Hartwig-Davis recently relocated her company to the City of Annapolis, the heart of Maryland's resiliency efforts. Melanie is a LEED Accredited Professional as well as an NCARB Certificate holder licensed in Maryland and the District of Columbia.



Photos by Kevin Wilson Photography



Q: Many property owners are frustrated with increasing zoning and building regulations. How do you approach these regulations and advocate for your clients' goals?

A: First, I thrive when challenged. When someone tells me that something is not possible, I see it as a design challenge. Second, people need to keep an open mind and understand that there are typically multiple ways to achieve their goals. It is not helpful to get boxed into believing in only one solution. Having served on commissions where some of these regulations are written, I have been on both sides of the table. It really helps to understand both perspectives; a regulation trying to protect the greater good, and individual property owners wanting what they want.

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