

The Southern Fried Architect

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(A clear, complete, concise, and mostly correct unofficial report of the MasterFormat Expansion Task Team activities and other stuff **Annual subscription: Priceless, but we do accept MasterCard, Visa, and American Express**

AIA praises CSI for MasterFormat Expansion

In a letter to CSI Interim Executive Director Tony Keane, dated October 22, 2002, AIA Executive Vice President/CEO, Norman L. Koonce, FAIA praised CSI for our courage and determination to lead the industry with expansion of MasterFormat. Norman went on to say, "We applaud the comprehensive approach you are taking. All too often, solutions within our industry have been piecemeal, and as a result, fall short." He went on to say other nice things about CSI and ask for a meeting with between AIA and CSI representatives to "share views" on the proposed MasterFormat expansion.

Scheme B is for Big

With Draft 2 of the proposed MasterFormat came 2 schemes, and Scheme B is getting a lot of attention out there in the heartland. The number one demand from many CSI members in the MasterFormat expansion process is to "keep it simple" when it comes to the final version. The proposed Scheme B, contrast the proposed 43 Division Scheme A with a simple nine Construction Group structure. These construction groups generally follow traditional construction practices and are broken down into five to nine Divisions each. This scheme provides for easier future expansion and flexibility. The big question is whether this major change in organizing construction information will be accepted by the industry. Based on reactions so far, the answer seems to be "YES."

Creating a Stir: MFETT in the Mags

On November 5 the *Wall Street Journal* ran an article on MasterFormat expansion. This is the first time a major business publication has published an article about little ole CSI and MasterFormat. OK, we were in the *Washington Business Journal* in September, but this is a national business publication. We knew what we were doing was important, but we never expected anyone else to agree. Today the *Wall Street Journal*, tomorrow the *National Enquirer*.

The November issue of *AIA Architect* also ran a story entitled "16-Division MasterFormat on Road to Change". The article discusses the two schemes contained in Draft 2, says more nice stuff about CSI, and then goes on to say the AIA has set up "a blue-ribbon committee of AIA-member representatives to meet with CSI representatives on December 16." I guess that means, I have another meeting to attend.

Tar and Feathering: On the Road for a better MasterFormat

December is a slow month for the task team. We are saving up our energy and getting ready for our January symposium and task team meeting in San Francisco. This is good. Based on my last trip there in October, we will need all the rest we can get and besides, after averaging one presentation a week for the last five months Momma is getting pretty well tired of the schedule. Remember, if your Chapter or Region wants to get in on the fun, just pick up the phone and give us a call. We are well rested and ready to go.

04 Dec	Construct Canada Show
11 Dec	Albuquerque Chapter
16 Dec	AIA MasterFormat Blue Ribbon Committee

The Technical Corner

The Technical Committee is at it again. This time there appears to be no stopping the Chairman of CSI's Technical Committee in his quest for world domination and control of the Institute. *SFA* has employed the most diabolical covert techniques known to man (we ask his wife) to undercover this latest plot of the Technical Committee and the following information on the technical programs of the Institute.

According to our unnamed sources, the Technical Committee has enlisted the help of former Technical Committee member Tommy Smith, to actually engage in conversations with enemies of the Committee. This sure fire method of bringing opposition groups to their knees was tested last year and found to be 100% effective. Tommy, who is known for, well, just being Tommy. He and TC Chair, Henry Berg has drawn up a secret list of people for Tommy to call and have a short chat.

In its propaganda brochure, “*Solutions for the Building Industry*”, the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) claims its Facility Information Council “publishes the U.S. National CAD Standard.” This seems to be a bit of a stretch of the truth since CSI publishes 80% of the NCS and AIA and the DOD’s CADD/GIS Technology Center publishes the rest of the document. NIBS is only responsible for the balloting process, which is extremely poor, and publishing the ballot results, which is even worse. NIBS President, David Harris, FAIA, declined to answer our questions about why the April ballot has still not been published and referred all NCS questions to Sandy Shaw who was in Japan.

Charles Rick Green and his UDS Program Task Team met last month to again discuss the seldom seen Drawing Specifications Coordination and his elusive cousin, Quality Construction Documents. They have been working with San Francisco based, independent writer, Fred Stitt on a document called “CODS- Coordination of Drawings and Specifications.” Based on information from our California sources, the document lacks quality and coordination. The task team is discussing all options to breathe life back into the document. They have decided NOT to submit it to NIBS for inclusion into the NCS. Boy, that was a shock!

Questions of the membership are now moving away from “if CSI will change MasterFormat” to “how we should implement the new changes.” With this general change in concern, several technical questions are now being raised.

1. How will CSI handle licensing of MasterFormat 04?
2. When will the new MasterFormat go into effect?
3. Will CSI continue to support MF 95 and for how long?

These and other similar questions go beyond the purview of the MasterFormat Expansion Task Team. Licensing is of particular concern to many. I thought I understood the current policy until I reviewed the written document and then I really got confused. Apparently the currently policy does not include UDS and UniFormat. A consistent written policy on licensing and use of all CSI copyrighted documents is badly needed. OK Henry, here is a technical topic that you can really sink your teeth into.

Quote of the Month

During a recent MasterFormat presentation, a specifier said that his firm still uses the 1988 edition of MasterFormat and has no intentions of changing. Chairman Hall gave the following response. “The three most important decisions a person makes in life are the god you serve, the person you marry, and the version of MasterFormat you use in your office. I am not saying that if you don’t adopt MasterFormat 04 you will burn in hell, but why take that chance?” I guess that puts things into perspective!

The Greening of MasterFormat

More folks keep getting on board the MF 04 train as it moves down the tracks. The Institute’s Environmental Task Team and the Houston Chapter have taken up the challenge of ensuring that MasterFormat 04 will address all applicable subject matter of sustainable design. The Environmental Team has been frustrated with their ability to sink their teeth into a real task. Upon receiving the invitation to assist with the MasterFormat expansion effort, task team chair, Dru Medows said, “I cannot adequately express how happy I am that the stars are finally aligning appropriately for us to make progress.” She was not as happy to learn of the April 1 deadline for her task team to present its recommendations to the MFETT, but will have a schedule and we intend to deliver.

SFA Editorial Section

Last month we threw our editorial support behind the Draft Bob Movement for CSI Executive Director, and as promised the top five reasons why *SFA* supports Bob.

5. We won’t have to pay for relocation cost.
4. He is one of us: a former contractor, an architect, and a specifier.

3. A former Institute President that is not afraid of change and wants to enhance our legacy in specifications.
2. He has one of the best technical minds in the Institute.
1. His name is Bob.

After all, how could we support the Draft Bob Movement if his name was “Fred.”

Epilog

CSI in-house legal shyster, Greg Ceton, has informed the *SFA* in a letter, that the Institute has received numerous complaints that we have insulted most of its members and a good portion of the construction industry. The *Architect* in an official response said, “some folks just don’t deserve the time it takes to insult them.” How’s that Greg, for insulting the rest of the Institute? Besides, when folks invite our insults, it would be rude of us not to poke them in the eye.

From the entire staff here at the world headquarters of the *Southern Fried Architect*, we wish each and every one of you a merry Christmas, happy Hanukah, joyous Kwanzaa, and a wonderful Festivus. Excuse me, I have a phone call from Tommy Smith. See ya next year.