

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH
ARCHITECT'S OF THE USA REGION MEMBERSHIP**

The meeting was convened at 6:30 on May 15, 2008 by Derek Bradford. Mr. Bradford spoke about the growth of the RIBA Organization in the United States and invited the attendees to go around the room and introduce themselves, which was done. Mr. Bradford then introduced Sunand Prasad, President of RIBA who led a delegation from London to attend the meeting.

1) Mr. Prasad made the following remarks:

- He would like the RIBA to anticipate change.
- Worldwide the construction industry and clients have changed.
- Worldwide there is a better understanding of the importance of design
- RIBA should assist architects to flourish and to function as part of a multi-disciplinary practice.
- We need to convince governments and industry of the importance of design. We have allowed the limits to be made by others.
- Architects must take a position of responsibility (not privilege). The present situation goes back to the 19th century when there was a shift where industry took over from landed gentry. New professions were formed modeled on legal, medical and clergy.
- For architects it doesn't work to distance ourselves from commerce and it is amazing that it went on as long as it did. Construction and artisans carried on.
- Meanwhile Architects only did design and didn't get involved in the technical aspects of construction.
- We need to reunite with labor (the art of making) and commerce.

Mr. Sunand Prasad discussed his goals for the RIBA.

A) Education:

- We need a new approach to education

- We need to understand the value of what we do and our responsibility to the client. What Architects do has enormous consequences e.g. response to climate change. Educators don't understand this.

B) Climate Change:

- Be involved in the Copenhagen Conference in 2009 for treaty to replace Kyoto, and which would take effect in 2012.

C) Use Our Knowledge As Our Best Base:

- Reposition Architecture and make it inter-disciplinary.

D) Government Planning / Permitting and Procurement Systems Are in disarray, mitigating against Design Excellence:

- We need to understand why the Government systems exist so that we can argue against them.
- Historically they don't want to trust Architects with control of their financing of projects.
- Contractors are not the best to be in charge.

Mr. Prasad introduced Chloe Sadler holding the new position of Head of International Chapters whose job is to work with the international chapters. RIBA is presently organized and active in the US and Chapters will be formed in the near future in Dubai, Hong Kong and Singapore.

2) Overseas Council Member Debbie Bentley Remarks:

- There are only one million architects and therefore we need to work together on issues such as protection of the environment.
- The recession hasn't affected architects in the U.S. thus far.
- We welcome Chloe Sadler as a great addition.
- We need more networking between the US Local Chapters.
- She has been an International Council Member for three years and is presently moving to the Middle East.
- We should use the RIBA to both improve the world and the profession.

3) Chloe Sadler Remarks:

- pledging to work with and support the International Chapters.

- Inviting members to contact her with ideas, questions, requests.

4) Status of Reciprocity Negotiations Europe: RIBA/ARB and USA: AIA/NCARB

Derek Bradford:

- Noted that reciprocity has not been available.

Sunand Prasad:

- Responded that the UK is heavily controlled by the EU. The ACE Counsel for Europe required a six year campaign just to make some amendments changing the reciprocity requirement within Europe from 5 plus 2 years to 4.
- The ACE and NCARB have an agreement in principle but NCARB thinks 4 years are too few for recognition.
- Thus reciprocity is mired in the problems that ACE is too cumbersome and yet are needed and NCARB which is not yet in agreement.

Stephen Stenson:

- ACE requires “a political interlocutor” but we don’t have one voice in the US because of the 50 states (in fact 54 Jurisdictions including territories such as Guam and Puerto Rico)
- There is going to be a changing of the guard at the National Accreditation Board in Washington DC
- NCARB has a new head who has only been there for six months, there may be some new flexibility there.
- Re: Canada let’s look and see if the academic qualifications are the same. (Not the Licensing). This might be an alternative i.e. academic reciprocity.

James Fischer:

- On academic credentials the US wants one and a half year general education before architectural studies began whereas the UK and Europe go straight into architectural studies
- Note that there is no federal licensing, it is all by each state.

Derek Bradford:

- Part of the problem in the US is that NCARB doesn't license, it merely prepares dossiers and the licensing requirements may vary state by state.

Stephen Stenson:

- Thus the problem is that Europe doesn't know who to talk to.

James Fischer:

- There is a focus on anti-trust issues not on consistency and health and safety.

Sunand Prasad:

- Could the AIA take on licensing? This is the situation in Ireland and the RIBA is considering.

Derek Bradford:

- The states license all professions. It would be unlikely that they would make an exception for architects.

Cynthia Fischer:

- The states are very jealous of their rights. It is a historical issue in the United States.

George _____:

- Architects have lost status; they used to be the primary source of information which is now being done by others.
- A lot of Architects are not practicing Architecture. He spends 80% of his time doing construction oversight and 20% on design.

Debbie Bentley and Stephen Stenson:

- Licensing is an expensive proposition in the United States. Standard licensing is \$2,000 and licensing as "broadly experienced" is approximately \$4,500.00.

James Fischer:

- Licensing is not the end of the story. The issue is also how to manage the local problems and deliver good design within the obstacles that exist.

5) **REGIONAL REPORTS**

A) Cynthia Fischer summarized the report of Clive Copping who was unable to attend:

- RIBA – USA, Inc. was incorporated as a non-profit corporation in Pennsylvania in February 2007.
- By-Laws were also finalized last year.
- The application for exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code is pending with the IRS. Tax exemption will also allow donations to the organization to be tax deductible by the donor. The application was submitted to the IRS in January 2008.
- Two officers have been added to the Corporation: Cynthia G. Fischer from Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis LLP as Secretary and Anthony Okoye RIBA from WRT in Philadelphia as Treasurer.
- A bank account was opened in Philadelphia which has a current balance of \$11,000.
- AIA Philadelphia is opening a new center of Architecture in May 2008. They have agreed that this center will also be the home of RIBA USA. This is a very exciting time for RIBA – USA.
- It was noted for the record that Clive is due a tremendous vote of thanks for his work in setting up our RIBA USA as a Not-For-Profit Corporation and applying for the 501(c)(3) Tax Status. A copy of his report is attached to these minutes.

B) The California Chapter Report from Tim Clark is likewise attached to these minutes.

C) Discussion of Funding

Derek Bradford:

- So as to generate funds for activities the RIBA USA is asking members to pay a \$25.00 annual membership fee. He noted that there was a time when a small portion of our RIBA Membership Fees went back to the region.

Debbie Bentley:

- We will be part of the American Region (including Canada). Now that we have an organization we can present a budget to London.

Sunand Prasad:

- Lay this out for Chloe Sadler who will work with you.

Derek Bradford:

- How do we fund ourselves?

Response from member:

- RIBA collects money for services that are provided, such as organizing continuing education, presentations (CPE). For example, Build Boston provides the Boston Group with funding for their services.

Derek Bradford:

- We need to sort this out with London.

James Fischer:

- In New York RIBA always presents joint programs with the AIA International Committee.

D) Planning upcoming elections for RIBA USA Officers:

Derek Bradford:

- Noted that elections would be held in the near future for the RIBA USA Board and Officers.

Cynthia Fischer:

- Reminded the meeting that the bylaws provide that the Board itself elect a new board and officers, terms are to be staggered and one board member should come from each of the local US Chapters (New England, New York, Philadelphia, Midwest and California).

The meeting was adjourned.