

BUILDING[®] BRIEFS

Published by:

Petra
CONSTRUCTION CORP.

98 Rebesch Drive • North Haven, CT 06473
(203) 865-6043 • FAX (203) 865-6847
Internet: www.petraconstruction.com
E-mail: information@petraconstruction.com

Ideas and
information
you can
build on.

SUMMER, 2010

The Owner's Responsibilities For Completing A Successful Project

It's been awhile since you've done a construction project. You're ready to get started, but you have so many questions:

- What must be built to fulfill our needs?
- How much will it cost?
- Can we finish on time?
- How can we make sure we get quality work at a fair price?
- How can we be sure that our property and people will remain safe?

Functionality, cost, time, quality and safety are arguably the five pillars of concern for an owner as they strive for a successful project. Even before understanding the costs and time required, other questions will need to be addressed.

Know what you need. It's a simple statement, but not always so simple to identify. An owner knows their organization like nobody else; you know your culture, strengths and weaknesses. Assemble a small group of project stakeholders to discuss the real needs of your organization in regard to the project. Is it simply aesthetics or are other factors, like expansion or operational efficiency, driving the need for change? By identifying your needs early, you will substantially improve the efficiency of your project team (owner,

architect and contractor). This process is called programming. It's essentially a wish list. Later on in the process, the architect will ask questions and document these needs during the discovery period. This document will become the basis for the design of your project, so it is very important.

Assemble your team and select a project delivery process. The standard team for the past 100 years has always included the owner, the architect and the contractor, typically selected in that order. Under this traditional approach, the architect would design the project; the owner, in conjunction with the architect, would put the project out to bid and then the contractor would build it.

The need for quicker occupancy has led to the development of a number of alternatives to the traditional Design-Bid-Build project delivery system. One such alternative, the Construction Manager At Risk system, begins to overlap the design and construction process and allows the collective

Continued on back page



DELIVERY OPTIONS

A lot of things have changed during the 100 plus *Building Briefs* publications over the past 20 years, including the available options for delivery of this information. If you would like to receive *Building Briefs* via email in a digital format only, or if you no longer wish to receive this publication, please email cmontuori@petraconstruction.com stating your preference. Otherwise, we will continue to send you *Building Briefs* in the hard copy format. Thank you for considering this environmentally friendly digital option.

Continued from front page

expertise to be shared earlier. This is very helpful in identifying costs, timelines and constructability issues up front when it is most beneficial.

Another alternative, the Design-Build system, links the architect and contractor earlier as a single point of contact for the owner and can be especially helpful in shortening the overall project timeline because the traditional project phases are overlapped. Due to these benefits, the Design-Build delivery system has become very popular over the past few years.

Recently, a new delivery method has been getting a lot of press. Begun primarily in California, Integrated Project Delivery, or IPD as it is known, is the newest delivery method that combines many principles into one. The American Institute of Architects' definition states "IPD...integrates people, systems, business structures and practices into a process that collaboratively harnesses the talents and insights of all participants to optimize project results, increase value to the owner, reduce waste and maximize efficiency through all phases of design, fabrication and construction." Under this delivery system, the decision making team (owner, architect and contractor) enters into a single contractual agreement bound by the agreed timeline and budget, and works together for a successful project. In the end, it comes down to trust and collaboration towards a common goal, while sharing risks and rewards.

With a project delivery system selected, an architect and contractor on board and the project scope defined, a better understanding of both time and cost can be developed. The initial

project schedule will be based on the delivery method, the complexity of the project and the historical data benchmarks for the project type. Budgetary numbers can be reviewed based on historical data, but actual estimates can only be developed as the design progresses. There will also be additional expenses beyond the construction costs. Such expenses include property acquisition costs, design fees, contingencies, furniture, fixtures and equipment, and many other items, all of which are referred to as soft costs and need to be included in the overall project budget. With an approved project budget, schedule and drawings you're now ready to move on to the actual project.

The owner's responsibilities do not stop when the shovel hits the ground. During construction it is inevitable that issues will arise. The keys to success are communication, organization and the ability to make timely decisions. Addressing these issues properly will keep your project on track.

You can now see light at the end of the tunnel, but there are a few important things to remember. The owner is solely responsible for the purchase of furniture, fixtures and equipment (referred to as FF&E). This can include things like chairs, telecommunication wiring, fume hoods and hospital beds. Of course there are consultants who can help with this task, but remember, nobody knows your organization better than you. Additionally, you'll need to coordinate the emptying of the space if it is a renovation and the move-in after the construction is finished.

As your project comes to completion, don't lose sight of the details in an effort to get it finished. A proper punchlist confirms that all the final

project details will be completed prior to the final payment. The commissioning procedure ensures that your mechanical systems are operating to design standards. "As-built" drawings create a record of the final project by recording any changes from the design documents as the project was built and will be invaluable information for the future.

Obviously, this article can only cover the more important issues, and one must address many more details to ensure a successful project.

To find out more about how Petra can provide assistance with your next construction project, please contact Guido Petra, President or Ron Goodin, Director of Business Development at 203-865-6043 today.



Petra
CONSTRUCTION CORP. 98 Rebesch Drive
North Haven, CT 06473

Visit us online at
www.petraconstruction.com

BUILDING
BRIEFS