

# Real Estate Journal

COVERING ALL OF LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK CITY AND UPSTATE NEW YORK

## Architects working in construction mgmt. offer clients the best in the industry

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Though not the norm, it has become more commonplace to see architects working at construction management firms. CMs that have architects on staff can bring their clients both the perspective of the constructor and the designer. As construction management firms along with architects gain recognition as collaborative partners with owners, the contractors' credibility is boosted and projects ultimately tend to flow more smoothly and efficiently.

With this shift, architects are becoming more comfortable on the construction management side of the industry. They are in-

creasing their awareness of construction processes and are able to serve construction management firms and clients more successfully. From recognizing the correlation between design and appropriate construction materials, to green building procurement, to coordinating design elements with construction procedures, architects employed by CM firms bring their unique vision and experience to the client in one cohesive, comprehensive package. They also assist during the pre-project stage by helping the owner create a team of consultants from different organizations or firms with dissimilar responsibilities.

This trend is noteworthy, especially as projects become more complex and the line between architect and construction manager becomes more hazy. Increasingly, architects want to know

that construction managers have the ability to solve problems as their business partners. This facilitates a truly collaborative spirit among all parties, including the owner. Ultimately, this collaborative effort reflects positively on the entire team. Because architects can more easily talk to architects, it opens the door for true communication and partnership at the essential early stages.

Having architects on staff allows the CM to be fully involved with a project from inception through construction. The CM is in a position to value a project from the architectural side, enabling discussions with owners that touch upon design and scope, as well as such construction issues as schedule and cost.

Because of their involvement with early project planning, CMs are occasionally asked by an owner

to help identify needs and then write RFPs for architects and engineers. Having an architect on staff facilitates this process. With the architect/construction management knowledge base, it is possible to write an RFP to extract the best from both architects and the construction team.

In the final analysis, it is a construction manager's job to bring added value to a project, through cost and time saving measures such as value engineering, fast-tracking and effective project control. Having an architect on board can be a key element in making the entire design/construction planning and execution process more direct, simple and fast.

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