Top 5 Reasons to Retain Your Architect during Construction:

Many clients question the need to have their architect involved once the design is complete and a permit has been issued. The happiest clients are those that hire the architect for the duration of the project, including what is known as construction administration services.

But why?

Why is it desirable and important to have your architect involved during construction?

Simply put, having the architect involved from beginning to end saves money, saves time, reduces potential headaches and helps avoid costly mistakes. To more fully understand the benefit of retaining your architect throughout construction, we have listed the top five reasons below:

1. **Your architect works and advocates for you**

   Most importantly, remember that the contract with your architect does not include the builder. Your architect has no vested interest in the cost of materials and the methods utilized to install them. Your architect's top priority is therefore looking out for you, the owner; ensuring the construction process is handled professionally and educating you on what can be expected from beginning to end of construction.

   Many of our clients are surprised at all the decisions required of them even after a building permit has been received. We help them focus and prioritize decisions, so they do not become overwhelming as well as responding to the weekly issues that arise on site. Our clients tell us regularly that our guidance and leadership throughout the process is invaluable in lowering their overall stress level and allowing the process to be fun and exciting.

2. **To ensure the project is built per design**

   Your architect's involvement during construction ensures that the project will be built as designed and/or any deviations from the drawings documented and approved by you, the client, prior to being built. Part of the construction process involves the contractor submitting samples and shop drawings (detailed manufacturer's drawings) for review and approval. Your architect knows what to look for in these submittals to ensure the product meets your standards and expectations and the overall design vision. By following and enforcing the prescribed process, there are no conflicts later, if during installation, the material and/or method does not meet the approved submittal: the two are compared and the product under question is replaced, revised, and/or redone until it meets the approved sample and/or submittal.

   Many of our clients have expressed gratitude and relief at this process. It is a simple objective procedure that eliminates emotion and gets the intended results quickly.

3. **Document construction progress - Provide accountability**

   During construction, your architect will coordinate regular visits to the site with the builder to review and document construction progress and answer any questions that may arise. These meetings reassure the contractor that questions will be answered in a timely manner and enforce an atmosphere of accountability, helping to maintain the project schedule. Field reports are generated and distributed following each meeting to all appropriate parties involved in the project. This ensures that you, the client, understand what is happening on the project on a regular basis and any decisions that may be required of you.

4. **Review Builder's pay applications and change orders**

   Applications for payment (invoices) are submitted to you, the owner, by the contractor on a monthly basis during construction. Your architect reviews these applications, ensuring that the materials and work that are being billed for have been purchased and performed. Any changes to the cost and/or schedule of the project should be included in these monthly billings. Your architect will review these and verify that all changes have been discussed and approved and that you, the owner, are fully aware of the effect these have on the overall project. Any questions surrounding these changes, or the invoice will be discussed and clarified.

   We have found our clients appreciate the double check of the invoice and knowing they have us to clarify any questions they may have. It is important to note that banks usually require the review and approval of the contractor's application for payment by the architect.

5. **To act as the point person for local jurisdictions and HOAs**

   All subdivisions, counties, and cities have their own set of restrictions, regulation s and requirements that must be met in order to receive a building permit. Proof that these requirements are being met during construction is critical to most building inspectors to ensure receipt of the certificate of occupancy at the end of the project. Your architect ensures this documentation is completed and submitted properly so you do not have to spend unnecessary time and energy preparing this information.

In addition to all those great reasons, it is also imperative to remember that your architect is passionate about his or her design. They dedicated to ensuring a beautiful, functional end product that you are proud of. The project should be a celebration of your lifestyle, design aesthetic and efficient functionality.

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) encourages and supports maintaining the architect during construction. To reference their policy, click on the link we have provided below:

http://www.ncarb.org/Publications/~/media/Files/PDF/Special-Paper/NecessityArch.pdf