



SPECTRUM

Newsletter of the Puget Sound Chapter CSI

President's Message

Beth Stroshane, CSI, CCS

What Specifiers Do vs. the Value Specifiers Provide

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the April meeting. Joe David of Point 32 discussed the movement toward more transparency of material components. He is working on projects that are pushing the envelope right here in Seattle. The two points that stuck with me are first that this must be a respectful dialog with manufactures about information the client wants and second they have no way of knowing if the materials they are replacing redlist materials with are actually any better for humans.



It was a whirl-wind lunch meeting. Part of this is due to the condensed schedule of lunch meetings and part of this was because I was late; which I apologize profusely for. As we move into planning for next year please let us know what you think of the lunch vs. dinner meetings so we can plan accordingly.

This month I read Sheldon Wolfe's article asking if specifiers are an endangered species, and it starts the conversation that Marc Chavez and I will continue during the program at the May 21st CSI meeting. This conversation is near to my heart because I plan on doing specification work for the next 30 years.

The conversation must start by dividing what specifiers do from the value specifiers provide. I think what specifiers currently do will go extinct. Not unlike the role that made blue prints and the role of the specifier's typist, and the bartender at the Architect's office.

The value that specifiers provide cannot go extinct because it is a fundamental part of the process of an Owner making a complex

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EVENTS CALENDAR 2014-2015

ChapterProgram Topics

[May 21, 2015](#)
Changing Delivery
Methods

[June 11, 2015](#)
Awards Reception

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President
[Beth Stroshane](#)

purchase of a construction project. Specifiers, with the help of good product representatives, educate the parties about the performance and design criteria of different systems so the correct choices for the project can be made. They then clearly define what the Owner has agreed to buy before it gets purchased and installed by the contractor.

Think about the last \$2,000 purchase you made. Did you just give your neighbor \$2,000 and tell them to run down to Sears and buy you a refrigerator. . .and they get to pocket whatever they don't spend on the refrigerator? No one in my neighborhood does that.

This is what Owners would be doing, with orders of magnitude more money, if the value that specifiers provide went extinct. If I was going to hand \$2,000 to my neighbor to run down and buy me a refrigerator, I would have used Sears's online comparison tool to see what features and capacities are available. I would have selected and documented down to the color choice and the hinge side what I wanted. I would have known that the refrigerator will come to \$1,800 with tax and delivery. My neighbor is making \$200 on the deal and I'm happy to pay that to have the refrigerator show up at my house.

The value that specifiers provide is essential to the purchaser because it allows them to make an informed decision and make sure they get a project that meets their needs. It is also valuable to the provider because it defines what will produce a happy client, and allows them to determine if they will go bankrupt providing that or if expectations need to be adjusted.

Please join us for our next meeting and continue the conversation.

See you there.



SHERWIN-WILLIAMS. Brian D Keil CSI CCPR | Northwest Specifications Consultant
3326 160th Ave SE, #310, Bellevue WA 98008 | (425) 643-2017 M: (425) 417-1765 | brian.keil@sherwin.com
Spec Help: 800 331-7979 or specifications@sherwin.com | Color Help: 800 382-6567 or mys-w.com

May Programs

Chapter Dinner Meeting: Evolve the Specifier! - May 21

Social Hour: 5:00-6:00 pm, Dinner: 6:00-7:00 pm, Program: 7:00-8:00 pm

\$35 members/\$40 non-members/\$25 students/\$0 sponsored students
(after 5/18/15, prices will be additional \$10)

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Life in the AEC industry is challenging, and getting more so at an exponential rate. It is not due to the fact we are all getting older. This is due to increased complexity caused by additional rules, additional assemblies, specialization and dispersion of knowledge, faster delivery, and non-linear processes.

Many delivery methods have attempted to manage this new complexity by having more people join the team earlier. This has the goal of getting the best knowledge in the room but has the side effect of many cooks in the kitchen who are used to working alone.

The thing that none of the delivery methods are addressing is the ever ballooning information involved in modern projects. Who manages that information?

If the answer presented by your inside voice was “no one on my projects”. Come join a discussion that presents a vision of the future and see if it resonates with your understanding of how projects work. Add your experience to create a vision that makes sense.

Learning Objectives:

- Review how the construction industry is evolving.
- Understand how information asymmetry is crippling our ability to effectively deliver projects.
- Discuss how this change is impacting projects right now.
- Challenge the way we have done it and explore the future as it is, and as it could be.

Bios:

Beth Stroshane CSI, CCS, LEED AP participates in the design of new buildings and renovations of existing facilities as a specification writer. Her philosophy is that better information leads to better project outcomes, and the best information can be achieved through teamwork and collaboration. Prior to starting an independent firm, Beth wrote specifications for ZGF Architects LLP and NBBJ. Beth presents nationally to the specifications community on topics including BIM and specifications, material transparency, and the evolving profession of specifications writing.

Marc Chavez CSI, CCS is a registered architect and participates in the design, specification and construction of project for ZGF Architects in Seattle. Marc has extensive experience in technical matters. An engaging speaker, Marc is the instructor of CSI audio CDT and CCA Prep Courses, and is the chair of the CSI Education Committee. He has presented papers on a wide range of topics from sustainability to ergonomics in architectural specifications.

[Register for May Dinner Meeting!](#)

Nucor Steel Mill Tour: May 29

1:00-3:00 pm

Cost: Free (*limited to 15 participants!*)

Location: 2424 SW Andover St. - West Seattle

members of the Puget Sound Chapter CSI.

Articles must be submitted by the 15th of the month for the next month's edition. Email submissions to office@psccsi.org.

Visit www.psccsi.org to subscribe or to view current and back issues.

LINKS

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[Capital Chapter CSI](#)

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Join CSI



Instead of Tech Talks this month, join us for a field trip to the Nucor Steel Mill in West Seattle. Founded in 1904, the Nucor Steel Mill is a Seattle landmark that has the flexibility to produce 1.1 million tons of steel annually. The plant primarily focuses on rebar and shapes such as angles, flats and channels. Please note that this is being held on a different day than our chapter meeting.

Sign up soon! We are limited to a group of 15. First come, first served; prior registration required.

Register for Steel Mill Tour!



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Quick Pitches

There are openings for ten-minute Quick Pitches at our Chapter meetings next fall at a cost of \$180.00. Contact [Dick Owen](#) to sign up.





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ProSpec 2015: Back to the Future

By Mary Ann Shepherd, CSI-EP



This year's ProSpec took place on April 21st. The afternoon seminar looked into the past as Mike Purdy, Principal of Michael E. Purdy Associates, LLC, provided a historical snapshot of how architecture, engineering, and construction was organized (or not) through the eyes of the White House reconstruction process during President Truman's term in office. What began as "ghosts" whispering and creaking in the halls and rooms of the White House in 1948 turned into a major renovation project as everything but the exterior sandstone wall remained. There were too many cooks in the kitchen during the construction project which led to over-budget and quality control issues.



The lessons learned provided the first steps to the standard process we use today: Clear objective planning, selecting an appropriate project delivery method, developing a realistic cost estimate, and having a design completed *prior* to bid. Anyone interested in learning more about the construction of the White House, Mr. Purdy recommends the book *The Hidden White House: Harry Truman and the Reconstruction of America's Most Famous Residence* by Robert Klara.

Following the seminar, the Tradeshow provided an opportunity for the industry to meet local product reps and ask questions on a variety of products in one swoop while enjoying cocktails and appetizer.



The feature speaker, Shinobu Homma, of Bing Thom Architects, grew up in Japan and immigrated to Canada in the early 1980s. Mr. Homma focused on three large projects: Aberdeen Centre in Richmond, B.C, Central City/SFU Surrey in Surrey, BC, and Tarrant County College in Fort Worth, TX. Although each project was different, they were designed around the future of the city in which they were built. The first project, a shopping mall, stepped away from the idea of a typical black box surrounded by a “sea of parking lots” and added façade as a piece of art and an interior with circular skylights and a fountain.



The second project, Central City, was based on a livable vision plan to create cities of town centers where the SkyTrain would take the pressure off the nearby downtown Vancouver population but most importantly allow the people to live and work within close proximity and provide the people with “pride, dignity, and a sense of future.” The third project, Tarrant County College, was a redevelopment project of 800 acres of reclaimed land along the Trinity River that transformed a flood-prone zone into an urban waterfront neighborhood. Again, the focus was to create a place for the people to live, learn and work within the city’s core while maintaining artistic design.

Thank you to everyone for attending and thank you to our sponsors and exhibitors for supporting another great learning and networking event!

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Jenny Senner CSI, CDT
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ProSpec: Looking Ahead

Thank you for joining us at ProSpec this year. Hope you were able to get your questions answered, learn something new, and meet interesting people.

We are starting to plan for next year's event and would like your input. Surveys (both host and guest) have been sent out. Please complete and let us know what you think.

Contact the Puget Sound CSI office when you are ready to sign up for next year's ProSpec. We will start sending out reminders in the fall!

-Julie Taylor, ProSpec Chair

April Programs Recap

Chapter Lunch Meeting

By Kelly Laleman, CSI, CCS

Joe David of Point 32 discussed research he has done on materials toxicity, primarily for the Bullitt Center. He was given a list of 14 chemicals to verify were not contained in any material to be used in the building. That list ballooned into over 360 chemicals once aliases and sub-categories were accounted for. He stressed the time commitment required to do this research – two to three years to review over 1,000 products. He acknowledged that process wasn't perfect, but the most important thing at that stage was that a dialogue with manufacturers was established. In some cases, the researchers had to take the manufacturer's word that they did not have any of the listed chemicals in their products, but some manufacturers changed the formulation of their products to meet the requirements.

Tech Talk

By Melissa Balestri, CSI, CCS

For those that missed last month's Tech Talk workshop "Formatting in Word: The Mundane to the Magical," Beth Stroshane from Applied Building Information led us through the limitless world of Microsoft Word, introducing topics such as how to use the clipboard to speed up your workflow, the importance of Normal.dotm, styles, formatting, and macros. She gave everyone a copy of her "Express" macro, which can be used to run a macro on multiple documents at once. It was an eye-opening and engaging workshop full of takeaways and action items.

Are Specifiers an Endangered Species?

Sheldon Wolfe, RA, FCSI, CCS, CCCA, CSC

Several years ago, Bob Johnson conducted an informal survey on 4specs.com, asking members to answer these questions: For many years, there have been debates about the future of construction specifiers. Where will we find new specifiers? Are they all dying off? Is the profession no longer needed? While I believe there is reason for concern, I don't think much has changed.



- What is your current age?
- Did you receive education beyond high school?
- What was your major?
- At what age did you first prepare some significant specifications?
- Did you have a mentor in specifications?
- How was the mentor related to you (office, CSI chapter, etc.)?
- At what age did you first take a formal education seminar or course in specifications?
- Who provided the education?
- At what age did you achieve CCS (will be later for many because of when the program started)?
- At what age did you first become a full-time specifier?

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About CSI

CSI is a national association of specifiers, architects, engineers, contractors, facility managers, product representatives, manufacturers, owners and others who are experts in building construction and the materials used therein. They are dedicated to improving the communication of construction information through:

- A diversified membership base of allied professionals involved in the creation and management of the built environment. Join us.
- Continuous development and transformation of standards and formats.
- Education and certification of professionals to improve project delivery processes.
- Creation of practice tools to assist users throughout the facility life-cycle. Join a CSI Practice Group.

CSI is governed by a Board of Directors, a nationally elected body that provides long-range strategic leadership. The Board is composed of nationally elected CSI officers, including the president, president-elect, two vice presidents, the secretary, and the treasurer; elected representatives (directors) from each of CSI's 10 regions; and a director at large. CSI's executive director/CEO is a corporate officer.

For more information about or to join CSI, visit www.csinet.org/joincsi, or call 800-689-2900.

Puget Sound Chapter CSI | 2150 N 107th St. Suite 205, Seattle, WA 98133 | 206-382-3393 | office@pscsci.org

Puget Sound Chapter CSI Office: 5727 Baker Way NW, Suite 200, Gig Harbor WA 98332

Phone: 253-265-3042 Email: office@pscsci.org

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