



POOL HOUSE NUMBER 3

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Photos: Dana Miller | millerhallphoto.com

In the middle of barren land where the former Stapleton International Airport once stood, a modern oasis with rejuvenating water and art now stands, bringing together residents who are part of the urban borough of Stapleton. This oasis is Pool House No. 3, one of four neighborhood public pool areas that the developers of Stapleton, Forest City, created for residents to cool off.

It's a sleek low-lying pool house with art facades, stimulating the community with its simple palate of materials and bold use of graphics – a stark contrast to the rest of the residential community's look of a traditional neighborhood.

The pool house is a series of four small buildings – three concrete and one clad in reclaimed cedar siding – all lined up with a 150-foot-long steel roof unifying them.

"I really wanted to make it different by not designing a building, but more of a pavilion, so the landscape could flow in and out," says Renée del Gaudio, the pool house's architect who was with Semple Brown Design at the time. "I wanted it to be a non-building."

ABOVE: Pool House No. 3 was headed up by architect Renée del Gaudio (now with Renée del Gaudio Architecture) and Chris Davis (now with BOSS Architecture) in 2005, who at the time were both working with Semple Brown Design. The pool house is a series of four low-lying pavilions nestled in Stapleton's prairie landscape. The pool was designed by Monarch Pools.

LEFT: Sarah Weeks (Wilhemina Denver) frolics poolside with a beach ball at Pool House No. 3, one of Stapleton's four neighborhood public pools.



Jeanine Centuori, artist, architect and owner of UrbanRock Design in Los Angeles created three 8- by 20-foot graphic façade panels for the pool house called "Conditional Reflections," which represent the three states of water – solid, liquid and vapor. At night, Centuori's artwork comes alive; the translucent panels are lit from behind and in front, creating a light box that glows from inside out.

"You have a roof over your head but you are not enclosed, so it is really an outdoor experience for the bathers and swimmers," she says.

The concession area, women's locker room, men's locker room and mechanical area are split into four pods. The landscape weaves in and out between the pool house's four pods. In between the concession building and women's locker room, there is a cutout in the roof bringing in light and allowing a cherry tree to grow up through the open area. There are also roof cutouts before you enter the men's and women's locker rooms, extending your outdoor experience.

From street view, the front facing facades of the building showcase three graphic art installations titled



ABOVE: There is cylindrical concrete seating in the pool house's courtyard that is arranged to make up the molecular structures of water, playing off of Centuori's graphic art facades and del Gaudio's relaxing and refreshing design.

RIGHT: The plantings are consistent with the pool house's architecture—clean, modern and minimal. The grasses that are used are contained and manicured and mimic the prairie grasses that are natural to the Stapleton area. All the landscaping is completed with native plants that require very little water. Paradigm Affiliates created the pool house's landscape design.

"Conditional Reflections" by Jeanine Centuori, architect and owner of Los Angeles' UrbanRock Design. The three-panel art installation is a meditation on the three states of water – solid, liquid, vapor – keeping with the rejuvenating theme of the pool house.

Centuori took macro photographs of each state of water and then collaged them in groupings of solid, liquid and vapor and colorized them. The large graphic collages were then printed on a special film and laminated in 8-foot by 20-foot glass, which act as translucent walls.

Also playing off the water theme are concrete cylindrical benches in the courtyard area that make up the molecular structures of water. The benches serve as audience seating so bathers can observe the giant art screens.

LEFT: A 150-foot planter box that stretches the length of the pool house was constructed out of reclaimed sheets of metal from the Stapleton International Airport.





Pool House No. 3 was built using sustainable methods. The facility has no parking lot – only bike stations to encourage biking and walking. The roof collects rainwater and diverts it to the surrounding area. There is zero heating and cooling, and very little water-use. Three of the pool house's pods are built using fly ash concrete, which reduces the amount of coal used to create concrete mixture.



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“The glass changes so much because the way the light hits it whether sunlight at day or night,” Centuori says. “The complexity of the pictures add to that set of reflections and so we were hoping to make a piece where people gain something from repeat experiences.”

The pool house serves as a work of art long after the sun goes down.

“It’s not just a community building during the day, but at night it continues to be an aspect of the community by being a sculptural light box,” architect del Gaudio says. “So when the pool is closed and everyone is gone, the glass laminated walls glow. It remains part of the neighborhood even when the pool is shut down.”