

# BOLDER

## *ARCHITECTURE, PLLC*

### How to select an architect

As with most aspects of construction projects or similar, you should get 3 bids. You can get more, but 3 is a good minimum for getting a sense of the range of options. Also, each conversation you have with a professional about your project is an opportunity to get information and insight that may be helpful.

Find out your options by google searches and recommendations from friends who have had work done. You could call local building departments or builders or similar to ask if they have any useful input. Select your bidders by reviewing their websites and any other sources of information. Compare how well the websites give a sense of the architecture firm and its previous work. Are there client recommendations or projects shown that are similar to yours? Can you get a sense of the architect from a bio page? How large is the firm and who would you be working with? Since the graphic design and content of a website is a design exercise, it is to some extent a reflection of the architect's ability or aesthetic.

Meet with each architect at the site to describe the project as well as possible, in terms of scope of work, construction goals and budget, and any special considerations, such as time-frame or site limitations. Show any sketches, magazine clippings or internet links as appropriate to clarify the work envisioned.

The architect should present samples of work that assist the description of what the design process will be like. Assess how clearly the design process is described, and how clear the schematic design and construction document samples are. Drawing clarity and good communication skills are important for a smooth design and construction process.

Has the architect done similar projects? Is there any initial idea about or reaction to some aspect of the project? How long does the design process take typically? Does the architect work well with builders and building inspectors? Ask for client references and contact them.

There are several ways to set the fee for architectural services. A fixed fee seems the type with the most advantages for the client, but other pricing methods such as percentage of construction cost or hourly fees can be best depending on the project.

Typically you will be e-mailed a proposal within a few days that further defines the architectural services that will be provided, the schedule of the design process, and how payment will be made. In addition to cost, compare the clarity of this document with those of the other architects. If you want construction management services, for example, be sure that is included in the basic services or addressed in some way.

Again, as with selecting a builder, cost will be an important factor, along with speed and reliability. A sense of rapport and confidence is a critical basis for the relationship with a building professional because construction projects involve the realization of a creative vision and significant expense; having a pleasant design and construction process is a real value.

Hope this is helpful. Thank you, talk to you soon.

-Dave Toder, RA