



Roundtable Report

Prepared by Ken Baker

Location: Boise Idaho
Date: May 26, 2004
Attendees: 23
Facilitators: Sherry McKibben and Ken Baker

Summary

The round table was designed as a follow up to a March 9, 2004 meeting of Idaho A&Es and K-12 schools personnel. The purpose of the 1.5-hour session was to explore and discuss high performance design and process decisions made by the Nampa School District and the process they engaged with their design professionals as they looked to make changes to the current template for elementary and middle schools and developed the design of the new high school. The new University of Idaho Integrated Design Lab utilized resources of the BetterBricks advisor program and together they played an integral part of the process, providing high performance design and equipment recommendations to the design team.

The session was formatted to provide an open dialogue on the design team communication process and issues encountered in the effort to explore the viability and cost efficiency of high performance features. Panelists included Design West architect Jim Cole, Jim Otradosky of CSHQA, Steve Bastian of Elkhorn Engineering, electrical engineer Amy Dockter of CSHQA, Gerry Lachcik, Director of Facilities for Nampa School District, and Kevin Van Den Wymelenberg with the U of I Integrated Design Lab.

The audience consisted of a few members of the local architectural and engineer community, Idaho Power Company staff, Idaho Energy Division representatives, and various program representatives of the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance. A representative of the Oregon Office of Energy also attended.

Highlights from the Discussion

The integrated design process is valid and valuable! This was probably the most meaningful message that collectively emerged from the panel. The team communication process employed by the district in the design of three schools provided a novel and effective communication base for the design team that resulted in a real effort at assessment and several design enhancements. For example; 1) daylighting enhancements



will be made to the design of elementary schools; and, 2) a direct digital control system will be added to the project buildings as a result of this process.

As a follow up to the Energy Efficiency Measures developed by the Integrated Design Lab and BetterBricks advisors, Jim Cole with Design West presented a two-page cost sheet on daylighting and lighting enhancements that were assessed for inclusion into the elementary school design. Jim listed a cost per classroom for many upgrade features such as additional glazing for daylighting, lighting controls, and lighting fixture type.

Jim Otradosky, CSHQA, noted that current design practice for schools is rapidly changing to include more high performance features such as daylighting and new lighting technologies. CSHQA employs a team approach that brings electrical and mechanical engineers into the design process.

Steve Bastian, Elkhorn Engineering, relayed that his company implemented an extensive interview process with control companies in a search for the best value system for Nampa elementary schools. He felt it was a very effective method for communicating and meeting the client's needs and expressed that it was a valuable process in which to participate.

Other issues that surfaced include:

- School districts need to ask for additional bonding dollars up front. Pre bonding costs need to be determined, an indication that the integrated design process needs to begin earlier in the design process. An estimated \$5 per square foot will buy a lot of energy efficiency and high performance features. This is especially true with the elementary schools where the price per square foot has been engineered down over the years of prototype modification.
- The design process becomes frustrating to A&E's when they look into technologies that cannot be afforded. The process of getting to higher performing schools is definitely a learning experience.
- There is a need to change the attitudes of sub-contractors to get them more involved from a solution perspective. Getting contractors, construction managers and subs involved in the integrated design process would be helpful.
- School superintendents need to be educated/involved in order for the high performance process to move forward. The effort requires a superintendent champion that is willing to discuss HP benefits with peers.

Moving Forward

As always, the larger question is action steps need to be implemented in order to most effectively move this process forward. Three key strategies seem to emerge:



1. Educate the decision makers such as district superintendents and school boards of the complete cost/benefit picture so that there is support for adequate budgets to make high performance schools achievable.
2. Continue to provide technical assistance to districts to assist them in the implementation of the integrated design process, bringing together the full design team including A&Es, contractors, subs and other key stakeholders.
3. Market both potential and documented success and benefits of high performance schools to the community. Create a support base for bonds, etc.

Closing

The round table certainly reflected that this was a good process for the school district and their design team. Appreciation was expressed to Sue Seifert and the Rebuild Idaho team for providing a base for this process and to Better Bricks for their continued technical assistance.

Unfortunately, most of the local design community representatives did not attend this session, possibly because of a perception this was a Nampa School District program. Several participants at the March 9th meeting indicated they could not attend because it was too far to travel to Boise for a 1.5-hour session. It has been suggested that we provide a similar format for discussion in eastern and northern Idaho.