

Whatcha Gonna Do?

The Situation

The junior class of Landscape Architecture University (LAU) performed a main street planning study for Shortville as part of the university's community service program.

The citizens of Shortville were so impressed with the students' work that the mayor, Polly T. Chin, went to Gedzit Boatwaze, the head of the undergraduate program and requested the students' assistance on the execution of the planning study. Boatwaze explained that the preparation of contract drawings was beyond the scope of the community service program because of health, safety, and welfare issues, and instead highly recommended the services of Bill & More (B&M), because of the firm's award-winning work in similar projects.

Normally, Chin would have used the normal request for proposal (RFP) process, but based on Boatwaze's recommendations, she began to negotiate with B&M, who knew of the referral from Boatwaze. Subsequently, at a meeting with B&M, Chin discovered that Boatwaze was a partner in the firm. Chin felt that Boatwaze should have been up front with her, and she broke off negotiations with B&M.

Whatcha Gonna Do?

Were the actions of Boatwaze and B&M appropriate? Did Boatwaze have a responsibility to disclose his relationship with B&M when he recommended their services? Did he have any special obligation as head of the undergraduate program? Would Boatwaze's referral have been appropriate had he revealed his relationship with B&M?



The Recommendation of the ASLA Ethics Committee

The ASLA Ethics Committee said that Gedzit Boatwaze should not have referred Polly T. Chin to B&M even if he revealed his role in the firm.

The committee found Gedzit Boatwaze in violation of ES1.2 and R1.203 of the ASLA Code and Guidelines for Professional Conduct.

ES1.2 states, "Members should seek to make full disclosure of relevant information to the clients, the public, and other interested parties who rely on their advice and professional work product."

R1.203 states, "Members shall make full disclosure to the client or employer of any financial or other interest which bears upon the service or project."

LAND BOX

The ASLA leadership is deeply grateful and extends hearty thanks to the dedicated staff that worked so hard to get us through this transition period.

President Janice C. Schach, FASLA

CORRECTION

The Michigan Chapter medallion awards were presented at the Edsel and Eleanor Ford House. This was not clearly stated in the article "Michigan ASLA Medallions Commemorate Landscape Designs of Jens Jensen," which appeared on page 5 in the June 2000 LAND.