

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

November 2004

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



MasterFormat 2004 Available this Month

The long anticipated *MasterFormat 2004* will be available this month. This exceptionally well-written and comprehensive 518-page document is sure to make the New York Times bestseller list. Okay, maybe not, but it's still a great resource document that you must have in your library. Regular pricing is \$109 for members and \$159 for non-members, but there is an early-bird special that will let you keep a few more pesos in your pocket. To get your copy, see the order form we have included in Section D: Other Stuff.

CSI Creates New Online Newsletter

The Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) has been so impressed with our little electronic publication that they created their own version called *CSI NewsBrief*. This electronic weekly newsletter provides members with regular happenings in the design/construction industry. What a clever idea! They've even called us to get us to share some of the latest stuff we uncover in our travels. To subscribe, go to <http://www.smartbrief.com/csi/>.

New Contract Administration Academy

CSI is holding its first Contract Administration Academy in Tampa, Florida. The event will be held on January 27-28 at the Wyndham Westshore Hotel. If you are a seasoned CCCA and want to hone your skills, or are new to this type of work and thinking about sitting for one of these certification exams, you should check out this event. Our old friend Sal Verrastro, FCSI, CCS, CCCA, AIA, from Eastern Pennsylvania is chairing this academy, so I am sure that it will be a great event.

MasterFormat 2004 Education in the Works

After months of hard work, the CSI *MasterFormat* Implementation Task Team is hot on the trail of getting *MasterFormat 2004* education up and operational. The task team met recently in San Diego at the CSI West Region Conference and was joined by numerous CSI and CSC muckity-mucks, including CSI Immediate Past President Edith Washington, and CSI and CSC Executive Directors Karl Borgstrom and Nick Franjic. I guess this was just the encouragement the group needed; they've spent the weeks since the meeting polishing the content of *MasterFormat 2004* education. For more information see www.CSINet.org/masterformateducation.

NW Plans *MasterFormat 2004* Implementation

It seems the folks in the Northwest United States are working on a united January 1, 2006 conversion date to the new *MasterFormat 2004*. This effort, which calls for everyone in the construction industry in that part of the world to make a simultaneous transition, is being led by several CSI Chapters and is one of a few similar efforts to establish an implementation schedule for an entire region. And while other areas are just talking about implementation planning, this group is taking the lead. I will be in the Oregon, Washington, and Idaho area for a week this month, preaching the gospel of *MasterFormat*, and I plan to meet with a few of the ring leaders of this conspiracy. I will keep you apprised of their progress.

***SFA* Goes on Sabbatical**

Beginning in January 2005, *SFA* will be a bi-monthly publication. This isn't because we've completed our life's goal of informing you of all the stuff you should know. Heck, we're not even sure of all the stuff that we need to know. It's just because other commitments are requiring that we spend more time elsewhere. But never fear, as we plan to return in full force in the near future. We figure if Dave Barry can do it, so can we.

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 continue to review some traditional construction practices or work results using those great, almost new *MasterFormat* 2004 numbers and titles. Below are a few things that we thought you might like to know.

08 80 00 – Glazing



Here we see the architect that has chosen a very interesting glazing detail around a steel beam. Having carefully calculated the expansion and contraction characteristics of both the steel and the glass in accordance with normal temperature ranges, the architect has used his skill to design control joints to provide a design that celebrates the structure of the building. NOT!

31 23 00 – Excavation and Fill



Foundation walls should always be properly backfilled and compacted. Otherwise, one might experience unexpected settlement. Experienced contractors always take care to ensure this work is performed in a workman-like manner and always use the correct tools and equipment for this operation.

Unfortunately, stuff happens on all construction sites. Here we see a couple of good ol' boys discussing the correct operation of a Bobcat in soft soil conditions. Perhaps this conversation should have occurred about five minutes earlier.

07 55 00 – Vegetated Protected Membrane Roofing



Vegetated Roofs, sometimes called “green roofs” or “garden roofs” are a great concept in energy conservation and can give LEED points for your project if you are seeking certification. This is of course unless your vegetation is growing out of your roof drains.

Here we see an example of a garden roof that needs weeding. I just hate it when this happens. I would also suggest walking pads for this roof garden as I suspect the patio furniture on the roof surface may cause a warranty problem. Burger anyone?

27 13 43 – Communications Services Cabling



Here we see a typical installation of communication wiring prior to *MasterFormat* 2004. Now with the new Communications Division, this type of situation might be avoided with coordinated construction documents showing all work to be incorporated into the project.

Technically Speaking

SFA - Section C

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

November is the month we give thanks that every month is not November. It may also be the month we give thanks the bank raised our line of credit as I don't see a lot of billing going on this month. Below are our travel plans until the New Year.

Nov 5	Construction Owners Association of America	Nashville, TN
Nov 8	CSI Willemette Valley	Eugene, OR
Nov 9	Northwest Construction Consumer Council	Seattle, WA
Nov 10	Port of Tacoma	Tacoma, WA
Nov 11	CSI Seattle	Seattle, WA
Nov 12	CSI Idaho	Boise, ID
Nov 16	Build Boston	Boston, MA
Nov 16	CSI New Hampshire	Manchester, NH
Nov 22	CSI Philadelphia	Philadelphia, PA
Dec 2	CSI Vermont	Burlington, VT
Dec 13	CSI Jacksonville	Jacksonville, FL

Canadian Tar and Feathering:

Our good friends from the frozen North are conducting their own version on *MasterFormat* education this month. Below are the dates and locations for all you Canucks. Go to www.csc-dcc.ca to register.

November 24, 2004

Edmonton – Royal Glenora , 11160 River Valley Road
Halifax – World Trade and Convention Centre, 1800 Argyle Street
Ottawa – Best Western Macies Hotel, 1274 Carling Avenue
Winnipeg – Delta Winnipeg, 350 St. Marys Avenue

November 25, 2004

Calgary – Calgary Construction Association, 2725 – 12 Street NE
London – Best Western Lamplighter Inn – 591 Wellington Road
Regina – Hotel Saskatchewan, 2125 Victoria Avenue
Toronto – Best Western Primrose Hotel, 111 Carlton Street

November 26, 2004

Grand Valley (Kitchener) - Holiday Inn Kitchener, 30 Fairway Road South
Moncton – Delta Beausejour, 750 Main Street, Moncton
Montréal – Le Centre Sheraton Montréal, 1201 boul. Rene-Levesque Ouest, Montréal
Saskatoon - Delta Bessborough, 601 Spadina Cres. E., Saskatoon
Vancouver – Crowne Plaza – Hotel Georgia, 801 Georgia Street

We Need Your Help

Over the last 3½ years I have had the opportunity to visit more than 40 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, two Canadian providences, and Puerto Rico while spreading the *MasterFormat* gospel. With the *MasterFormat* Implementation Task Team starting their educational activities early next year, our travels for *MasterFormat* will soon be coming to an end as we pass the baton along to others. Unfortunately, there are 8 US states where we still have not had the pleasure of making new friends. And while we're certain that this is our loss, if you live in the garden spots of **West Virginia, Delaware, Arkansas, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, New Jersey, or Alaska**, you may want to give us a call so we can make the list of places we haven't been to yet a little shorter and the list of new friends a little longer. Or you may not. Of course, this is limited time offer, and we reserve the right not to visit cold states in the winter.

Okay, we *are* going back to northern Minnesota this winter, but they promised us a dog sled ride and that was just too good to pass up.

Special Thanks and Acknowledgement:

Somewhere near the front of the new *MasterFormat 2004*, all members of the *MasterFormat* Expansion Task Team, the group responsible for its creation, are acknowledged and thanked for their volunteer service in the development and production of the document. But, we also had a number of non-members of the task team who attended most of the meetings, served on work groups, and contributed to the document. And these folks did it on their own nickel. Below is a list of the names of those individuals and their organizations. On behalf of the *MasterFormat* Expansion Task Team, CSI, and CSC, I wish to express our thanks and acknowledgement of your work in improving the construction industry. Names are listed alphabetically.

Chris Bushnell, FCSI, CCS, AIA (ARCOM)

Richard McKeagan (Mechanical Contractors Association of Canada)

Phil Pegram (Johnson Controls)

Tom Rauscher, CSI (Archi-Technology)

Edward “Ted” Smith, D.Arch., CSI, FAIA (ARCOM)

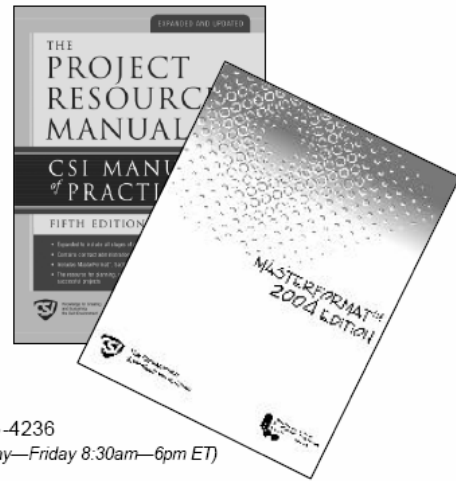
Other Stuff

SFA - Section D

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Editorial Section

SFA - Section E

The Building Speaks

by Dennis J. Hall, FCSI, AIA

Buildings are a lot like people. Some are tall and some are short, some are bold and some are shy, some are fat and some are thin, but they all talk. And just like some people, when they talk, they like to complain more than anything else! Have you ever noticed that people seem to do a lot more talking than they do listening? And design professionals spend a lot more time talking to their buildings than we do listening to what our buildings are trying to tell us. Maybe this is because we don't care what they have to tell us, or maybe it's because we just don't know how to listen.

Our buildings complain about the forces of nature that are exerted upon them, like heat, cold, wind, and rain. They complain about poor design and poor construction. And they complain about poor maintenance. They also speak of the joy of serving, of providing us with beauty, shelter, and comfort. And hopefully, if called upon, they will speak at length on protecting us from fire, wind, water, and earthquakes.

As a forensic architect, I have spent a lot of time listening to buildings. And buildings speak to us in their own language. This language is not taught in schools, nor can you buy one of those audiotapes and learn it while driving on a long trip. It's a graphic language, communicated in a dialect of cracks, stains, mold, and a host of other visible murmurs – surface spalling, peeling paint, and concrete chips. And, just like the clues on *CSI* the television series, these signs are at times complex and usually require some degree of interpretation. But what is important to note is that our buildings *want* to talk to us, and if we understand them and their problems, we can help them. So why is it that when they scream at us for attention, we often just ignore them?

If you want to be a better architect, take a Saturday when no one is around and go have a quiet conversation with one of your buildings. Take a camera and spend some quality time listening. Learn to “listen” with the eyes of an architect. You might be surprised with some of the secrets your building will tell you when it thinks you really care.

If you don't listen to your buildings they may chose to talk to others. This is a bad thing, because odds are they'll end up telling their troubles to your client's attorney, and I'm sure they'll get listened to there. And while I could try to provide you with a building vocabulary list, it's really best if you try and master it on your own, because each building seems to speak with its own personal accent, one that its creator would best understand.

After a while, you'll be fluent in the building language, and will be carrying on regular conversations with not only your buildings but with others' as well. While this is a normal occupational hazard for architects that our wives and husbands simply don't understand, they soon learn to accept it as just another piece of who we are. I also found it to be a handy skill during all those years I spent in the sanitarium, but that's a subject for another article.

Have you listened to one of your buildings today?