



# Big Deals

## New FRED Awards Honor Investment in Real Estate

BY MARY THAYER HAUGEN ★ PHOTOGRAPHY BY TURNER PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS PART SCIENCE, PART ART.** WOOLING BUSINESSES AND INVESTMENT TO FREDERICK COUNTY DOESN'T ALWAYS FOLLOW A LINEAR PATH, and those responsible for making the deals are often forgotten for their roles.

But a new recognition program, the inaugural Frederick Real Estate Dealmakers (FRED) Awards, sponsored by the economic development offices of Frederick County and the City of Frederick, has honored the most successful commercial real estate transactions of the past year.

The awards gave nods to a variety of people: real estate agents, architects, engineers, general contractors and

building owners. "These are all people who create opportunities and bring jobs to the area," says Helen Propher, director of the Frederick County Office of Economic Development. "It isn't by magic that a business shows up. It takes all the stars aligned to make it happen."

There were seven award categories, including the **Deal of the Year**, presented for the complex transaction

that will create a new, expanded home for Flying Dog Brewery. Key players in the deal included Rocky MacIntosh and Steve Cranford of MacRo Ltd.; Steve Chafitz of Steve Chafitz Realty; the City of Frederick; and Jim Caruso and Ben Savage of Flying Dog Brewery.

The property for the Flying Dog deal came from the City of Frederick—a tract of land originally



PHOTO COURTESY FLYING DOG BREWERY



The property for the proposed new home of Flying Dog Brewery was a tract of land originally designed for Frederick Municipal Airport but no longer needed. The sale to a private company helped to retire the debt on the land and return it to the tax base.

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brewery and add an area for outdoor entertainment.”

The City of Frederick feels it got a lot of bang for its buck with this

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—Rocky MacIntosh, FRED Award winner

and return it to the tax base. “Everybody was really excited to make this happen,” says MacIntosh. “It was an opportunity to keep a business in Frederick, and it allows Flying Dog Brewery to double the size of their

deal. “Any time we can retain—and add—well-paying, benefitted manufacturing jobs in the community, it’s a win,” says Richard Griffin, director of Economic Development for the City of Frederick.

Another weighty category is that of the **Lifetime Achievement Award**, presented to MacIntosh. Real estate runs deep in his family: His grandfather started a real estate business in Washington, D.C., in 1907 and his father followed in those footsteps. When it was Rocky’s turn, he had a decision to make. “I could have joined that firm, or strike out on my own and get involved locally,” MacIntosh says. “That’s what I decided to do. I started with a small farm in 1972.”

His career took many twists and turns. He eventually acquired his own office and brought his siblings into the business. After about 10 years, he left that business to focus on commercial real estate and the creation of MacRo, Ltd.





Danny Severn of St. John Properties helped engineer the transaction that turned into the Most Creative Deal award when Float Frederick, a water therapy spa, moved into its current location on Gashouse Pike.

He's described by his colleagues and peers as a "leader and a mentor." In fact, he's trained many people who have later become his competitors, and he's fine with that. He chose to follow his own path and feels he shouldn't stand in the way of others doing the same thing. "I love to mentor people," MacIntosh says. "The most important thing you can do is pass on your knowledge. A lot of people I trained in the '80s are still out there working. I'm really proud of that."

In addition to the generosity of spirit and knowledge he shares with people in the industry, he has also given countless hours and resources to local boards and organizations.

**Most Creative Deal** award went to one that could not have happened

without the creative knowledge and flexibility of the broker, developer or landlord. Float Frederick, a float therapy facility, certainly fits this bill. It is the first of its kind in Frederick, and required all participants to be creative in their approach and understanding.

"The float tanks require a tremendous amount of salt," says Danny Severn, the landlord representative for St. John Properties. "It's insanely corrosive so we couldn't use standard products. Everything from the light switches to the floors had to be marine-grade."

In addition, every room contained a variety of integrated elements. "That's unique for commercial applications," says Severn. "It required inspectors to have a thorough understanding of the project as a whole."

Winner of the **Modern Masterpiece Award** went to Ruppert Properties for rehabilitating the old Rotorex manufacturing plant. "This property was a pretty brutal, overgrown space with a heavy industrial feel," says Brandon Cannon, senior associate for Ruppert Properties. "We took a property with issues that nobody else wanted to deal with and leveraged our strengths to turn it into a place where people can have manufacturing facilities as well as office space for their headquarters."

**Perseverance Award** acknowledged the people who continued to pursue a deal despite the difficulty or delay. This aptly describes the process of finding the proper location and delivering a specialized laboratory for BioFactura.





The Office Brokerage Firm of the Year award went to Avison Young for its revamping of the office space left vacant by Bechtel Corporation's exodus from the county. Pictured is Bob Wrightson, senior vice president at Avison Young.

"From the first point of contact until we signed the lease took 35 months," says David Kaye, the tenant representative from Tyler-Donagan Real Estate. "There were many challenges to getting the lab completed, but we just kept at it until we got it right."

The **Broker of the Year** award recognized the outstanding performance of a commercial real estate professional. Brad Benna, Frederick portfolio leasing agent for Matan Companies, took home this award for securing more than 350,000 square feet of transactions. "I'm the one on the front line," says Benna, "so I tend to get the attention, but we [development and construction departments] really work as a team." He adds, "There is no magic closing

skill, it's just being responsive throughout the process."

The **Office Brokerage Firm of the Year** award went to Avison Young for its reimagining of the 450,000 square feet of office space left vacant by Bechtel Corporation's exodus from the county.

Avison Young had a tall order to fill, according to Bob Wrightson, senior vice president. Bechtel vacated a campus of traditional buildings with vast amounts of floor space, so Avison Young decided to shake things up. "By 2020, half the workforce will be millennials," Wrightson says. "They value openness, light and color. With this in mind, we recreated the interiors to be a welcoming place in which they would enjoy working."

The campus is also being reimag-

ined to create a sense of community and integration. In 2016, Avison Young jump-started the second life of this facility by leasing 160,000 square feet of space.

For a complete listing of all the people named in the FRED Awards and finalists for each of the categories, please visit [www.discoverfred-erickmd.com/fredawards](http://www.discoverfred-erickmd.com/fredawards).

Propheter, the county economic development chief, says the recent FRED Awards program was so successful that officials are already looking ahead to 2018. "The energy in the room on awards night was exactly what we wanted," she says. "I heard a lot of people already discussing what projects they could enter for next year." **FM**