President's Message

August 31, 2023

As we wrap up summer and get back to school, you can almost smell sharpened pencils in the air. In the morning the kids are standing at the bus stop and the sound of Friday night football games invokes a sense of pride throughout communities. For AIA Michigan, summer was full of activity wrapping up with our annual Mid-Summer Conference on Mackinaw Island. A shared event with the Associated General Contractors (AGC), there was optimal weather, informative education sessions, and activities that brought family, friends, and colleagues together from around the state. Now it's possible that Mid-Summer Conference wasn't for you, but perhaps the Design Retreat coming up in September is. The event is a little more laid-back getaway for a night or two and an opportunity to hear about and discuss design. If you haven't been before, maybe this is the year you attend and see what it's all about.

As we move towards fall, AIA Michigan is hard at work for its members. Just recently you should have received a notice about Senate Bills 314 and 315, which propose the use of design build in school design. Something that at its core isn't a bad idea. However, in this case AIA Michigan is taking a stance against these bills as they compromise the role of the architect related to K-12 school design. To do what they are proposing, they also are looking to change the laws around what it means to be an architectural firm by eliminating the 2/3 rule for firm ownership. Please read the email you received from AIA Michigan for complete information regarding the bills. If we use our voice, we can successfully negate this proposed legislation.

As a countermeasure to the current design build bills noted above, AIA Michigan and our Government Affairs Committee are working to develop our own design build language and legislation for school construction. As indicated, we don't have a problem with the use of the design build process for school design and construction, but it needs to be performed in a way that maintains the integrity of the architect, contractor, and owner while also ensuring a process that will provide the best possible results for our communities. As we develop this language, please engage by learning about what is happening and sharing your voice through AIA Michigan. I would be more than happy to hear your thoughts and share them with our team. Finally, when it's time, support this proposed legislation. AIA Michigan will provide information and opportunities for you to engage with your representatives in Lansing.

Take some time now and enjoy the transition of summer to fall. Grab a cup of coffee with a friend on a crisp early morning and enjoy the majesty that our world offers. I've lived all over our great country, and it's hard to beat fall in Michigan.

Paul Haselhuhn, AIA
AIA Michigan President 2023