

About the Project

Project Address: 9359 Torrent Row Columbia, MD

Certification Level: LEED Platinum

Owner: [ARC of Howard County](#)

Builder: [Columbia Builders](#)

Architect: [DW Taylor Associates, Inc.](#)



The [Arc of Howard County](#) is committed to achieving full community life for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities—one person at a time. With this vision, they built the Awake House on Torrent Row in Columbia, MD to exemplify the true relationship of universal design and green building.

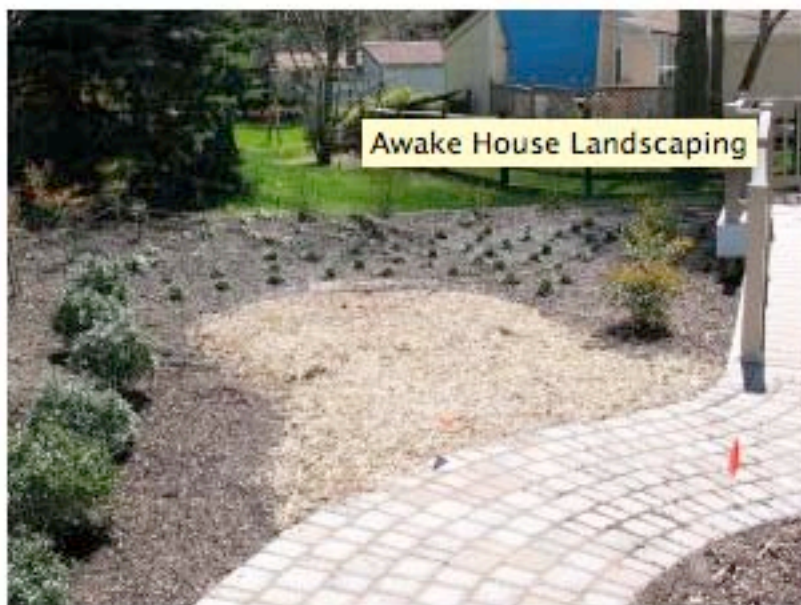
Don Taylor, principal of [DW Taylor Associates, Inc](#) and Jim Greenfield, president of [Columbia Builders](#) respectively designed and built this LEED Platinum home, the highest rating possible given by the US Green Building Council. The home was built in 7 months on the site of an old home that was removed. Many of the services of the contractors and subcontractors were donated or provided at cost by companies that support the Arc's mission.

The goal of the project was to provide an environment to fully support 4 residents who need round the clock care, in every possible way. The Awake House was thusly named for its 24-hour personal care. The home boasts universal design access elements to allow physically disabled residents to have full use of the house. It has an extremely energy efficient building envelope and HVAC system to minimize the Arc's operating costs, environmentally friendly products that don't emit toxins to improve occupant health, and durable products and design features to minimize maintenance.

Going for LEED

The team initially shot for a LEED Silver certification, but smart decision making quickly got them into Gold, and then Platinum certification territory. They also intelligently appointed one point person who oversaw the LEED process and collected documentation, Eva Castillo of DW Taylor.

The home was entirely panelized, reducing lumber waste and construction time on site. **Nearly 90% of all waste from the site was recycled.** The site is designed for water management with all pervious walkways and driveway, and **100% of all plants are drought tolerant.** Icynene spray foam insulation was used throughout the entire home to help it reach 54% improved energy efficiency over standard homes. All toilets, faucets and shower heads are super low-flow for superior water efficiency.



The residents will enjoy improved indoor air quality and comfort with an ERV and Carrier Infinity furnace, systems so smart they proved difficult to test in worst case conditions because of the backup features included. The home also has low-VOC paints, adhesives and finishes and uses recycled content flooring, decking, foundation and siding.

Jim Greenfield succinctly summarized this project in an interview with [The Business Monthly](#): "It's an incredible place."