MASONRY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Masonry Advisory Council

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RAISING THE BAR FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

This is an exciting time in the masonry industry. Joel Arthur Barker writes in Paradigms, the Business of Discovering the Future, "Don't wait for the trends to develop. Instead, watch for people messing with the rules...that is the earliest sign of significant change."

The construction industry is definitely messing with the rules - every segment. New products. New processes. And a new look on masonry.

Are you ready for the paradigm shift to load-bearing masonry? Simple foundations provide the dual function of supporting uniform gravity loads while resisting lateral loads. With the price of steel spiraling, delayed availability and the threat of a potential iron-ore strike looming, count on load- bearing masonry to go up quickly and cost effectively with a myriad of additional benefits.

As more reinforced masonry is being designed, the industry responds with more efficient methods of grouting. Code changes include grout demonstration panels. Upcoming code changes include higher (12 ft.-8-in.) grout lifts. Research on selfconsolidating grout continues, and now extended-set grout emerges, a new product for efficiency and profitability. After 9/11, the American Society of Civil Engineers spent two years defining the Body of Knowledge to be taught for the 21st Century, prescribing a substantially greater depth and breadth of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

In neighboring Michigan,state-of-the-art facilities have been completed at both Ferris State University and Oakland Community College. At Ferris, the Granger Center for Construction Management is truly a structural observatory with a variety of masonry assemblies exposed as well as interfacing with other building systems demonstrating its versatility. The Fire Training Building at Oakland is part of a 15-building emergency services training complex, the first of its kind in the country. Built of masonry, it will ultimately survive up to 5,000 fires, extreme temperature differentials, voluminous water coverage, steam, condensation and abuse from firefighting equipment.

The story of the Three Little Pigs perhaps should be amended to include one more scenario, that of fire resistance, so everyone can learn at a very young age that masonry not only stands up to the big bad wolf huffing and puffing but also to fire. Fire kills more Americans than all natural disasters combined. When will we learn? After experiencing devastating fires, cities vow to reconstruct with noncombustible masonry. And yet, buildings continue to be constructed with less expensive alternatives that burn.

Signs of Significant Change

This building in Aurora was built in 2004 using partially reinforced 12" CMU in lieu of precast concrete panel construction. Masonry was chosen because the owner did not want to wait the inital 16 to 18 week lead time for the precast availability. J&E Duff, the mason contractor, suggested this faster, cost effective alternative.

New Berwyn Middle School

Architect: Green Associates, Inc. - Deerfield, IL
Mason Contractor :Piazza Masonry - Lockport,IL

The well insulated, well designed masonry cavity wall used on this new school will serve it's community for many decades to come.