



ph 323.463.6603  
fax 866.851.1043

answers@askjeffbruce.com

## Essentials—The Architect

Your construction project is not going to run perfectly. There will be problems: time problems and money problems and contract problems—and maybe even spouse problems. That's just the nature of the beast. Understanding a few topics will vastly reduce the degree of stress and your dollar outlay. Three understandings I consider absolutely critical to a good construction experience are: what will the architect do? What will the general contractor do? And what should be included in a construction contract?

- a. First the architect. The scope of an architect's work varies tremendously from architect to architect and from project to project. At one extreme we have plan drawer, whose job is complete when the plans are finished and you have your building permit in hand. At the other extreme is the micro-manager, who will essentially run the show. He will help draft your construction contract, obtain your building permits, require that all project documentation (change orders, sub-contracts, landscape design, furniture layout, and correspondence) go through his office, attend all site meetings, review and approve all billings, and inspect the work on a regular basis. Since no two projects or customers are the same, it is vital that you understand what you want from your architect—how much do you want to buy? After determining the services you want, ask about a few other things such as:
  - i. Do you recommend a particular general contractor?
  - ii. Are there any sub contractors whom you particularly like?
  - iii. Do we really need drawings for the air conditioning system and the electrical switches and outlets?
  - iv. How much will you charge to make cabinet plans?
  - v. Will you help me review the general contractor bids?
  - vi. Do you recommend a particular construction contract form?

Understanding what you want from your architect will save you time, money, and grief. This is a really broad outline: generalized and incomplete. If you wish further information or consultation on your individual project, give me a call.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bruce