

February 2020



AIA
Michigan

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I am writing this newsletter on February 2, groundhog day. Its 50 degrees and apparently the groundhog did not see his shadow, so we are supposedly in for a shorter winter! Thinking about Phil the groundhog led me to thinking about the movie Groundhog Day that 1993 film featuring Bill Murray. Living one specific day over and over again? The movie of course made it seem enticing and humorous to be able to undo our mistakes or manipulate a situation to our advantage. It also had its nightmarish qualities. What would that really be like? Especially as the novelty wore off. What if we could only work on the same project, the exact same parts? Would we actually make it perfect? Even if we could, we would never be able to get out of schematic design, or responding to the same 4 RFI's over and over again. Things that we think of as an inconvenience or irritating like last minute client initiated changes, budget changes or change orders, things we sometimes resent or loath, we would come to crave

We human beings thrive on change, as much as we say we hate it. Our profession is changing. Some of the changes are subtle like how we are expected to get a little more work done in a little less time. It only becomes noticeable when we are given some ludicrous schedule that we react to with contempt. The computer has nudged that change almost imperceptibly along. It would be interesting to compare how long it takes to complete comparable sized projects from the beginning of wide spread CAD design use say 1985 up to now. Do architects feel as connected to the design and design process as they used to? Other changes seem much more threatening. How will artificial intelligence play a role in the profession? How will the BIM model erode what architects consider sacred ground like the design and legal responsibility of Construction Documents?

We are pushing much of that information further upstream into design development and even schematic design. We need to be involved in shaping our futures. I encourage you to get involved in professional and AIA issues that are of interest to you. Learn the process of how to advocate for change. There are talented and experienced architects who can and are mentoring the next generation of architects. Advocating takes time, effort and your participation.

We have two important bills that the AIA Michigan's Government Advocacy Committee is currently working on and tracking. First is the reestablishment of the Michigan Historic Tax Credit and second is the Certificate of Merit law which is designed to limit frivolous lawsuits against design professionals by assisting attorneys in assessing the technical merits of a potential case prior to filing suit. I encourage you to contact your representative prior to this year's Legislative Day. Then meet with them in person on March 17 in Lansing. The GAC does a great job of preparing us in advance and coordinating our meetings with our senators and representatives. Our responsibility as licensed architects is to participate and shape our professions future.

Gandhi said "be the change you want to see". Be involved as a citizen architect. Together we will shape the profession for our future.

Norman Hamann, Jr., AIA