Assignment 1 - Issues

Due: Wednesday, Jan 13

Context
Interview your parents about what life was like before you were born. Pay attention to what kind of questions are effective at eliciting information and which result in unclear understandings. Consider “taking them back” to that time, before actually asking any questions.

Issues of Interest
Continue to refine your area of personal interest in some aspect of professional practice.
The Issues- Aspects of Practice

In your first semester work, you experienced the challenges and rewards associated with collaborative project delivery. Concurrently, you explored a broad spectrum of practice issues, outside the realm of “design”, which proved to have a potentially critical impact on resulting architecture.

Your first project will extend your inquiry into one area of professional practice which is now of particular interest to you individually. Through research and interviews with practitioners, you will assess its impact on project delivery, and identify the related pitfalls faced by Architects and how successful architects overcome them.

For Wednesday:

1. Clarify the particular issue on which you would like to focus your research.

2. Identify and provide a one paragraph summary analysis for each of three existing case studies focusing on the role of this issue in practice. Be prepared to discuss these in class.

3. Identify three architecture firms in Boston who are known to be successful in this area of professional practice.
Building Selection

1. Email your Issues of Interest Summaries to me in MS Word Format.

2. Based on our discussion in class today, identify one individual outside with whom you have not previously spoken who is in a position to advise you on your building selection. Contact that person for their recommendation for a local building (region) build in the last 10 years that best embodies the issues your case study will address.

On Wednesday, bring three building options to class with supporting arguments for each. You will make these arguments to the class.

Based on their feedback, your building will be selected.
What would need to be looked at to analyze a previously built structure?

Assumed information needed for studying a built-work

- What was the client’s vision of the building? What are their priorities?
  - Was there a clearly defined vision for the building?
  - Was this carried out? Mission statement?
  - How did the architect enhance this vision?
- What is the setting or environment?
  - What are site limitations?
  - What are the benefits?
  - What are the zoning laws?
  - Was the building integrated with the environment?
  - Was site orientation considered?
- What are the relationships between all parties involved?
  - How were decisions made?
  - How does everyone get along?
  - Did conflicts arise?
  - Was there a plan set forth at the beginning of the project to dictate exactly how parties interacted with each other?
- Who were the key players in each stage of the project?
  - Did it match their role or responsibility well?
  - How many divisions were there?
  - How was the key player defined? Contractual?
  - How were these people chosen for their roles?
    - Were they a friend or recommended by another person on the project?
    - Have they worked on projects together in the past?
- Organization of program/thresholds. (What are thresholds? Progression of one space to another)
- Adjacencies and flow regarding program.
- How does the building work?
  - What was the program?
  - How does circulation work?
- Did the architect/everyone consider community involvement?
  - Who does the building work for?
  - How does it impact surrounding area? Traffic etc.
  - Did the architect make an effort to involve the community, or were they involved as a result of dissatisfaction with the progress of the building?
- Was there a balance between appeasing the community as well as the owner and other parties?
- How does the building age?
  - Intentional aging
  - Unintentional aging
• Did the MEP not work well in one particular part of the building? How have the building systems performed over time?
  – Theoretical performance of building parts
  – Actual performance of building parts
  – Is the building being monitored? How?
  – Were solar panels installed in a cloudy area (example)?
• What was the time period during which the building was constructed?
• What was the buildings delivery method?
• How was it built?
  – Were new technologies used?
  – Who chose the construction methods? Builder?
  – If innovation was used, who was responsible for ensuring that these applications were successful?
• What was the timeline? Was the project rushed? Was it over or under the schedule?
• Was it over or under budget? What was the estimated and actual cost of the project?
• How did the process "go" and why?
• Was there a green objective? Was it met?
• How has the building changed since construction was completed?
  – Adaptive reuse
  – Client changed programmatic use
  – Actual physical properties of the building (additions/renovations)

To understand the starting point of a project, it is necessary to know what came before the building.
(Analogy of knowing your parent’s life before you were born)

How is it possible to know about something before the building was built?

• Look at the firm’s previous experience
  – How have they handled things in the past?
  – What were their priorities on past projects?
  – Strengths and weaknesses
    - Some firms think they do good work
    - Some firms actually do good work
• Look at current events of the time
  – Political news
  – Research newspaper articles about site or area prior to construction
• Investigative journalism
  – Important to not take anything as fact
  – Difficult to not take anything as fact
Additions to initial list:

- What was the history before the building was constructed?
  - What factor(s) caused the construction of the building?

What to know about a firm?
  - Who is in charge?
  - Who is designing?

How do you ask how a firm works without offending someone?
  - Ask for definitions of client roles
What do you need to know about a building to develop a case study?

Client
- Influence on the project
- Objectives
- Public/private/developer
- Experience
- Financial Reputation
- Financial Responsibility
- Goals

Budget
- Where is it coming from?
- Estimated
- Over/under
- Cost/Sq Ft
- What influenced the budget?
- Budget allocation
- Rebates/Incentives
- Fundraising

User
- Involvement in process
- Defining of user
- Unique requirements
- Goals
- Satisfaction
- Stakeholders
- Relationship to owner/funder

Location/Siting
- Relationship to context
- Zoning
- Weather factors
- Context
- Existing conditions
- Impact on site
- Traffic patterns
- Cultural context
- Infrastructure
- Soil conditions
- Materials in relation to site

Design Team
- Who makes the team up?
- Selection process
Hierarchy
Team chart
Experience
Previous relationships to each other
Individual goals
Degree of involvement
Any changes over time
Location of parties
Relationship conflicts

Delivery Method
How was it chosen?
If it was followed/variations
Each parties experience with method
How successful was it?
Who initiated this process?
Did it elaborate on technology/process itself?

Intent/Goal
Were they met?
Weight of individual goals
Collective goal

Sustainability
Intended to be?
Who pushed for sustainability?
Why was/was not a priority?
Sustainable Strategies
Team member’s background in sustainable design
Was it a superficial goal?
How sustainability affects budget?

Obstacles/Solutions
What happened?
Who identifies obstacle?
Who arrived at solutions?
When did they arise?
Proactive/reactive strategy?
Value engineering sessions
Source of obstacle?
Were recurring obstacles avoided?

Timeline/What Took Place
Overall project timeline
Proposed timeline
Ideal timeline
Were milestones met?
Who made the first schedule?
Outside influences on timeline
Where obstacles occurred on timeline
Who is responsible for maintaining timeline?
What are critical milestones of project?
How were they met? Or not?
Who was hired and why?

Community Involvement
How much?
To what extent
Who makes up community? Singular person?
Local/Global?
How was community addressed in meetings?
Communication between community and design team?
Influence or lip service

Materials
All Documentation From Conception to Finished Product
Construction Methods
Reception/Reaction
Performance
Life Cycle Analysis
Project Details:

Now that you have a building it will be necessary to build a framework of “facts” about the project which will serve as the basis for your analysis. Over the next two weeks, do the necessary research and contact the appropriate project sources to identify the following, as relevant to your Case Study and Issue of Interest.

1. Project Description
   Project name
   Location
   Type of Project Market Sector
   Client
   Budget/Cost of Project
   Compensation Type > Lump Sum, % of cost, etc
   Size of Project > Area, etc
   Schedule > Basic Timeline
   Graphic- Photos of finished project, drawings, renderings, etc

2. Team
   Create two charts > internal team and external team > identifying all of the players on the project, with names, titles and positions. Construct the chart in such a way that it illustrates the lines of communication and decision-making hierarchies.

3. Scope of Services
   Services/Scope
   What scope of services was provided by the firm on this project?
   How is the scope of services defined by the contract?
   Was compensation for all services structured the same way? If not, explain why different approaches were used. Develop a brief explanation of each specific service provided by the firm and list the products/deliverables associated with each service.

4. Delivery
   What method of design + construction delivery was utilized for this project? Why was this method chosen? Was this delivery method typical or atypical for the firm?
   What are advantages/benefits were associated with the chosen approach?
   What liabilities/limitation?

5. Roles/Responsibilities
   Working with the scope of services list and the external and internal team charts, create a Roles + Responsibilities Chart that illustrates primary, secondary and tertiary responsibilities for each of the services.

6. Time/Schedule
   Describe the major phases of the project schedule and indicate when each major service task occurred in relation to the overall project.
7. Money/Budget
What was the project budget initially presented to the design firm by the client? What were the sources of funding for the project? Was the budget reasonable for a project of this scale/scope? What challenges did the budget present? At what points in the design process were budgets presented to the client? Who prepared the estimates? Did the project budget change over the course of the project? How were these changes agreed upon? Was the project bid or negotiated? Was the construction cost different from the budget? How were costs controlled/managed during the construction process?

8. Agreements
What forms of agreement were used? Between which parties? Give AIA form where applicable. List all contracts used for the project. How were the terms and conditions of the contract made clear to each party involved? Who led the process? What modifications or additions, if any, were made to the contract? By whom? Why? What were the challenges, misunderstandings, or violations of the contract? Describe and comment. Were there any other issues? Provide commentary.

Context
Due: 3/15/10

Develop a working draft Project Timeline.

On it, identify the key project milestones. For contextual understanding of the project, develop a parallel record of key milestone/events and periods, locally, regionally, and nationally, as relevant to an understanding of the project. Consider, for instance: Socio-Economic, Political, and Business Cycles/Trends.

Develop a working draft Project Area Plan, including:

- Place within the larger city
- Building Use Profile of Site and surrounding area
- Proximity to relevant stakeholders groups/entities
Context (Due: 3/17/10)

Based on the Case Study samples reviewed in class on 3/10, the AIA Case Study Format (as modified to reflect your Issue of Interest in consultation with me), develop a graphic format and prepare a working draft of the following Case Study sections for 10 minute projected class presentation:

- Preface
- Introduction
- Abstract
- Perspectives
  - Protocols: The Web of Decision-Making (Include Team Chart)
  - Constituencies: Key Voices in Projects
  - Stories: The Episodes of Practice

Reading:

“13 Simple Journalist Techniques for Effective Interviews”
(http://www.bravenewtraveler.com/2007/03/26/13-simple-journalist-techniques-for-effective-interviews/)

Chapter 4 Developing a Practice pp. 76-143
Chapter 9.2 Managing Architectural Projects pp. 459-476
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Northeastern Graduate School of Architecture  
Case Studies Symposium “Correlating Trust and Group Based Innovation in Architectural Practice”

Date: 4/21/2010  
Time: 10:00 AM-12:30 PM  
Location: DG 450 Dodge Hall

Preparation: In preparation for the symposium, meet as a group. Select a moderator(s) to introduce the work you have done and to introduce the individual projects in sequence, according to the following timeline. By Monday, one person is to let me know, via email, how many guests we can expect.

Schedule:

9:30- 10:00 Room Setup (all)  
10:00-10:05 Welcome (Hewett)  
10:05-10:10 Introductions (Moderator)  
10:10-11:05 Case Study Presentations (11 @ 5 minutes each):

Brief description of:
● Issue of Interest(s),  
● Learning Objective  
● Project Description  
● What was learned (Analysis & Conclusion)

What has your case study revealed you about the following?  
● The definition of project success  
● The architect’s ideal role within a project team  
● The architect’s potential to impact their communities  
● The most important non-design related factors impacting project success  
● The traits you most admired in the architects you studied  
● How this project has impacted your own ambitions and plans

11:05- 12:15 Discussion  
In a symposium, the moderator facilitates a discussion by raising relevant questions, highlighting consensus or conclusions, and, if necessary to move things along, calling on individuals and guests based on their topic or relevant expertise. It expected that all participants will contribute to the discussion.

Consider the following:  
Defining terms: Trust, Credibility, Reputation  
Measures of Success  
The Architects’ Changing Role  
Skills, Interests, and Roles within the profession; not everyone a designer.  
How issues of Trust and Innovation arose in this class’ own work.

12:15-12:20 Closing comments (Hewett & guests)