

# The Southern Fried Architect

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

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

**June 2004**

**Greg Ceton, Esq.:** Ghost editor, legal insultant, and guy who fixes this stuff

---

## **MasterFormat 2004 Available on Web This Month**

After more than three years in development, the MasterFormat 2004 titles and numbers are finally here the second week of this month. Check it out at [CSINet.org/MasterFormat](http://CSINet.org/MasterFormat). The complete printed document with Applications Guide, searchable keyword index, use notes, and more will be available in October.

## **MasterFormat 2004 Presentation from CSI Show Available Online**

We have had many requests for copies of the “MasterFormat: The Next 40 Years” presentation we gave at the CSI Convention in April. Well, CSI has posted it online for you to download at [CSINet.org](http://CSINet.org). As a special bonus, this presentation also includes many of the photos included in *Sticks + Stones* as a part of a “MasterFormat 2004 In Action” portion of the presentation.

## **MasterFormat 2004 at AIA Convention**

Speaking of MasterFormat presentations, we will be at the AIA Convention on Saturday afternoon, June 12th at 2:00 PM for a special presentation of the new MasterFormat 2004. We will have *SFA* mugs available on a first come, first served basis. Chris Bushnell, FCSI, AIA, of ARCOM will also be making a presentation on “MasterFormat 2004 in MASTERSPEC.”

## **OmniClass to Publish the Month**

The on again, off again schedule for the publication of Version 1 of the OmniClass Construction Classification System is back on again (well, kind of). The OCCS Development Committee is expected to publish the current state of all 15 tables this month. Some of the tables will be at a “Version 1” completion status and some will be in a second draft version for additional review and commentary. Keep an eye out for the new stuff at [OmniClass.org](http://OmniClass.org). We’ve also included a short OmniClass primer this month in Section C: Technically Speaking.

## **MasterFormat 2004 Attracting Lots of Attention**

It’s not the fact that the new MasterFormat is attracting lots of attention that’s surprising, but rather whose attention it’s attracting. For some reason, we’re getting lots of interest from AIA Chapters across the country. In addition to the AIA National Convention, we’ll be speaking to AIA Georgia, AIA Louisiana, and AIA Minnesota. But it’s not just architects who are beating down our door, major owner organizations such as the Construction Owners Association of America and the Northwest Construction Consumer Council are too. While most CSI Chapters are familiar with MasterFormat 2004, many of these other groups are just now getting up to speed.

## **MasterFormat 2004 in Practice**

As if we haven’t talked enough about MasterFormat 2004 already this month, here’s one more news story. In last month’s *SFA*, we showed a table of contents for a project manual we wrote last year, comparing MasterFormat 95 and 04 titles and numbers. If that wasn’t cool enough, in May we prepared a project manual and bid the project based on a working draft of MasterFormat 2004. To really mess with the bidders’ minds, we even used Level Four numbering and modified all the AIA documents to conform to new terminology. We forgot to mention any of this to the owner and the bidding went without a hitch. We did have to issue one addendum because the owner wanted to have an alternate for a custom color on one of the products, but other than that, the world did not explode and it seemed as though the bidders could have cared less about those darn funny numbers and titles.

# Sticks + Stones

SFA - Section B

---

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 **S+S** will examine a recent forensic investigation project involving two elementary schools where adhesive was oozing from the VCT (vinyl composition tile). The architect and the contractor had been pointing fingers at each other for the past two years and the owner finally got tired of the whole mess. That's where we came in. Below is a walk through of what we found.

## **07 71 23 – Gutters and Downspouts**

When the architect designed the metal standing seam roof, they chose not to include gutters and downspouts on the building. In a 7-inch rain, more than half a million gallons of water per hour were deposited around the perimeter of the school. This resulted in standing water everywhere. Water management is a necessary concept both in the design of a building and the site. It appears that neither the architect nor the civil engineer figured this out on this project.

## **31 22 19 – Finish Grading**

The architect then determined that the building would look better with a stone landscape bed around the perimeter. The decorative bed had a wood border that held in the stone as well as all the water that fell from the roof. In only a few months, the stone was displaced at all internal corners of the building due to the quantity of water falling, and the ground eroded until it sloped back toward the building. The civil engineer didn't help the architect any either, as he took a sloped site and made it flat. As a result, water landing anywhere near the building had little chance of ever seeing a drop inlet.

## **04 05 23 – Masonry Accessories**

The architect detailed the masonry wall such that the weeps were at the same elevation as the grade. The standing water completely covered the weeps and wicked under and through the wall into the drainage layer below the concrete slab.

## **32 11 23. 13 – Drainage Layers**

The contractor installed a silty sand drainage layer under the concrete slab on grade in lieu of the stone drainage layer specified. Instead of draining water away from the slab, the silty sand wicked water back to the underside of the vapor barrier.

## **07 26 16 – Below-Grade Vapor Retarders**

The under slab vapor retarder (barrier) that was specified is a three-part product that has a layer of kraft paper sandwiched between two plastic sheets. According to the manufacturer, the product should not be in direct contact with water and is not to be installed under concrete slabs that are to receive an impervious floor covering. The contractor also had not taken a great deal of care to protect the vapor barrier during construction and the material was riddled with pin holes. Needless to say, the vapor barrier was found in various stages of deterioration.

## **09 65 19 – Resilient Tile Flooring**

The vapor drive forced the water in the silty sand and the ground below the sand through the concrete slab, which re-emulsified the water-based adhesive. The adhesive then oozed through the edges of the vinyl composition tile. Every time it was cleaned off, it came back.

Next month we will have more of the photos *Sticks + Stones* has become famous for. So, if you see something that deserves our attention, please send it to us. The world is interested in your colleagues' mistakes.

# Technically Speaking

SFA - Section C

---

## **Tar and Feathering:** On the Road for a better MasterFormat

Just when we thought things are calming down and I can get back to paying work, the phone rings and I forget my promise to say “no.” Here are a few places we will be visiting over the next couple months to spread the word of MasterFormat 2004 and other stuff.

June 8	CSI Raleigh/Durham	Raleigh, NC
June 12	AIA National Convention	Chicago, IL
June 24	AIA Topeka/CSI Flint Hills	Topeka, KS
June 30	AIA Contracts in North Carolina Seminar	Charlotte, NC
July 30	CSI North Central Region Conference	Lake Geneva, MI

## **Understanding MasterFormat 2004 Terminology**

Last month we began our unofficial glossary of terminology found in MasterFormat 2004. Below are a few more terms to assist you in the use of this document. Next month, even more of what we think we mean.

**Document:** A portion of the Procurement and Contracting Requirements Group of a project manual composed using SectionFormat. The Document title and number may be determined by using MasterFormat.

**Section:** A portion of the Specifications Group of a project manual composed using SectionFormat. The Section title and number may be determined by using MasterFormat

**Available Information:** A portion of the Procurement Requirements of a project manual that provides information known about the project that is not a part of the Contract Documents.

**Bidder:** A person or entity that submits a competitive bid for services or goods. This bid may be a part of a construction project or for the operation and maintenance of a facility.

**Proposer:** A person or entity that submits a proposal as a part of direct selection to perform services or provide goods. This proposal may be a part of a construction project or for the operation and maintenance of a facility. Owners may request proposals from several proposers, whereby each proposer defines the terms of their proposal. This is in comparison with a bid where the owner defines the terms and the bidders provide a cost for the work so defined.

**Facility Services Subgroup:** The portion of the Specifications Group in a project manual that includes one or more of the work result sections in the following Divisions: Fire Suppression (Div. 21), Plumbing (Div. 22), Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (Div. 23), Integrated Automation (Div. 25), Electrical (Div. 26), Communication (Div. 27), and Electronic Safety and Security (Div. 28).

## **OmniClass Primer**

For those of you who have not been paying attention for the last three years, below is a short primer on OmniClass. And while it is rather obscure today, I predict that it will be an extremely important document as a language for construction information integration in the near future.

**OmniClass** is a classification system for the construction industry, composed of a set of fifteen interrelated tables that describe the built environment from various points of view. **OmniClass** will be used by all industries involved with creating and sustaining the built environment from conception through demolition. It will provide a basis for organizing, storing, and retrieving information and

deriving relational applications. **OmniClass** is being developed in response to the increased use of electronic information technology in the AEC industry, the expanding focus on the complete life cycle of facilities, and the need to classify all construction subjects to better track and document the information addressed and decisions being made during that life cycle.

**OmniClass** is an open standard freely available for use by all parties involved in creating and sustaining the built environment. **OmniClass** will be the vocabulary for the current evolution of construction documents from an agglomeration of often redundant, typically unshared, separate, and diverse paper documents into an interoperable, shared, electronic database that provides a model for all the information that comprises a built entity.

**OmniClass** is made up of the following 15 tables. Entries from different tables can be combined to classify and identify very discrete objects of the built environment:

**Table 11 - Construction Entities by Function**

**Table 12 - Construction Entities by Form**

**Table 13 - Spaces by Function**

**Table 14 - Spaces by Form**

**Table 21 - Elements**

**Table 22 - Work Results**

**Table 23 - Products**

**Table 31 - Phases**

**Table 32 - Services**

**Table 33 - Disciplines**

**Table 34 - Organizational Roles**

**Table 35 - Process Aids**

**Table 41 - Information**

**Table 42 - Materials**

**Table 49 - Properties**

## **MPI Issues Update**

The Master Painters Institute has recently revised their Architectural Painting Manual, an update that was not expected until later this year. In February, ARCOM revised the AIA MASTERSPEC painting sections to incorporate MPI Standards. In our office Nina the Spec Wench has been working with these standards in the updating of master guide specifications for a major paint manufacturer and she tells me; "Like MF04, change is always difficult, but once we become accustomed to the new MPI Standards it will give the industry a better method of comparison between products." As usual, the Spec Wench had too much to say. For more information about the MPI visit [www.paintinfo.com](http://www.paintinfo.com).

# Other Stuff

*SFA* - Section D

---

## **Sad News on the Home Front**

It is with great sorrow we report that the deaths of more than two-dozen *SFA* coffee mugs. Recently, a box of 36 mugs arrived at our office, via the US Postal Service. We had been waiting with great expectation for our boys to come home. From the sound of the box, we knew the news would not be good. Inside, only 10 brave soldiers remained intact. Their comrades were lost due to the reckless actions of our government. A proper southern fried burial was conducted, and they were laid to rest with full *SFA* honors.

## **SCIP Fiscal Year to Begin Next Month**

The Specification Consultants in Independent Practice (SCIP) begins its fiscal year in July just like CSI, so that means it's time for all you skinflints to shell out this year's dues. SCIP Secretary-Treasurer David Metzger, CSI, FAIA, SCIP will be sending out invoices soon. And for the same measly \$25 a year, you too can be a member of a terrific group of pinheads. Download a membership application form at [scip.com](http://scip.com).

## **Hall Receives SCIP Rascal of the Year Award**

During the Annual SCIP meeting held at the Chicago Architectural Foundation in April, Dennis J. Hall, FCSI, CCS, CCCA, AIA, SCIP, EIEIO was presented with the first SCIP Rascal of the Year Award by SCIP President Dane Dodd-Hansen. The award included a beautiful wood plaque and a bottle of Arrogant Bastard Ale. At least a part of the award was practical.

## **More SCIP Stuff**

I heard a rumor floating around Chicago last month that SCIP was thinking about a name change. They would keep the acronym SCIP but change the name to the "Society of Construction Information Professionals." I also heard the new term for "specifiers" floating about is "knowledge managers." Personally, I like the name change for SCIP a lot. It should be relatively easy for an organization to change its name and this one makes sense given the changing role of the specifier. I guess I can also live with the change in title to "knowledge managers," even if it does seem just a little presumptuous. Frankly, I know a few specifiers that can't hardly manage to get out of bed in the morning and would not recognize knowledge if it hit them square in the forehead, which is just where knowledge is suppose to hit you.

# Editorial Section

SFA - Section E

---

## Going to School with Contractors

A couple months ago I was in Pawleys Island, South Carolina investigating some problems with ten ocean-front condominium buildings and I got into a conversation with Charlie, an attorney for one of the 62 parties involved in the litigation. Charlie is a Yankee attorney, who went to law school at the University of Florida. Talk about a guy with three strikes against him. (*By the way, this is the same law school as attended by our own legal insultant, Greg Ceton, Esq.*) Charlie has lived in the real South long enough not only to develop a surprising sense of humor, but also common sense, both especially uncommon in attorneys, especially those of the Yankee variety. Since neither one of us were representing any of the contractors to the case, we naturally started to bemoan the current state of construction in general and general contractors in particular. From this discussion, we concluded that there exist three schools of contractors, “old school,” “new school,” and “no school.”

“Old school contractors” are the ones we grew up with. Don is my favorite old school contractor. He has “L-O-V-E” tattooed on the fingers of one hand and “H-A-T-E” on the fingers of the other. Every third word uttered from his lips is unsuitable to print in this editorial. Half of his subs love him, the other half hate him, and they all are frightened of him. He knows the drawings and specs better than the architect that drew them and he builds every project like he was going to own it himself.

One of my favorite Don stories occurred when he was building the Alumni Center at Appalachian State University for us. He walked up the Vice-Chancellor, who was on the site to attend a progress meeting and said, “Good morning Dr. Clyde, you sawed-off little shit,” (the vice chancellor is not a tall man). When I confronted Don later about the incident, he acknowledged that he was just trying to be friendly. Of course, when he finished the building, the Alumni Director presented him with a gold ASU Alumni watch for his quality workmanship and positive attitude.

“New school contractors” generally have degrees in construction management and have worked a half-dozen years for a large construction company before they decide that they don’t want to travel any more and open their own shops. Most of them have a strong grasp of construction accounting and no grasp of accounting for quality construction. They hire superintendents that are unqualified and don’t have the backbone to demand and get quality work or meet the construction schedule. Sometimes new school contractors decide to branch out and become owner/builders or developers, an occurrence that usually manages to give even developers a bad name.

“No school contractors” are not real contractors, but somehow they’ve managed to convince the state to issue them a license, often under several different company names. They’re really more like construction brokers. To qualify as a no school contractor, all you need is a license, a pick-up truck, and a cell phone. A good construction attorney is also a good idea. By the way, the attorney is the only party that ever gets all of his money from this type of contractor. No school contractors are easy to spot. They always ask for half of their, (meaning your) money up front, have no employees, and no insurance. The only people that seem to be further down the food chain are the ones who hire them.

Believe it or not, I really like most contractors and have tremendous respect for them. I have had the pleasure of working with some true craftsmen in my many years of doing this stuff. In the end, a good contractor can solve a lot of ills in a bad set of drawings, but a bad contractor is still a bad contractor even with a perfect set of drawings.