

OF A MIND

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I was "Of A Mind", some years ago, to tell him to forget it (or words to that effect) when an old Prof of mine called me and asked me, as a building code official, to address his senior practice class (of architects) about the code as a construction constraint.

Here he was, a Professor of Architecture, with practice experience, old enough to both know better, and to have work within the regulatory context, still fallaciously portraying the code in the negative. Oh, well, he did approve my thesis that allowed me to graduate, so I told him I would talk to his class about *"building codes and their proper place and use in the construction of project"!!!!* (No mention, I said, will be made to 'constraint', by me, and hopefully by him).

What's the point? Just this, if you are "challenged" to speak about your work and specifications generally/overall, what are you "Of A Mind" to say?

Herman Hoyer shared a very funny but most insightful cartoon with me (and perhaps with many he knew far better than me) in which he (his character really) is being introduced by one matron to another, at a cocktail party, with the line, "This is Mr. Hoyer. He is a writer... a writer of specks, or some such nonsense"!! Hey, have a double on that!!

OK, OK, you have no "friends" like that, BUT what would you really say about specifications and your involvement in preparing them? Would you rely on a litany of "war stories"? Would you attempt to pontificate on the whole of the topic?

Just how would you present a truly rational, even-handed picture of specs, their contribution to construction and architecture, and your specific expertise and work in their production? Think about it. It is very much like trying to explain that you were, really, born but your birth certificate was lost in your last move!

How would you address a student group with this topic (OK, you can call Margaret Chewing, another SCIP colleague or your CSI chapter person dealing with students for advice, for a synopsis, or even for her to substitute for you?) Are you aware of student oriented activities? Do you know what efforts SCIP or CSI has in place for and about students? Do you realize the very fertile ground among those folks for future spec writers, even if they become immersed in servicing BIM?

Say, are you "Of A Mind" to jump in and work with students to their betterment, and that of the profession, SCIP and CSI?