

# Palm Beach Daily News

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## NEWS

# Palm Beach's North Fire Station wins preservation foundation award

*The Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach has honored the town's North Fire Station with its Edward E. and Susie Elson Award for excellence in historic renovation.*



**Jodie Wagner**

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## Key Points

The Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach recognized the station with its Edward E. and Susie Elson Award at a ceremony on Feb. 2.

The station, which opened in 1927, underwent a \$17 million redevelopment to modernize the facility without losing its historic character.

The facility reopened in March 2025 after nearly three years of renovation.

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Palm Beach's historic North Fire Station was honored Feb. 2 for its rehabilitation and preservation as one of Florida's oldest continuously operating fire stations.

The Mediterranean-style building, [which reopened in March 2025 after a nearly three-year redevelopment](#), was recognized with the Edward E. and Susie Elson Award during a ceremony at 300 N. County Road.

Established by the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach, the award recognizes excellence in non-residential restoration, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse projects that uphold "historic integrity, craftsmanship and long-term stewardship," according to the foundation.

Danielle Del Sol, the foundation's president and CEO, told gathered guests that the town faced the option of replacing the aging fire station but instead chose what turned out to be a \$17 million redevelopment project. The design team led by the Palm Beach architect Mark Marsh of Bridges Marsh & Associates in Palm Beach carefully balanced modern operational needs with the preservation of the building's historic fabric, Del Sol said.

The North Fire Station opened in 1927 and was landmarked by the town in 1988. That designation protects its exterior walls from significant alteration with the permission of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

"It took an incredible investment and foresight for the town to say this is such a significant and historic piece of architecture," Del Sol said. "Yes, it would be way easier to knock it down, and yes, we could accommodate all the technical needs of the fire trucks and the ambulances and all of that in a much simpler way. But this (building) is integral to our community. This has been here for a hundred years. It looks like Palm Beach. We're going to keep it looking like Palm Beach."

Since it first opened nearly a century ago, the North Fire Station has undergone several updates, including the addition of third-floor administrative offices in 1987. The building sustained significant damage during hurricanes Frances and Jeanne in 2004, prompting renovations the following year.

A comprehensive inspection in July 2021 later identified a need for major repairs, including a full roof replacement, new windows and doors, water-damage fixes and structural improvements. The structural engineer was Lantana-based Carmo Engineering Associates, headed by Dave Carmo.

Construction began in July 2022 and [was completed in January 2025](#). During the renovation, personnel [operated out of a temporary station beside the old building](#), near North County and Wells roads.

In restoring the building, the town [worked to preserve key historical features](#), including the original brick façade. The building also retains a number of historical items, including old logbooks, fire badges, the bell from the station's first fire truck, and the fire pole, which is still in use.

Fire Rescue Chief Sean Baker said the project not only upgraded the station, but also preserved its historic character.

"The North Fire Station is more than a building," he said. "It is a symbol of service, resilience and pride for the town of Palm Beach. This rehabilitation ensures our firefighters have a safe, modern facility while honoring nearly 100 years of history. We are grateful to the Preservation Foundation for recognizing the care and commitment that went into preserving a station that continues to protect our community every day."

The North Fire Station is the second recipient of the Edward E. and Susie Elson Award, which is expected to be presented every other year, Del Sol said. [The White Elephant hotel was the first recipient in December 2022.](#)

Edward Elson is a retired businessman and former U.S. ambassador to Denmark. Susie Elson is a photographer and former chairwoman of The Society of the Four Arts and American Craft Council. They are longtime supporters of the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach.

The Elson Award is one of several honors presented regularly by the Preservation Foundation to honor excellence in renovations, restorations, new architecture and landscapes.

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