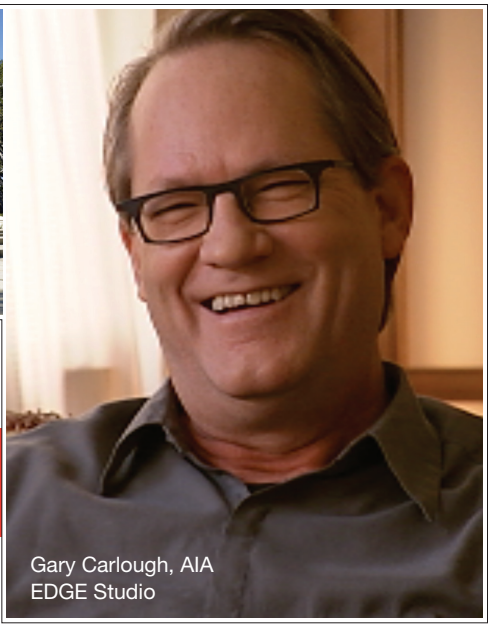
# Questions to Ask Your **Architect**

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS



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Every architecture firm brings its own combination of skills, expertise, interests, and values to its projects. The challenge is to find the one that aligns most closely with your project's needs.

Here are some questions to address when meeting with a prospective architect.

## *EXPERIENCE*

- What is your design philosophy?
- What sets your firm apart from other architects with similar experience?
- Do you have experience with the building type and size of my project?
- Will you share with me a portfolio of similar projects and provide a list of client references?
- Who from the architecture firm will I be dealing with on a regular basis? Is this the person who will design my project?

## *MY PROJECT*

- Are you interested enough in this project to make it a priority?
- What challenges do you foresee for my project?
- What do you see as the important issues or considerations in my project?
- What is your estimated timetable for my project?
- What means will you use to collect information about my needs, goals, etc.?
- How will you help me to fully understand the scope and sequence of the project? Will you utilize models, drawings, or computer animation?

## *DESIGN*

- What are the steps in the design process, and how are they organized?
- What criteria will be used to establish priorities and make design decisions?
- What do you expect me to provide?
- How disruptive will construction be?
- What role do you have during construction? Am I expected to work with the contractor directly?

## *GREEN DESIGN*

- Do you have experience with "green" or sustainable design?
- Do you regularly integrate low or no cost sustainable design strategies into projects?
- Considering the many areas that may be affected by sustainable design, how will you determine which options to pursue?
- If sustainable design technologies are implemented, do up front costs exist that may affect the construction budget? What are the expected pay back times?

## *FEES*

- How do you establish fees?
- In anticipation of a formal proposal with costs, what would you expect your fee to be for this project?
- What is included in your basic services and what services would incur additional fees?
- If the scope of the project changes later in the project, will there be additional fees? How will these fees be justified? How will this be communicated to me?
- What is your track record with completing a project within the original budget?

For more information, please review **You and Your Architect** at http://howdesignworks.aia.org/pdf/You_and_Your_Architect.pdf.
This is a guide to a successful partnership with your architect.

http://howdesignworks.aia.org

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