



Projects Bring New Life (continued from page 72)

was to enhance the space and re-energize the businesses in the area.

Theodore said John Morgan and his father Jimmy Morgan of the Mill Creek Foundation were heavily involved in the project that would ultimately result in Courthouse Square.

Courthouse Square was designed to be an important space that offers multiple uses as well as being pedestrian friendly.

"We tried as much as possible to use materials other than concrete on this streetscape," Theodore said. "Brick pavers are in abundance. We also used bluestone pavement, which is common in the Southeast United States."

Theodore noted that the pavers and the bluestone complement each other, adding that with such a large open space, using only brick pavers would give a feel of too much brick.

"It is a pleasing combination of color, with the green space and streetscapes," Baker added.

The fountain at the center of the square was designed to cure the need for a dynamic aspect to the area. The pre-cast concrete shelf used on the brick benches that wrap around the Courthouse Square ties the new to the old as this benching

ABOVE: A traditional cast stone fountain feature is centrally located in the plaza and becomes a dynamic focal point that not only softens the noise of perimeter vehicular traffic, but also becomes a place making icon that adds a sense of coolness on a hot summer day and a place where dreams are only a penny away. PHOTO COURTESY OF WOOD+PARTNERS, INC.

mimics the old courthouse benches. Iron bollards were placed around portions of the square to prevent vehicle traffic from entering the plaza area.

A vertical element was given to the square with the placement of Palmetto trees inside the square. Canopy trees were placed along the perimeter of the square, and the decision was made to not use canopy trees throughout the site because it would cause too much shade.

In addition to proceeds provided by the Mill Creek Foundation, the project was co-funded by Emanuel County and Transportation Enhancement Act funds. The new Courthouse Square has been well received by Swainsboro residents.

"Since the project was completed, building occupancy in that area has gone from about 50 percent to 100 percent occupancy," Baker said. "When cities invest in the public realm, it promotes private sector investment."