

# The Southern Fried Architect

(A clear, complete, concise, and mostly correct, view of stuff happening in the design/construction industry)

July 2006

**Dennis J. Hall, FAIA, FCSI, SCIP:** Guy who writes this stuff

**Nina M. Giglio, CSI, CCS, Assoc. AIA, SCIP:** Editor, Spec Winch, and she who fixes this stuff

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## We're Back!

After months of being on sabbatical, the *Southern Fried Architect* has returned. Beginning in early 2005, we took a few months off to complete a book for the AIA and when we returned in the fall, we were surprised to learn that at least one high-level mucky-muck at CSI felt that serving as Institute Vice President and publishing this exceptional internet rag was a conflict of interest. So, rather than fight the establishment, we decided just to extend our sabbatical until our term of office was complete on June 30. And now that I am a free man again, we are back up to our ole ways of searching for truth, spreading knowledge, and a little poking the bear.

We are pleased to have back with us the chemically dependent (artificial red-head), Spec Winch who has the challenge of proof-readin' and fixin' of this stuff. But being a very talented and useful instrument of service (winch) she is up to the task.

### **AIA, CSI, and NIBS Sign New US National CAD Standard Agreement**

In June, representatives from the American Institute of Architects, the Construction Specifications Institute, and the National Institute of Building Sciences agreed to a new three-year agreement to continue the US National CAD Standard upon expiration in September of the current agreement. The new agreement will provide for better administration of the Standard and brings the AIA into a more active role in the marketing of the document. This new agreement will hopefully allow the NCS to achieve the potential that all three organizations envisioned for it in 1997, when they agreed to establish the standard.

### **CSI Starts Web Discussion Forum**

The Construction Specifications Institute has revamped its website to include a new web discussion forum. You can now easily get to the forums by simply clicking the "Forums" button on the left side of the home page at <http://www.CSInet.org>. In the near future, the forum will be able to automatically send notices of activity related to postings you are interested in. Currently, content is limited, but as more folks use the forum the subjects and depth of information will expand.

### **OmniClass Version 1 Published**

At long last, the OmniClass Construction Classification System has finally published Version 1. To see and download it, visit <http://www.omniclass.org>. Some of the tables are considered Version 1 tables and others are still commentary drafts, but all have numbers, which has been a major sticking point. With the publishing of OmniClass, CSI and CSC signed an agreement in June to establish an OmniClass business management structure and to ensure that OmniClass will remain an open standard. It is expected that OmniClass will be an integral part of the National Building Information Model Standard currently being developed.

### **CSI Drops Specifications Competition**

The CSI Board voted to drop the CSI Specification Competition in June while it examines new expanded options for improving the only national competition for written construction documents. The competition is not included in the Institute budget for the next three years, but our inside sources tell us that there may be ongoing discussions with several other specifications groups about bringing it back as a joint venture with a new format.

Welcome to another issue of *Sticks + Stones*, where we provide marginally professional advice to our readers based on our many years of creating and observing problems in the construction industry. This month we will limit our discussion to one subject and try to cover it in some depth rather than our traditional practice of commenting on a variety of issues. I also thought I would give the Spec Winch an opportunity to express her views.

## Measurement and Payment as a SectionFormat Article Title



When the initial draft updating SectionFormat was released by the SectionFormat/PageFormat Update Task Team (SPUTT) and included a Part 4 – there was reaction. We may get into additional discussion of that reaction in future issues, but some of the engineering disciplines raised the issue that they already use Part 4 for Measurement and Payment items in their written construction documents. As a member of SPUTT, these views are my individual opinions and may not reflect the position of the task team, but when a client recently insisted on the inclusion of measurement and payment articles in the guide specifications being developed we were led to ponder the topic.

Looking back to a time before the 3-Part SectionFormat, Part 4 was used for indicating to the contractor the methods by which the work would be measured and paid. There are a variety of measurement methods and a couple of payment methods. Measurement methods include lump sum; by weight; by volume; by area or a linear measurement. The method of specific requirements needs to be outlined in the paragraph giving specific details about the units of measure “per cubic yard” on a volume basis, but additionally, when specific measurement procedures must be followed such as using certified scales. This information needs to address how the material is to be measure and by whom. As to payment for this type of work, it is typically either progress or full compensation. In most of the examples given to SPUTT along with information from our client, the payment methods frequently are part of a lump sum quantity for specific work

Now that we have established the information is certainly relevant to certain types of work the question becomes – is Part 4 sacred for the use of this? – I think not. SectionFormat, including the current 1997 publication identify measurement and payment activities as procedural and provided a location for the information in Part 1 as a subordinate title to the section Summary. Discussion continued in that “the contractors won’t be able to find the information if we put it in Part 1” again - I think not. We are all creatures of habit and most of us tend to like to stay the path we’ve beaten, but that doesn’t mean we can’t learn. To bolster the argument, I contacted another client who had used Part 4 for Measurement and Payment, and had not really wanted to relocate the information, but because they were adopting MasterFormat 2004 they decided to go all the way. When asked what the fallout had been – his laughed and said, “That’s right, we did move it”

The most important item to observe with measurement and payment is coordination between the Conditions of the Contract, any Division 01 Measurement and Payment Sections and the individual technical sections.

# Technically Speaking

SFA - Section C

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## New NCS Book Hits the Streets



### The Architect's Guide to the U.S. National CAD Standard

Dennis J. Hall, FAIA, FCSI and Charles Rick Green, AIA, FCSI

ISBN: 0-471-70378-8

Hardcover

264 pages

April 2006

US \$70.00  [Add to Cart](#)

This price is valid for United States. [Change location](#) to view local pricing and availability.

#### Description

A definitive user's guide to the U.S. National CAD Standard

#### [Table of Contents](#)

The Architect's Guide to the U.S. National CAD Standard helps make the National CAD Standard (NCS) more accessible to architects by presenting:

#### [Author Information](#)

- Clear and succinct explanations of concepts and options in the NCS
- A step-by-step approach to seamlessly implement standardized drawings in any size firm
- Successful strategies design firms can use to best take advantage of the NCS requirements

The Architect's Guide to the U.S. National CAD Standard presents an informative overview of the NCS, including illustrations and frequently asked questions. It shows architects how to minimize immediate costs and downtime, how to reap immediate benefits, and how best to learn the system at an individualized pace. Used side by side with the Standard, this authoritative guide offers helpful insight into how the NCS is likely to be interpreted and presents a variety of available options for meeting the standardization requirements.

Interior designers, construction managers, urban planners, as well as owners, engineers, and facility managers will also find this authoritative reference to be invaluable

## NCS Starts Version 4.0 Update Cycle

Speaking of the NCS; AIA, CSI, and NIBS officially kicked off the start of the next update to the NCS. This version should clean up a lot of inconsistencies in the standard, deal with compliance issues, and plotting guidelines, and discipline designators.

## SPUTT to Release Draft 2

The CSI/CSC SectionFormat/PageFormat Update Task Team (SPUTT) has been working on Draft 2, which is schedule for release of public comments in August. This new draft incorporates comments from Draft 1 and responds to new guiding principles to ensure that the new documents are better coordinated with MasterFormat and the Project Resource Manual. SFA insiders have seen the early versions of Draft 2 and think that changes made to Part 1 of SectionFormat are right on target as to the future of construction information management. We will see where the rest of the document goes from here.

# People in the News

SFA - Section D

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## ARCOM's Founder Retires

**Edward "Ted" Smith, D.Arch, FAIA, CSI**, Chairman of the Board of ARCOM, providers of AIA MASTERSPEC retired in July. Ted and his lovely bride Bev, two of our favorite people in the industry, are planning to travel and enjoy their grandkids. **Christopher Bushnell, FCSI, CCS, AIA**, President of ARCOM, will assume the title of Chairman and lead the organization as it faces new challenges in the integration of the BIM into master guide specifications.

## SCIP Elects New Officers

The Specification Consultants in Independent Practice and international organization of specification consultants have announced the officers for 2006-2008.

Below are the new officers who assumed office on July 1:

President - **Dennis J. Hall, FAIA, FCSI, CCS, CCCA**  
Vice President/Technical - **Robert W. Johnson, AIA, FCSI, CCS, CCCA**  
Vice President/Education - **Linda Stansen, CSI, CCS, RA**  
Vice President/Communications - **David E. Lorenzini, FCSI, CCS**  
Secretary - **Nina M. Giglio, CSI, CCS, Assoc. AIA**  
Treasurer/Membership - **David Metzger, FAIA, FCSI**  
Immediate Past President - **John Regener, AIA, CCS, CCCA**

## Former CSI Executive Director Starts Consulting Firm

We ran into former CSI Executive Director **Karl Borgstrom** in April at an ENR event in New York City and he and wife Karen have opened Borgstrom and Herman Associates. BHA offers association management consulting services and is located in the Washington, DC area.

## New AIA CEO

Speaking of big mucky-mucks at the ENR event, we had an opportunity to talk to **Christine McEntee**, the new Executive Vice President/CEO of AIA for quite some time. Chris came to the AIA from a similar position in the medical industry and despite rumors of concern from some AIA insiders, I found her to be a delightful and professional individual. We wish her many years of success as the head of AIA.

## Gehry Goes to the Dogs

Our travels take us many places and we get to meet some pretty interesting folks. While at the CSI Convention this year, **Frank Gehry, FAIA** the convention keynote speaker got his travel plans all messed up and he found himself having coffee with me and a couple other CSI nardowells. Frank had some great stories and recently was commissioned to design two dog houses for a fee of a mere \$350K each. He is donating his design fee to the Las Vegas Alzheimer's Association. See "Conversation with Frank" in Section E for more stories over coffee.

## Metzger Named Double Fellow

In April, **David Metzger, FAIA, FCSI** of Heller & Metzger in Washington, DC became the twenty-fifth individual to be invested as a Fellow in both the American Institute of Architects and the Construction Specifications Institute. Of the twenty-five double fellows, nine are deceased, seven are retired, and nine are practicing. Congratulations Dave!

# Editorial Section

SFA - Section E

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## Conversation with Frank

By Dennis J. Hall, FAIA, FCSI, SCIP

Early on a sunny morning in March, Michael Owen; CSI President, Teresa Sullivan; CSI Director of Marketing (who had laryngitis), and myself, sat down with Frank Gehry, FAIA for a 45-minute conversation, while we waited for CSI dignitaries to arrive for coffee and pastries prior to the Opening General Session of the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual CSI Convention and Show. During this time, we talked about design, construction, ice hockey, life as an internationally famous architect, and other stuff. The 77-year old architect was open, candid, and very charming. Below is a little of that conversation.

Up the escalator of the MGM Conference Center came a small, elderly, white haired man, carrying a bamboo cane, wearing black slacks, a black sweater, and a black jacket, and followed by an entourage of PhD's. I quickly ruled out Johnny Cash and walked up to him and said, "Good morning Mr. Gehry, I am Dennis Hall, welcome to the CSI Convention." We shook hands and had a short conversation about his preference for sleeping in his own bed vs. hotel beds and headed to a quiet place where the four of us could sit and talk, out of the main corridor of the conference center.

Frank Gehry is an architectural genius who referred to himself as a "working stiff" and whose office is a converted LA warehouse with autographed ice hockey jerseys hanging on the walls. I asked him if he still played and he held up the cane and said "no." I think he actually carries it just in case he needs to 'high stick' someone, but I decided not to test that theory. Although, I was not quite sure what he was going to do or say when I referred to him as the "chain-link architect" as we discussed some of his earlier work. But he just smiled and said that his recent clients have more money than his earlier ones and the cane never left the floor.

Other than having tremendous design talent and wealthy clients, Frank is a lot like all architects. He designs buildings, creates construction documents, complains about clients, contractors, and learns from his mistakes. His evolution into computer-aided design was actually a response to a contractor building one of his buildings wrong and his thinking that he needed a better way of communicating his designs or "dream ideas" to contractors. From this mistake in construction, he began to look for a better way of creating construction documents utilizing the computer. During our conversation, he used the term "infantalized" several times, to indicate the parent-child relationship between the architect and contractor, and how contractors, because of their control over cost, are displacing architects as decision makers. Frank believes that only when we as architects regain control over cost can we have control over design and the computer is the tool that will let that happen.

As we spoke about construction documentation in the past and today, Frank suddenly said, "I used to write specs." At this point my head felt numb, but his cane was still right there beside him. He continued by saying, "I wrote specs, hand drafted construction drawings, and administered construction contracts." He was simply doing all the things that any small practitioner would do, as they perfected their craft. He explained that most people are surprised at the "business like approach" his office takes to projects. I was invited by a few of his associates to visit the office in June while at the AIA Convention and had hoped to be able to stop by, but this practitioner had other obligations that come with staying in business.

At 77, he has no plans to retire. He loves the process of creating architecture, actually more than the architecture itself. He hopes his legacy is not just as an architect who designed a few cool buildings, but an architect who changed the way architecture is practiced. The only question he refused to answer is "what is your favorite building you designed?" His response of "how can you ask a person which child do you love more, I love them all" shows that he is not only a great architect, but also a smart businessman.

After about 90 minutes of conversation, I left liking the man, respecting his work, and feeling the connection of just a couple working stiff's trying to improve their craft and their profession. God bless Frank Gehry.