



Message from the President

Hello Members,

It is the first of August with my term being a little more than half over. In the first half, many fantastic meetings and events have taken place, not to mention the many committee meetings conducted by the great volunteers this Chapter is known for. There are many more planned for the rest of this year and beyond. Many of you have been and will be responsible for making these events happen and I personally thank you for your leadership, hard work and dedication. All members thank you as well, I am sure.

There is one decision which has recently taken place which I would like to relay to you, the members. At the last Chapter Board meeting on Tuesday, July 14th, the Board voted to approve a virtual office. AIA Cincinnati's office will be moving from Longworth Hall to the Executive Director's house. The office will close the week of August 24 and will reopen on Monday, August 31. The phone, fax and email address will all remain the same. The Chapter's new mailing address will be:

AIA Cincinnati
P.O. Box 889
Milford, Ohio 45150

This decision did not come lightly or without discussion. The idea of this came about due to the economic environment that we all find ourselves in and the potential that it may continue for sometime. The Board has a duty to the members to manage the resources of the Chapter in a responsible manner. A committee was formed and discussions began. Research and analysis were evaluated as to a number of options including staying where we have been at Longworth (both moving to another floor or in the same exact location and signing a long term lease), moving to less expensive, new geographic location inside the I-275 loop, and thirdly, having a "virtual" office. Each of these options were evaluated on their cost savings (both immediate and in the future) and on the impact to the members. At the

beginning of this year, the Board made a decision to approve this year's budget with the anticipated reduction of members as well as a considerably more difficult time soliciting not only the number of sponsors but the amount of sponsorship that we have come to expect in the past. In fact, our membership is down, number of sponsors - down, and the dollar amount of sponsorship is down. I would like to think that the workload of all of our firms will begin to pick up, but this may be mere wishful thinking. Harder times may be ahead. As a matter of fact, there are many indicators that suggest that work may not pick up for a longer period than originally thought. Recovery may not occur for another 12 to 24 months, especially in some of the sectors which are the mainstay of some of our larger local firms. (See Article from AIA Chief Economist's Kermit Baker, PhD titled AIA Architecture Billings Index: Slowdown in business conditions at Architecture Firms Accelerated Again in June at http://info.aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek09/0724/0724b_otb.cfm) Should this happen, and I certainly don't wish it to, AIA Cincinnati could lose more revenue. It seemed prudent to take action now to protect the Chapter financially and continue providing service to the members. This is why I supported closing the Longworth Hall office and move the day to day operations to the Executive Director's house for at least a two year period. These day to day operations include but are not limited to selling documents, answering questions from potential new members and current members, corresponding with members and vendors, and preparing for our Board meetings, Chapter meetings, and committee meetings. These tasks do not necessarily require a meeting space. Should the economy get better, the membership rise, and sponsors get back to the levels we have been fortunate enough to receive in the past, then the Board will revisit the office location. A "virtual" office, could save the Chapter a considerable amount of yearly expense. It also frees up some Chapter funds to go toward updating the Chapter's computer and printing equipment, which is currently incredibly outdated. In fact, new equipment has been identified, bid and

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is being reviewed, ready to be ordered. I believe that the Board can provide the same leadership that it has over the years without a rented physical space. Executive Committee meetings can continue to be held at an Executive Committee Member's office as we have done since January. The Chapter Board meetings can be held at a Board member's firm. Should anyone like to host a Board Meeting, please let Pat know. This in fact, can be a great way for the Board members to not only see others offices, but for the Board to be seen by other offices. Monthly Chapter meetings for the members will still be held off site as they have been in the past.

Being a fiscal conservative and a strong believer in always having a "Plan B", I believe that the decision to move the day to day operations to the Executive Director's house responds to our fiduciary responsibility. This move, will undoubtedly have some bumps in the road, and may be an inconvenience to a few. And there are still some logistical and procedural issues that need to be addressed which the Board is prepared to solve. But as Architects, we are all problem solvers and with your help, we can make this happen to the benefit of the Chapter. If any of you have any concerns or ideas or logistical and/or procedural issues about the "virtual office", please let the Board know so we can include them in our continued Chapter planning discussions and decision making.

These are tough times which require tough decisions. Sometimes the decisions are not always what we would necessarily like to do, but what we need to do. I believe that this is one of those tough decisions. I know the Board voted for what they think the Chapter needs to do and what is best for the Chapter and its members. Lastly, I want to thank the Board for its careful and thoughtful consideration in making the right decision for our Chapter.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Mauch, AIA, LEED A.P.
2009 AIA Cincinnati President

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In Memory

Gerald S. Hammond, FAIA, LEED AP

Gerry Hammond passed away on Friday, July 31. Gerry served as AIA Cincinnati's President in 1974. In 2000, he was elected vice president of national AIA and advanced to the AIA College of Fellows. In 2002 he received the AIA Ohio Gold Medal for service to the profession.

He became involved in NCARB in 1998 when he was appointed to the Ohio Board of Examiners of Architects by former Ohio Governor Robert Taft. His work on the Committee on Examination helped usher in the new seven-division ARE 4.0. He was the 2008 recipient of NCARB's President's Medal for Distinguished Service.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, August 15th, at 10:00 am at the Presbyterian Church – 23 Front Street, Hamilton, OH 45011. There will be a reception with a light lunch following the service at the Fitton Center across the street from the church and you can park in either lot. Donations are being requested for the following:

The Hamilton Community Foundation - Gerry & Gerry Hammond Fund, a donor advised fund established in 2005 to aid them in providing funding for their various charitable interests.

Hamilton Community Foundation
319 North Third Street
Hamilton, OH 45011-1624; P: 513-863-1717

The Presbyterian Church
23 Front Street
Hamilton, Ohio 45011 - 2819; P: 513-867-5411

Berkeley Square
100 Berkeley Drive
Hamilton Ohio 45013-1787; P: 513-856-8600