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## AROUND TOWN



**We're in Northeast Baltimore.** Construction is nearly complete on PBA's latest Baltimore City school project, the new Walter P. Carter/Lois T. Murray Elementary & Middle School. The 147,302 SF two story building combines two schools, a K-8 elementary and middle school with a school for children with special needs. PBA formed a successful partnership with Newman Architects to meet Baltimore City Public Schools' stringent guidelines while providing a high level of design for a traditionally underserved community. The project is on track to receive LEED Gold status and is scheduled to open in early 2021. [Read more.](#)

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## TRENDS

### HEALTHY BUILDINGS — THE CASE FOR RE-THINKING VENTILATION

Many architects and designers have proffered ideas about how to design healthy buildings in light of COVID 19. However, the current pandemic need not be the motivation to design structures that support salubrious living. There should be an ongoing effort to strive for buildings and spaces that are beautiful, safe, and healthy for all.

Accordingly, architects, planners, and designers should rethink what constitutes a healthy building with particular reference to its culture, resources, and climate. In developed nations structures usually begin with a program that considers design, safety, comfort, a healthy environment, and perhaps a LEED certification. However, this may not be feasible in parts of the world where resources are scarcer. In such places, architects must triage priorities when it comes to designing healthy buildings. This is particularly important in healthcare buildings, where design strategies employed in developed nations may not be feasible in other parts of the world.

## What This Pandemic Taught Us

Aerosolized droplets that contain the virus can travel long distances through the airstream and linger, where they can be inhaled. The closer individuals are to each other, the higher the risk of infection.

Most infections occur indoors, on public transit, or during social gatherings. However, the risk indoors is significantly reduced through well-designed ventilation systems.

[Read more.](#)

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## RESIDENTIAL DESIGN — MUDROOMS

**Update your mudroom with style.** PBA designs and re-envision entry spaces to become important organizational areas. Functionality is key; however mudrooms can still be stylish. Some important considerations:

1. **The personality** of the owner should always be reflected - ultra-tidy or shabby chic? Consider the location. A public entry area may be best designed with closed storage options, whereas open storage options may be more appropriate in a family mudroom.

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2. **Functions** desired for a mudroom space and storage of all the specific items must be assessed. These include coats, hats, boots/shoes, umbrellas, purses, wallets, keys, sunglasses, devices, etc. A device charging station or mirror can be useful. A good design will include a specific place for all items, especially those 'left at the door' daily.

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3. **Efficiency** maximizes space to make every inch count by using a creative combination of closets, cabinets, shelves, cubbies, hooks, baskets, benches, countertops, etc. Consider double rods for jackets and hanging linens with adjustable shelves above. The insides of closet doors can be outfitted with shallow shelves or hooks.

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4. **Lighting** is an important feature that is often overlooked. Consider closet or cabinet lights that turn on when doors open and a decorative mudroom fixture that combines effective lighting and style.

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5. **Maintenance** is an important design consideration to keep any space organized and clean. Consider the users, as good organizational design should be easily maintained in an organized manner and materials should be easy to keep clean.



Above: This PBA design features a mudroom, laundry room and dog wash all in one connected space, providing the homeowner with an organized and functional space for daily use. [Photo by Whitney Wasson]



Left: For the homeowner's three active boys, this PBA mudroom design provides an abundance of storage in a classic navy and white color scheme. [Photo by Mitch Allen]



Right: This PBA mudroom design, located adjacent to the kitchen, provides storage and functionality, but doesn't lack in style. The historic home's character is retained by using traditional cabinetry and details. [Photo by Vince Lupo]

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## CREATIVE INSPIRATIONS

### STAFF PASSIONS



**Our Architects have many passions.** Leah Penza, Architectural Associate at PBA, has been collecting and rescuing orchids for a few years. Her interest started with a large pink *Phalaenopsis*. Once the flowers fell off, she thought the plant was dying. However, after doing a little research Leah discovered that such flower cycles are normal for orchids, and she began collecting more so she could enjoy a constant arrangement of alternating blooming flowers. After a visit to her grandma's house, Leah spotted a sad-looking plant sitting outside and took it home to bring back to life. Since then, rescues have been her favorite because of the complete surprise when flowers bloom.



After collecting common *Phalaenopsis* orchids of many different colors, Leah recently started to expand her collection by searching for more exotic varieties. Her collection now includes one each of *Epicyclia*, *Oncidium*, *Miltoniopsis*, *Dendrobium*, and *Cattleya* orchids. She is now on the hunt for the elusive Jewel orchid which is adorned with graphic lightning bolt leaves. She admires the rich colors and patterns, the long elegant stems, and the pronounced flowers that distinguish orchids from other flowering plants. Leah says that although she is near capacity on her "orchid shelf," that will not deter her from future rescues.

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## THINGS WE LIKE



**The Modell Lyric Opera House.** This five minute video by Baltimore Heritage's Executive Director, Johns Hopkins, details a fascinating history of the renowned concert hall. PBA is currently providing design services for interior renovations. [Watch history video.](#)



**Waterfront Walks by Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore.** Take a self-guided stroll through Baltimore's native plant gardens throughout the Inner Harbor. Waterfront gardens are full of native plants that support local wildlife like birds, butterflies, and other insects while helping filter polluted runoff to keep our streams and harbor clean. [Learn more.](#)

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