

BOARD REPORT



Northeast Region Board Meeting – August 27, 2009

DATE: July 31, 2009 - Amended August 12, 2009

TO: Northeast Region Board of Directors

FROM: *Richard L. De Vault, AIA, CDT*
Regional Director for the Syracuse Chapter of CSI

SUBJECT: Report of Region Directors.

A. Report Summary

- 1. Under the leadership of Charlie Laun, Pres. and Ron Fiorentino, Vice Pres., and the Board of Directors the Syracuse Chapter is beginning the process of re-building. As stated by Cal Bowne in his April 4th Report to the Northeast Region we have made ... "good progress in revitalizing the Chapter." We began Charlie Laun's tenure with 46 members and have grown to 56, following the NE Conference in Portland, Maine in 2007.*
- 2. The key ingredient has been excellent meeting topics that pulled in fairly large crowds. We also joined forces with the Syracuse Builders Exchange to expand our audience. The Builders Exchanges' involvement adds contractors that we need to interact with, to fully develop the CSI potential for offerings.*

B. The Report

- 1. Summary of activities since last report: Our primary function has been to serve the membership with programs we organize with the intent to entice the largest possible audiences. We restrict the programs to CSI related activities and themes, trying to stay with our original purpose.*
- 2. Status of current programs: July's meeting of the Syracuse Board set the stage for the fall and winter program schedule.*

The Syracuse CSI Board met to debate upcoming events and prepare for the Regional Meeting in Lake George. We discussed budget issues and membership opportunities, along with the current situation with colleges and universities looking for spec writing assistance. Curriculums encompassing spec writing seem

to come and go with available instructors. We briefly discussed the idea of training the trainers, where an expert at CSI Format and Spec Writing might teach others how to teach students at the college level. This idea requires further development.

3. *Problem areas: As always declining memberships remains the largest single foe. Competing for participant's time is a never ending battle. We try very hard to make our programs as topical as possible to advance the cause. It is sometimes difficult to present the real value of CSI Membership. Writing specs is something many designers run away from, not toward.*
4. *Success stories: The 2008 and 2009 Program Schedule produced some very large turn outs, at least for our chapter. When we joined forces with the Syracuse Builders Exchange, it opened a new access to Contractors that changed our program choices to some extent, but for the positive. The key of course is picking a topic that offers new thinking for new developments in the construction industry.*
5. *Schedule of activities prior to next Board Meeting:*

***September**-Our first session will feature Ilene Clinton of Brown & Brown talking about LEED Liability, combined with Larry Libatore, AIA, LEED AP updating us on recent developments in green architecture/construction.*

***October**-HOLT Architects of Ithaca, New York presenting on Contract Administration beginning with an understanding of the General conditions.*

***November**-Topic centers on MOLD issues in construction with possibly several speakers that hopefully include Manufacturer's representatives, American Air Barrier Association Representatives, and Engineering Consultants.*

***January**-Addenda and Bidding Documents from CSI Division 00 and 01.*

***February**-TBD*

***March**-TBD*

***April**-TBD*

***May**-TBD*

6. *Changes in Chapter Membership since last report: As stated in the opening paragraph, we have grown from 46 to 56. It is happening because a few people joined together with ideas that meet the goals of CSI.*

The Syracuse Chapter has for the past two years developed our programs from discussions and ideas debated during our board meetings, rather than having one person as program director responsible to come up with new offerings by

themselves. Usually someone in the group suggests something and it spring boards into something palatable.

C. Suggestions for the benefit of the Region (from Syracuse Chapter Board Members)

- 1. Membership dues are high, compared to other organizations; perhaps it should become corporate memberships. This would allow design firms / contractors / construction industry representatives an opportunity to pick and choose programs, by having the company they work for as a member, thereby permitting access to CSI to it's employees.*
- 2. A list of benefits in belonging to CSI should be put on a CD or if to expensive, placed on National/Regional Websites.*
- 3. The Region should help by being a 'clearinghouse' for new programs, based on CSI goals. Send representatives on occasion to visit with us and hear our concerns.*
- 4. Currently the New York State Education Department does not recognize Continuing Education Credits form CSI. Perhaps the Region could help with this situation, particularly if this is the same in other states within the Region. Develop a system that state governments will recognize.*
- 5. We need to keep discussions and dialog open across all professional disciplines / contractors / construction industry related groups.*
- 6. The Region needs to justify its existence, not unlike any employee or organization. Our Chapter has lowered it's dues by dropping the dinner inclusion and is constantly searching for ways to improve our delivery to the membership. Individuals who are not spec writers see little need in paying \$300 plus, to join an organization of perceived limited value to them. Our experience is that if the company pays for it; they will join, if not, most do not join.*

Respectfully submitted;

Richard L. De Vault, AIA, CDT
Syracuse CSI - Regional Director
Ashley McGraw Architects, PC
500 South Salina Street – Suite 110
Syracuse, New York 13202
Telephone No. 315-425-1814 x129
E-mail address: devaul@ashleymcgraw.com

END OF REPORT

Cc: Region Secretary