

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Looking at 1992

It is with great expectations and concern that I assumed the office of President for 1992.

The concern is obviously over an economy that is falling and there seems to be little in sight for the coming year.

It seems like architect's are on the lower level of the food chain when the big fish decide to stop building and banks are treating construction like a four letter word.

During these recessionary times the pressure on architects to maintain professional stature and secure appropriate monetary value for their work is even more difficult.

That is why it is very important that all architects unite to sell creative energy and protect our profession

Yet, amidst all of this, we as architects have an uncommon opportunity to preserve our profession and make a bigger impact on the built environment (when-ever it gets built).

Architects have a tremendous talent that can nurture society. It must be taken care of by all architects - or it will cease to exist, just like any relationship that is not properly taken care of, it withers and dies.

Architects uniting to determine the future of the profession is what the AIA is all about.

And this is where I believe we have a great opportunity for 1992 and can set our collective sites toward accomplishing some important goals.

One of these goals is to expand membership and participation in AIA by effectively communicating to all architects and students of architecture as to what the AIA offers them.

Another is in what each and everyone of you can individually do and that is to actively participate, whether it is to attend an event, work on a particular project, work toward a leadership position, or participate in some of the continuing education programs.

Furthermore, there is a huge gap in how architects view themselves and how the public views architects. There is even a larger gap in what the public thinks about what architects do, and what they actually do.

Therefore, I believe it is terribly important that we educate the public as to who we are and what we do.

One of our aims for the coming year is to oversee licensing requirements by the state and to ensure jobs for architects in this uncommonly bad economy.

And lastly, through a revamped awards program, to include non architects, the construction industry, clients and students, we can further educate the public as to who we are and what we stand for thru excellence in design.

This newsletter should serve as two way communication. I'm interested in the issues and concerns you would like addressed.

*Robert L. Ziegelman, FAIA
President*

MESSAGES TO THE MEMBERS

~The Chapter has enclosed with this newsletter a strip of AIA logos for use on your personal calendar. We hope that you will use these to help keep yourself aware of the many upcoming events the Chapter is sponsoring.

~Congratulations to **Dick Pinnell** of **SH&G Assoc.** on his winning entry for the design of newsletter's masthead and format concept. Thanks also to our other entrants: **Morris Webster** and **Walter Reddig**.

AIA DETROIT: SPEAKING OUT

One of our objectives in 1991 was to increase the visibility of the Chapter in the community by speaking out on issues of significance involving architecture and planning. Included among these were the following:

Chene House. The Chapter and the community spoke out last year concerning the preservation of Chene House, but the City was unable to process a demolition permit on almost a sub rosa basis and the building was destroyed, before preservation forces had a chance to mobilize. The City has received an enormous amount of criticism in the press, and the owners are now being required to show why they should not be prosecuted for proceeding with the demolition. The issue is still unresolved.

Ford Auditorium. After the Chapter and a number of civic organizations objected to the sale of the Auditorium to Gerald Hines Interests and Comerica Bank, enough signatures were obtained to force a referendum and the sale was prevented. Now, through the good offices of Bill Kessler, FAIA and others in the chapter and community, the Ford family has offered a gift of \$40,000 to finance a market study of the Auditorium and will also look at other potential uses. His study, now under way, will explore the potential of the building as a Civic Auditorium and will also look at other potential uses. The report of the consultant is due in about two months.

Tiger Stadium. As part of the dialogue on the future of the present Tiger Stadium and the need for a more modern baseball stadium in Detroit, a task force of the Chapter Board was asked to review the merits of all sides of the controversy and to report back for appropriate action by the board. Their presentation to the Board was lengthy but firm in its recommendation that a new stadium was the better solution, IF the

new stadium site benefitted the entire city and preferably its downtown, and IF a study was made of the existing stadium site to determine the maximum benefit to that neighborhood community of an alternative development there. At this writing, the issue has bogged down in a combination of politics and intransigence of the Tiger organization.

GSA Standards. Wayne County's government asked the Chapter to review current GSA standards for occupancy by government agency offices of downtown Detroit buildings; also, to offer an expert opinion as to their reasonableness and the ability of landlords to upgrade their facilities to GSA standards, where appropriate. The Building Performance and Regulations Committee (formerly the BOCA Committee) rendered a thorough report which was conveyed to the County. Essentially, it reported that the standards which GSA applies are the usual standards applied to new construction in most jurisdictions, and are

FYI: Looking at Licensing Regulations

We are publishing this sample copy of a letter for mass mailing to the membership in hopes to provide, for you, the facts and criteria regarding the Chapter Boards position on the very important issue of licensing regulations. We feel your awareness of this information is vital to the continued strength of our profession.

Dear Fellow Architect:

AIA Detroit has perceived a significant, persistent and serious erosion of architects' professional status and of proper protection to the public due to the State's lax enforcement of the licensing laws and rules. Problems as wide ranging as grossly unsafe buildings, serious code violations, increasing liability costs and increased litigation have all been fueled by a laissez-faire attitude within our entire industry toward the obligations and

generally considered reasonable and proper for the occupancies expected. (The problem in many cases is that owners who originally built to older standards, have not upgraded their properties to the newer standards. When private tenants are involved, this is not always necessary, but under GSA regs the higher level of conformance is mandated, although some negotiation is available). We are still awaiting feedback from the County, but the Committee did an exemplary job of analysis in a short time.

In the next issue we will bring you up to date on the activities of other Chapter committees, to let you know what your Chapter is doing for you and your community. This will give you an idea of the range of events in progress in the hopes that you may wish to become involved. We need the benefit of your experience.

*Jerry Shea, FAIA
1991 President*

requirements of the licensed professionals (architects, engineers and land surveyors). The chapter strongly believes that the best avenue for correcting the problem is vigilant enforcement of the Licensing Act.

The AIA Detroit Professional Practice Committee has been engaged in the compilation and delivery, to the Board of Architects, of complaints and violations of the Licensing Act. At various times, the subject, need or "severity" of certain complaints has been questioned, along with the need to "warn" or advise members.

The Committee believes it is essential that we be consistent and diligent in our complaint process. Whether a potential complaint is as simple as forgetting to place a signature adjacent to a seal or as profound as practicing well beyond the limits of a licensee's competence, or practicing without a license, we feel our process and vigilance should remain the same.

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1992 Grassroots Leadership Conference

Each January, AIA representatives from across the country converge on Washington D.C. for the annual Grassroots Leadership Conference. For those unfamiliar with this event, it is designed primarily for AIA component officers as a basic introduction to the National AIA organization, as well as an opportunity to review current national and regional issues and share experiences with other component members. The format is four action-packed days of breakfast meetings, receptions, lectures and dinners. If that sounds intense, it is! In fact, it's impossible for one person to absorb it all the first year. Still, it's a great way to open one's eyes to the scope of AIA activities and exchange information with other AIA Chapters on common issues.

This year attendees from the Detroit Chapter included President Robert Ziegelman, FAIA; Executive Director Rae Dumke, Hon. AIA; former Associates Director Cynthia Enzer, Assoc. AIA; and me. In addition, representatives from the MSA and the Flint, Grand Valley, Huron Valley, Mid-Michigan, Northern Michigan, Saginaw Valley, Upper Great Lakes and Western Michigan Chapters attended as well.

Day One activities included the opening session, regional orientation sessions, and installation of institute officers followed by regional dinners that evening. Guest speaker at the opening session was Mike Fitzgerald, who spoke about the rapid changes taking place in the '90's and how those changes can become opportunities for Architects to prove themselves indispensable to the design and building process, the building industry, and to society.

Day Two began with a sister chapter breakfast where we shared discussions with other urban chapters like Boston, Dallas, Chicago, etc. Not surprisingly, a

good deal of the time was spent on dealing with the recession. Various chapters had contracted with a professional placement service and another was offering professional psychological counseling. Continuing education was also discussed. Mandatory vs. voluntary programs is still a hot topic, but most felt either way, the AIA must take the lead.

The morning training sessions focused on finances. Topics included methods of dues collections, retaining members when they can't pay, fiscal conservancy and generating income. Some ideas for generating income included participation in continuing education for other professions, as well as for Architects, and aggressively pursuing outside sponsors for programs. The Minnesota Architectural Foundation raised a net \$45,000 in a car raffle!

Just before lunch, Cynthia Enzer and I participated as panelists for a program on retaining Intern Members. Numerous ideas were presented from other chapters, including conducting firm surveys, offering training exercises, including interns on the Board, and offering seminars with value units toward IDP. The Institute is also considering publishing "tip sheets" about successful programs from the chapters with step-by-step organization ideas.

During lunch, presentations were given by Institute Board members on current programs, planning for the commissions on the Public, Professional Excellence and Membership, the 1992 Convention in Boston, the AIA Videoconference on ADA and candidates for 1992 office.

Following lunch, Robert Ziegelman and I attended leadership conferences on "Public Awareness Opportunities for Components" and "Awards without Tears: Developing an Awards Jury Process." Both of these sessions were somewhat helpful, but as we discovered, the Detroit Chapter had more to offer on these topics than most other chapters. One interesting idea: The Portland

Chapter televises their awards program on local cable.

That evening, following an open house at the AIA Headquarters, members of the Michigan Region shared the day's events over dinner at one of D.C.'s restaurants.

Day three activities were devoted primarily to members' services. The Institute's Service Delivery and Communications Task Force organized the day beginning with a breakfast presentation of initial directions taken by the task force. These directions included developing options for implementation in six different areas: Education, Structure, Body of Knowledge, Communication, Membership and Public Policy.

Following the morning presentation, conference attendees were organized into several smaller groups to discuss the various options in each area and brainstorm additional ideas. At lunch the results of the various group sessions were tabulated and presented in preliminary form as follows:

Education:

- Strong feeling for mandatory continuing education (but keep it simple)
- Strong feeling for linking education to the construction industry

Structure:

- Single point dues collection
- Regional Grassroots programs

Body of Knowledge:

- Increase access
- Develop electronic system

Communications:

- Strong support for electronic link

Membership:

- Enhance self-esteem
- Requiring member involvement
- FUN

Public Policy:

- Assume leadership role in construction

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A Reflective Practice Studio Experiment

Architects and educators have seen the increasing use of the term "reflective practice" in professional literature. Practicing architects are encouraged to "reflect-in-action", and academics are much more comfortable with a research component to practice.

For a definition of reflective practice, we turn to the writings of Donald Schön. In particular, two books provide descriptions that are central to this report. *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* was published in 1983 and *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* in 1987.

A reflective studio is a practice setting designed as a virtual world of its own, "relatively free of the pressures, distractions, and risks of the real one to which, nevertheless, it refers. It stands in the intermediate space between the practice world, the 'lay' world of ordinary life, and the esoteric world of the academy." In this setting, a master practitioner-teacher actively coaches, and the participants practice facing problems, testing solutions, making mistakes, seeking help and refining approaches. Reflective conversations take place at every opportunity.

Educational objectives and other opportunities during the Fall of 1991 were combined to form an experiment in post-professional education at Lawrence Technological University. The changing image and expanding mission of the institution as a focused university supports the search for ways to extend the solid base of linking theory and practice into graduate education.

Also, the University-owned Affleck House in Bloomfield Hills was available for a non-traditional educational use. Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1941, the Affleck House can be a symbol of the

highest standard of inductive studio education, centered around a design problem from the real world. A parallel use for this building is a professional consultation center, where teams of practitioners and academics can engage in applied research.

Malcolm Holzman, FAIA, partner of Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer, New York, was selected as "a practitioner who practices with artistry" and was contacted a year ago. In addition to publications, letters and fax communications, the College received a letter of strong support from a graduate of Lawrence Technological University who worked with Malcolm for two years, 1989 and 1990.

Donald Schön, professor at M.I.T., guided the planning for the reflective practice studio and visited Lawrence Technological University at a midpoint

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during the fall quarter. His lecture on "Marrying Artistry and Applied Science in Professional Education" was held in conjunction with the ArchiLECTURE series. During his two-day visit, Don also participated in the studio at the Affleck House. Glenn Wiggins, a researcher with Donald Schön, monitored the studio with initial, midpoint and exit visits. Glenn practiced architecture for twelve years and is currently completing his doctoral studies at M.I.T. with Don. One of our full-time faculty in the College of Architecture and Design, Tom Nashlen, coordinated the project and worked closely with Malcolm Holzman.

A studio project was selected in discussion with the past city manager of Bloomfield Hills, and the owners of the project site were involved in the studio at certain points. A group of the younger practicing architects expressed interest in the fall studio, however, obtaining release time from practice offices became a major problem.

There were many gains generated by the first reflective practice studio at Lawrence Technological University. Malcolm Holzman led the experience with enthusiasm, and followed closely the nature of his office practice. Two aspects were involved - the way he practices as a reflective practitioner (how he teaches, criticizes and reflects with other architects), and the way in which the studio itself becomes a setting for reflection (how participants engage in the dialogue of reflective practice and how they communicate changing perceptions).

A committee of the College has tabled reports and insights from all participants, including a full evaluation of the studio by Glenn Wiggins and Donald Schön. The most significant outcome for the university is the decision to develop a Master of Architecture post-professional degree program with the reflective practice studio as its focus. A group of approximately seven architects would be the ideal number to participate in a second studio a year from now. The team for Fall 1992 seems enthusiastic to pursue the idea further.

*Neville Clouten, Dean
Lawrence Technological University*

Editors note:

This article was written in January of 1992, as a synopsis or reflection on the events of the Fall 1991 studio. By publishing this we hope to encourage you to examine the strengthening bond between academics and practicing professionals, beyond the more traditional exercises, and behold the benefits that may arise from such a relationship.

THE INFORMATION PAGE: WHAT IS, WHAT WAS, AND WHAT WILL BE

January

9 A new licensee's reception was held at the Riverfront Apartments and was attended by a majority of the newly licensed architects from the Detroit area. The event was organized by **Pam Holmes** and the membership committee and was funded through a national AIA grant intended to support the development of new membership. The evening was intended as an opportunity for the newly licensed architects of our Chapter to meet with many of the principals of area firms. The night was a success for both the new licensee's and the Chapter as several new memberships resulted.

19-22 AIA Detroit Board of Directors was represented at AIA Grassroots in Washington D.C. Look for a report on the events of the conference in this issue of this newsletter.

March

21 Detroit Chapter Long Range was held from 9a.m. until 3p.m. at the

Beaubien House. The planning session was facilitated by **Ron Leonetti**.

April

7 The Detroit Chapter will have an opportunity to meet the three candidates for the regional directors seat which Tom Lucas, FAIA will be vacating this fall. The candidates are Richard Fry, AIA from Huron Valley, Leslie Tincknell, AIA from Saginaw Valley, and Karl Greimel, FAIA from Detroit Chapter. The Regional Director position will be elected by mail in ballots for the first time, with ballots due to MSA by July 15. As MSA President Whitney pointed out in the February MSA bulletin, this position is very important to us in our relationship with Washington, so come out and meet the candidates before you vote. **The reception will be held at Beaubien House from 5-7p.m.**

26 Your attendance is welcome for Architect's Sunday from 1-4p.m. at Industry Nightclub in Pontiac.

May

30 AIA Detroit Design Awards and Recognitions Program will be held at Cranbrook. A great deal of effort has been put in by the planning committee to make this a public awareness event, as well as, a celebration of our profession. Entry forms have been mailed and hopefully you've entered a submission. If you haven't, please hurry, submissions are due by March 27.

Another Message

The AIA Detroit House Tour will be conducted in Grosse Pointe on September 20. The House Tour Committee is still in need of sites for this year's tour and time is running short to finalize the tour program. If your firm has been involved with a new home, renovation or addition project in the Grosse Pointe area and the owner's are willing to open their home to this event please contact Beaubien House at 965-4100. Your help is appreciated.

Paul Stachowiak

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industry

- Develop legislative awareness
- Develop community leadership
- Take risks

A final, more detailed report will be published by the task force this summer.

Activities after lunch included presentations by the American Architectural Foundation on recent events by the Hon. Juanita Crabb, mayor of Binghamton, N.Y. on how architects can play a leading role in community development. Regional meetings concluded the day.

Day Four was "Government Affairs Day". We began again at breakfast with a presentation by Carolyn Miller, of the National Federation of Independent Business, on the national "health care crises" followed by Representative William Archer (R-TX), ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee, and Terry Hill, Manager for National Media Relations for the National Federation of

Independent Business, Mr. Hill coached the attendees on visiting capitol Hill. At lunch, Representative Dan Rostenkowski (D-IL), Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, also spoke about the various health care proposals being considered. In the afternoon, the various state and regional components visited their representatives on Capitol Hill to discuss the health care issue. Robert Ziegelman and I joined ten other MSA and Michigan Chapter officers at a meeting with Senator Carl Levin where we discussed the economy, as well as health care costs.

That evening, members of the Michigan delegation attended the "Accent on Architecture" Gala Ceremony at the Kennedy Center where First Lady Barbara Bush presented the AIA Gold Medal to Benjamin Thompson, FAIA; the Project Honor Awards, 25 Year Award, and Firm Award were also announced.

*Gary L. Skog
Vice-President*

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If you would like to learn more, please attend one of our Chapter Dialogues, the MSA Convention or contact the Chapter office at 965-4100. Meanwhile, the Committee has already filed nearly 150 complaints to date. It is possible that you may be involved either directly, or indirectly, in a complaint. If so, you will be notified by the state if they determine a violation should be processed or if they require additional information. If that occurs, please understand the concern and discipline we exercise as a Committee should be reflected by each of us as professionals, and respond in spirit.

*Yours toward a stronger profession-
Professional Practice Committee*

AIA/DETROIT CHAPTER

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