



President's Message

June 30, 2022

Musings – "...thoughts or comments on something you have been thinking about carefully and for a long time." Or, a lot of thoughts that don't link well via transition sentences. Yep, these are my musings for this month.

What a sobering month it has been for our nation. As professionals who pride ourselves on being strategists and problem solvers, many of us feel frustrated with the deepening schism in our society. It seems like we cannot get through a day without some polarizing newscast, slogan, or meme working its way into social media. Freedom of the press? I suppose. But I don't see *this* communicate as one to further splinter our cohorts by suggesting they don't understand, don't care, or must not truly embrace primary goals of J.E.D.I. or climate resiliency if they are not front and center on the local newscast. That might work for some but others effect change through more subtle means, and still others have a different world view but remain committed to equitable, safe, sustainable communities.

We need that same common ground in our projects and volunteerism. At the recent AIA A'22 conference I had the pleasure of meeting a small firm owner who shared her story of an alternative path to licensure without an NAAB-accredited degree. She combined great experience and leadership skills with two years of college courses. By happenstance, two days later another colleague mentioned her involvement in evaluating a resolution to have AIA recommend that NCARB recognize an alternative path to licensure—and ultimately deciding she could not support that motion. Both architects are genuine in thought, successful in practice, and cognizant of pros and cons of the issue. AIA Michigan directors were asked to discuss this topic within their chapters several weeks ago but the resolution was pulled from the Institute's business meeting agenda. If it is brought forth again let's listen carefully and learn what it means to our peers and profession by seeking out all perspectives. I have a hunch we will explore this topic again.

Discussion at A'22 also validated our commitment to challenge AIA Michigan norms to attract future leaders and optimize our limited resources. At the Large States meeting we shared best practices, advocacy updates, and details of board composition and meeting cadence. Cathy and I look forward to sharing our thoughts with all of you regarding potential changes for 2023 and beyond. Maybe fewer board meetings and more committee-led events? Just maybe.

Speaking of events, with Honor Awards and A'22 Conference now behind us, we look forward to the upcoming AIA MI and AGC Michigan Midsummer Conference on August 4-6, 2022. Registration is open and we look forward to having Emily Grandstaff-Rice, FAIA, 2022 First Vice President/2023 President-Elect join us to share insights into the changing Institute under new leadership of Lakisha Woods, Executive Vice President and CEO of AIA. Check out the program online and please try to join us.



Next comes the Design Conference in September and the Leadership Conference in October. There really is something for everyone throughout the year. And, as we connect at these diverse events in the months ahead, let's seek that common ground which aligns us with each other. Engage someone across the generational split, the gender divide, or the political aisle and listen, *then* talk. I was reminded again this year at the conference, it really does work best that way.

Be safe, be positive!

A handwritten signature in black ink on a yellow rectangular background. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style and reads "Cindy".

Cindy Pozolo, FAIA