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CSI Section Format Revisions

Last month's focus group meeting in Alexandria on changes to CSI Section Format reportedly went very well. Specifiers from around the country, the architectural publishing community, master specification systems from the US and Canada, even NASA held an effective working session with the committee making changes in real time. Expect an update probably available on-line at the CSI website in early October as the committee starts the application guide and moves onto proposed changes for Page Format. Questions or comments - David Lorenzini is the Chair of the CSI Focus Group, deloren@scip.com.

USPS Requires Larger Mailboxes

Buildings permitted after October 4, 2006 are required to comply with the new standard from the US Postal Service, USPS-STD-4C, which requires ganged mailboxes with stronger locks, a larger size mail box (for example, 12 inches wide by 15 inches deep by 3 inches high), and a parcel locker for each 10 units served. The grace period for the older type of mailbox has expired! Look to specs in Section 10550 on the ARCAT site for Auth-Florence and Postal Products Unlimited for specs updated to the new requirements. Note that under Standard 4C the local postmaster has the authority to allow for alternate means for delivering parcels in lieu of parcel lockers on a case by case basis (for example an residential high-rise with a concierge staff and secure storage area).

Streamlining Specs: PDF Deliverables

The traditional method for issuing a project spec includes receiving printed copies from each discipline, creating a table of contents, and sending one copy to the printer for duplication and distribution. In many architectural offices, the architectural specwriter or project architect prepares the architectural specifications, and the engineering consultants send Word or PDF files of their specs to save the expense of a courier or overnight shipping.

Frequently, the engineering files don't print correctly with the margins or the header/footer not matching the architectural spec, or printing half off the page. Worse, the schedule for printing is imminent and the specifier has no time to request replacement files and spends long hours fixing files. One really good way to streamline this process is to request PDF files only from the engineers. If they aren't right - send an email with the requested changes back to the engineer and remind them the printing deadline is imminent. Usually a corrected file will come back very quickly, saving the architectural specifier time.

Even better, assemble and email all the PDF files to the printer, as many copy shops prefer to receive files electronically. This is very typical for printing specs where the architect is not located in the same city as the location of the project. The local printer can distribute to the owner and contractor, saving the expense of shipping heavy

documents across the country overnight. One overnight shipping company estimates \$900 million is spent in shipping architectural and engineering drawings each year - ultimately costing owners and architect's budgets more than they expected.

Long Specs / Short Specs

We recently prepared specifications for three 7-story parking garages for three different clients - a public agency, a private computer company, and a private college. The spec for the public agency was 2,200 pages long; for the computer company 220 pages long; for the private college 22 pages long. The difference? For public bidding, the project manager has only the spec to enforce the contract among the low bidders; for private bidding with teams that have worked together before, negotiated contracts allow for more streamlined specifications; for design/build the spec needs only to communicate to the design and construction team sitting at the same table, joined under one contract.

To Do List for Your Project on Hold

Many projects don't run seamlessly from design through construction. It's not uncommon for a project to go 'on hold' for six months or more. Before putting the project to sleep, create a 'to do' list of outstanding issues. There's almost no chance you'll remember all the details after the project has been on hold for a long time, and new team members may join the project and have to start from scratch. Project meeting minutes won't solve the problem. Save yourself some time by creating a quick "To Do List" and store it with the project files. You could organize the list, but stream-of-consciousness writing works as well.

LEED Tips

It's definitely getting harder to achieve LEED Materials and Resources Credits 5.1 and 5.2 for regional materials. In LEED-NC Version 2.2, the first point is gained if 10 percent of the building materials are extracted, processed and manufactured regionally and the second point if 20 percent is achieved. For the full impact, review the USGBC reference guide, but summarizing: Start with the project construction cost and multiply by 0.45 to get the default value for the material cost in CSI Masterformat 1995 in Divisions 2 through 10. Take 10 percent of that cost and track the manufacturer and original source of materials specified in Division 2 through 10. If you want to predict this point prior to construction, you'll need a cost estimate which breaks out materials and labor and to work closely with the specification writer to track the allowable manufacturers. This may get easier over time as the building product community makes this information more readily available.

More Green Links You'll Like

Green Paints: www.greenseal.org/findaproduct/index.cfm (paints and coatings which have achieved GreenSeal certification - even hotels which pass GS-33 environmental standards)

California VOC Limits: SCAQMD Rule #1168 VOC limits for adhesives & sealants (South Coast Air Quality Management District) program
<http://www.aqmd.gov> Quality Management District program.

More California VOC Limits: BAAQMD Regulation 8, Rule 51 VOC limit's for sealants & sealant primers: Bay Area Air Quality Management District program, www.baaqmd.gov

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