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CONFESSIONS OF A HARD-HAT JUNKIE: REFLECTIONS ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF ANHEUSER-BUSCH HALL

MICHAEL M. GREENFIELD*

In September 1987 our newly installed dean, Dorsey D. Ellis, Jr., appointed a committee to investigate the need for additional space to house the School of Law. Thus began what turned out to be a ten-year project, culminating in the dedication of Anheuser-Busch Hall on September 27, 1997. The process actually had begun several years earlier, when in 1981 then-dean F. Hodge O'Neal appointed a committee to investigate the expansion of the law school building. Though Mudd Hall, the building then housing the School of Law, had been completed only a decade earlier, it already was too small to accommodate the school's operations: the student body had doubled in size, the library was running out of shelf space to accommodate an expanding collection, course scheduling was constricted by a scarcity of appropriate classrooms, there was no space for an expansion of faculty or administrative and support staff. In late 1983, with the assistance of an architectural consultant the committee recommended that the school aggressively pursue the expansion and renovation of Mudd Hall. Dean O'Neal concluded, however, that the estimated cost of the project made it virtually impossible, and the committee's recommendation died a quiet death.

The problems with Mudd Hall did not go away. Indeed, they grew much worse and increasingly interfered with the school's ability to accomplish its mission: by the early 1990s the library actually ran out of space for its expanding collection, and many volumes were stored at two off-site locations; secretarial offices and the *Law Quarterly* office were cannibalized to create space for additional faculty; offices of other student organizations were cannibalized to make room for administrative staff; the paucity of small classrooms led to the use of rooms in other buildings for law school classes. Against this developing background, Dean Ellis made the improvement of the physical plant a major priority.

In this essay I will describe the process by which the Washington University School of Law has come now to occupy Anheuser-Busch Hall. By doing so, I hope to provide some insight and assistance to those at other

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schools who face similar projects.

I. THE PROCESS

The building committee consisted of the dean, the business manager, four students, and five faculty (including the librarian and the associate dean). At its first meeting the committee decided to form subcommittees to investigate the needs for library space, student and instructional space, faculty space, and administrative and secretarial space.¹ Each subcommittee attempted to identify and articulate the space needs within its bailiwick. In every case this required an empirical study. For example, to determine the number and size of the various classrooms, one subcommittee obtained a list of the enrollment in each course offered during the four prior years, and created a grid showing the number of courses each year in six different size ranges. To determine the number of faculty offices, another subcommittee surveyed more than a dozen schools to determine the number of students per full-time-equivalent faculty at law schools with whom we wished to compete. In this way, each subcommittee identified the amount of each kind of space that the law school required in order to operate in an efficient and optimal fashion. The subcommittee reports were circulated to all committee members, revised by the committee, combined into a report, and distributed to the faculty in the spring of 1988 under the title *Space Needs of the Washington University School of Law*.² The faculty as a whole met in the summer to discuss this document, and the building committee continued to refine it through the 1988-89 academic year.

Meanwhile, Dean Ellis used this document to persuade the university's central administration of the law school's need. He succeeded, at least to the extent of obtaining the university's authorization for us to discuss the project with the architecture firm that served as the master planner for the entire campus.³ At this point it was unclear whether the expansion would be in the form of an entirely new building or an addition to the existing one. This discussion with the architects centered on the *Space Needs* document, which we revised in light of the projected budget and the anticipated construction costs; it culminated in sketches of an appropriately sized entirely new building.

1. A fifth subcommittee, consisting solely of a second-year student who before coming to law school had been employed by Honeywell Corp. as a consultant on mechanical systems, investigated why the heating and cooling system in Mudd Hall functioned so poorly.

2. Unpublished document on file with the *Washington University Law Quarterly*.

3. Kallman, McKinnell, & Wood, of Boston, Massachusetts.

In the fall of 1989 the project focus turned to selection of the appropriate site for new space. Five possibilities were identified. Two of them were immediately adjacent to the existing law building (and therefore would permit the project to consist of an addition to the existing building). Of the others, one was occupied by a public television station, whose lease was not to expire for several more years. A second proved to be too small. And the third, though large enough even for future expansions, was so remote from the center of campus that it raised security concerns and risked isolating the law school from those divisions of the university with whom the law faculty was becoming increasingly involved. In addition, further investigation revealed that there was a subterranean creek, the diversion of which would entail an additional expense of more than a million dollars. The faculty opted for one of the adjacent sites, and the dean undertook the effort of persuading the central administration to agree.

Just as it appeared that the central administration would recommend that the board of trustees approve our project, the unexpected happened, and delays resulted: the university appointed two new administrators. Each of these administrators had jurisdiction over parts of our proposal. And each had to be persuaded of our need. One, a vice chancellor in charge of construction and maintenance, had a plateful of decisions to make. Because our project was not the first to be digested, it took a long time to secure his approval. Whereas the dean and faculty were ready to go in the summer of 1989, final approval of the project did not occur until the fall of 1991, and final approval of the site did not occur until the following spring.

After approval of the site, the next step in the process was selection of an architect. We briefly considered conducting a formal competition, but we quickly abandoned that idea, for two reasons. First, Mudd Hall was the result of a competition, and although its arrangement of space was interesting and arguably functional, the designer's attention to the life of those who would occupy the building was sorely inadequate: the raw concrete finish on both exterior and interior was brutal; and the classrooms were of grossly poor design for teaching by means of interactive dialog. In other words, the law school community—perhaps irrationally—did not want to risk being saddled with the results of a competition in which the law school community did not have the power to select the winner. Secondly, and more rationally, the school wanted to have a substantial voice in an interactive design process for the building. One of the features of a formal competition is that the owner is basically committed to using the design that wins the competition. We were not willing to make that commitment.

Consequently, the university issued a request for qualifications to more than two dozen architectural firms located throughout the country. An

advisory committee of central administration and law school representatives narrowed the list of firms to ten, then to five, and invited the five to develop specific design proposals based on the detailed statement of needs that the building committee had articulated in the *Space Needs* document. To avoid any hint of a formal competition, the invitation made it clear that we would not feel bound to the specific design of the firm that was selected. Each firm was given a \$15,000 stipend to defray the out-of-pocket costs and to provide an incentive to take the invitation even more seriously than it otherwise would. The law school members of the selection team placed a high value on the various firms' experience in designing law schools, and on the firms' records of integrating new construction into an already well-defined architectural environment. Because of our totally unpleasant experience living in the "award-winning" Mudd Hall, we were not interested in hiring architects who wanted to make a dramatic architectural statement. Our project, in other words, was not to be the site of their paradigm-shifting sculpture.

The presentations of all five finalists were impressive. Several appeared to have spent an amount equal to the entire stipend just on building models of the proposed structure. In the end, however, the advisory committee was more taken by the presentation of the firm that did not build a model at all. That firm's record of seamlessly blending newly designed structures into the existing environment,⁴ coupled with its experience in designing law school buildings,⁵ led the law school members to recommend unanimously the selection of Hartman-Cox Architects, of Washington, D.C., as the architects for our new building. The chancellor agreed, but then it still took three months for the university and the firm to negotiate and sign a contract.

During the selection process I learned the true meaning of the expression, "who you date ain't who you marry." The presentation to the advisory committee was led by Warren J. Cox, a principal of the firm and the partner in charge of the Georgetown University Law Center's law library and Tulane Law School projects. Hartman-Cox's proposal listed Cox as the partner in charge of our project, and it listed as the assistant partner in charge a member of the firm who had worked on the Georgetown and Tulane projects. Only one other person was mentioned in the proposal; Lee Becker was to be the "project architect." Perhaps naively, I inferred this to mean that the two

4. For example, McIntire School of Commerce, University of Virginia; Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C.; John Carter Brown Library, Brown University; Sumner School Complex, 17th and M Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C.

5. Georgetown University Law Center law library, Tulane University Law School, University of Connecticut Law School library.

partners would play the primary role in designing our building and would be the persons with whom we would have primary contact. In fact, our contact was exclusively with Lee Becker. To me, one lesson of this experience is the necessity of probing carefully to ascertain the precise roles of the project participants and the extent of the involvement of all persons mentioned in a proposal.⁶ I suspect that it is not always easy, because the partner in charge of the dog-and-pony show will be reluctant to reveal, if it be true, that he or she will be only indirectly involved with the project and the project owner. In checking references of the firms under consideration, one probably should ascertain which member of the firm had primary contact with the other institution.⁷

After the selection of Hartman-Cox, I was initially disappointed to learn that we would not be dealing directly with the persons who had the most experience in designing law school structures. As it turned out, however, we were very fortunate. Lee Becker proved to be extremely capable—as his association with that outstanding firm would suggest—and, even better, extremely easy to work with. He listened well and was flexible, responding to our requests and to our reasons for occasionally rejecting his initial ideas.⁸ Before long, we had developed an excellent working relationship and communicated well and easily.⁹ In retrospect, I could not have asked for anything more. Thus, another lesson of the selection process is captured by the proverb, “Be careful of what you wish for.”¹⁰ I am convinced that the school would not have had as successful an interactive experience in the design of our building had we been working with one of the other members of the firm.

6. *But see infra* note 10.

7. I assumed that Warren Cox had done the majority of the work on the two earlier projects that we associated with the firm, and that he would be doing the majority of the work on ours as well. I later learned that I was wrong on both counts. I was told that the work on the earlier projects, which so impressed us, was done by other members of the firm.

8. An early example of this was the design of the north facade of our building. Most buildings on our campus ring the perimeter of the campus, and their main entrances open to the center of the campus. This is true of our former and new buildings, too. But most of the parking for both occupants of the building and occasional visitors is on the perimeter. The sole north-side entrance to Mudd Hall is primarily a service entrance, but it was more heavily used than the main, south-side entrance. We anticipated that the same would be true of our new building. Hence, we emphasized the need for an attractive, inviting entrance on the north. It took several conversations before Lee Becker understood what we sought. Thereafter, it took much less communication for us to understand what we each were trying to accomplish.

9. So much so that a friendship developed, and several times he joined my wife and me at home for dinner. As evidence of his flexibility, he even learned to tolerate our brand of cheap Scotch.

10. *See supra* text accompanying note 6.

The next stage in the project was programming, the process of articulating exactly how much space is needed for each function of the school, and how each space is to relate to other spaces. This process took more than six months, until mid-summer 1993. Many, perhaps most, architectural firms perform this function in-house. Hartman-Cox does not. Instead, at its expense, the firm hired a professional programmer,¹¹ who conducted interviews with every member of the faculty, staff, and administration, as well as with every student group, and with representatives of each class of students. Through this process, the programmer created a 157-page document describing the size of each space that we desired in the building, the number of occupants, the functions performed there, the furnishings and equipment in it, the technological needs of the space, and the desired physical relationship between the space and other spaces.¹² For each space, we had to decide whether we wanted the budget model, the mid-line model, or the top of the line. For most spaces we specified the middle level. For some space, such as the ceremonial moot court room, the state-of-the-art trial court room, and the student and faculty commons, we opted for the high end.¹³ I asked the occupants of each space to review the draft to ensure that the program statement would accurately describe our needs. As a result of the programming process, every employee of the school had a say in the size and configuration of the new building.

Simultaneous with development of the program statement, the architect began developing the design of the building. Our preliminary planning had suggested the approximate size, and the evolving program statement tended to confirm that size. In addition, Lee Becker's marching orders were to design the exterior in the collegiate gothic style, using red granite and limestone, to blend in with the older buildings on campus.¹⁴ Consequently, he was able to begin the design process before completion of the program statement.

The design process went through two distinct phases, culminating in putting the job out to bid late in the summer of 1994. The first phase was

11. Walter J. Moleski, of Environmental Resources Group, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

12. See *Architectural Program*, Washington University in St. Louis School of Law (unpublished document on file with the *Washington University Law Quarterly*).

13. These decisions impacted both the size and the level of finish of the spaces.

14. Construction of the campus had begun approximately one hundred years earlier, and the first dozen buildings employed a consistent design, drawing on the great English universities. This continued until the middle of the century, when the design became more modern. The starkest example of this shift is Mudd Hall, the law school's former home. Though some have reveled in its design, for most members of the university community, Mudd Hall was an acute embarrassment. In the mid-1980s the University decided to return to the older style, and the buildings built between 1985 and 1998 have been increasingly faithful to the campus' original architecture.

“schematic design,” during which we determined the lines of the exterior and the layout of the interior spaces. The second phase was “design development,” during which the architect took the drawings to a level of detail that would enable contractors to bid on the project. Simultaneously, Lee Becker supervised preparation of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing drawings, and prepared the package of specifications for the project. These documents, running in excess of one thousand pages, detailed all of the items to be used in the project, from the slate to be used on the roof and the floors, to the lath and plaster of the walls,¹⁵ the dimensions and features of the student lockers, and the hardware on the doors.¹⁶

During this phase communication was extensive and critical. For the building to look and function the way the school wants it to, innumerable details must be addressed. If the school lets the architect make all the decisions, the school may be dissatisfied with the final product. Alternatively, the school may ask for changes during the construction phase, but this entails increased cost. It is far preferable to invest the time during the design phase. Thus our building committee carefully examined each iteration of the drawings,¹⁷ and I also reviewed the specifications.¹⁸ As the architect focused on overall design and architectural details, the committee focused as well on details that would allow the building to satisfy the school’s long-term needs. For example, we visited several local businesses to test out their auditorium seats,¹⁹ and we asked several manufacturers of fixed classroom seating to provide us with mock-ups of their products.²⁰

The committee communicated repeatedly with the faculty and the staff. As each new set of drawings arrived, one copy was mounted on the walls of a common room, for review by all. In addition, at major milestones in the process, the faculty met as a whole to review the progress and the design. After the initial design decisions were fixed, this process produced little

15. The traditional technique, which consists of a backing of wood strips to which the plaster is applied, has been replaced by use of a backing that consists of wire mesh attached to the wall studs. I did not learn this via the Socratic method, but rather in response to my question, “Huh?”

16. Including hinges, door handles, locks, etc.

17. For example, we reviewed the floor plans to ensure that any apparently dead space behind walls was converted into storage space. This review has resulted in closets in unlikely places, which I suspect will prove quite useful over the long term.

18. Much of the material in the specifications was beyond my competence. There were, however, specifications that changed as a result of my review, e.g., the kinds of locking mechanisms on many of the doors. On the other hand, other matters slipped by, e.g., adjustable thermostats that are readily adjustable only by persons with pinkies the size of a pencil. A lesson from the Show-me State: get a manufacturer’s sample of everything you can before it is installed.

19. For 52 minutes, of course.

20. We made these mock-ups available for students to try out and asked them to register their preferences. Ultimately, we decided not to have fixed seating at all.

feedback from members of the faculty or staff who were not on the building committee. But no one could complain about being left in the dark or about being surprised by the design. Extensive communication is critical.

Site preparation, which entailed the relocation of a road, demolition of three fraternity houses, extensive excavation, and relocation of utility lines, began in the summer of 1994. The formal ground breaking was January 17, 1995. The university had authorized a project in which \$25 million was available for construction. The projected construction cost for a building of the size we needed, however, was approximately \$32 million. Therefore, the project was divided into two phases. Phase I was construction of the entire exterior of the building and completion of approximately half the interior, primarily the classrooms and student spaces. Phase II, which would occur when the law school raised the rest of the money, consisted of completing the other half of the interior, primarily the library and faculty spaces. In the interim, the school would continue to use Mudd Hall, and there would be a temporary connection constructed between the two buildings.²¹ Fortunately, Dean Ellis was so successful in raising funds for the project that in April 1995, the University authorized the completion of the entire building at one time.²²

During the construction phase, the building committee remained active but turned its attention to matters that had been sidelined earlier. One was refinement of the technological needs of the court rooms, which we had deferred in order to take advantage of rapidly developing technology.

21. I was very concerned that we would never be able to escape Mudd Hall altogether, and I repeatedly insisted that the connection between the two buildings be temporary and be removed upon completion of Phase II. The University, on the other hand, had campus-wide interest in enabling movement from one building to another without the need to go outside. Given the arrangement of space in the new building, the only appropriate connection to Mudd would adjoin the law school's library, which had to be a secure space to prevent loss of library materials. After completion of Phase II, however, Mudd would not be a secure space, and it would be inappropriate for the general university population to move freely back and forth between the two buildings. I objected that upon completion of Phase II the connection could never be used. Evidently I had overstated my case to an architect and construction manager who had different marching orders from the central administration. One day I walked into the construction trailer for a meeting only to see a drawing pinned to the wall showing the passage between the two buildings, labeled "Greenfield Connection."

22. The construction schedule originally called for completion in October 1996. When Phase II became part of the project, the schedule was extended only two months, to permit occupancy for the spring semester of the 1996-97 academic year. Through extraordinary planning and coordination, the construction manager (McCarthy Co.) achieved substantial completion on time. Indeed, from the very beginning, McCarthy's contributions were superb. The can-do attitude of the individuals in charge of our project and their ability to get persons of diverse interests and personality-types to work together greatly facilitated successful completion of our project. The lesson here is to pick your project manager or general contractor based on reputation as well as price. In a mandatory low-bid environment (unlike our non-governmental project), it may be wise to hire a project manager to oversee the entire project.

Another was the selection of interior furnishings. We started the furniture selection process more than a year before the scheduled occupancy, again interviewing every employee and student group to ascertain their needs. Notwithstanding this long lead time, much of the furniture did not arrive until several months after we had moved in.²³

As a committee, there was little to do with respect to the construction process. As the chair, however, I remained quite active. The construction manager scheduled weekly meetings with all the tradespeople who were on the job that week, and I attended those meetings. No matter how good the architectural drawings may be, questions arise during the course of construction. These questions often were raised at the weekly meetings, and it was very helpful to have a law school representative present. Once the interior work began in earnest, about half-way through the construction, the weekly meetings became almost daily visits to the site to review the progress. In addition, there were daily visits to the construction trailer to answer questions about details of construction. As a result of these interactions, I developed increased respect and affection for the foremen of the respective subcontractors and their workers. They in turn seemed increasingly willing to accommodate my not-so-occasional requests for modifications, and also seemed to feel that our project was more than just another job.²⁴

The law school constituents remained very interested in the progress of the project, and many wanted to tour the work-in-progress. Dean Ellis took many alumni and potential benefactors through the building, and he conducted periodic tours for faculty and staff. During the last four months of construction, the Associate Dean for Students conducted weekly tours for groups of students. One of the last tasks was the faculty's selection of offices. After considerable discussion of the criteria for determining the order of selection, the dean adopted the criteria and announced the order.²⁵ There were approximately forty people making selections, and we thought that each should have a reasonable time for pondering after his or her predecessor had selected an office. We anticipated that the selection process might last more

23. In part, this resulted from an intentional decision to delay selection of furniture until after faculty members had selected their offices. We postponed office selection until the office walls were in place so that faculty members could better gauge the dimensions and feel of each space.

24. Several months before the end of the project, my wife and I threw a party at the construction site for the foremen of the principle subcontractors. They each disappeared, early in the evening, to show their spouses through the nearly completed structure. We later learned that it is rare for the workers (as opposed to the owners of the subcontractors) to have the opportunity to show off their work in a hard-hat restricted area to their spouses.

25. Not surprisingly, the faculty discussion concerning the order of selection was more extensive and lively than was the discussion of any other building-related matter during the entire 10-year process.

than a week. In fact, most people had identified several desirable choices before their turns came, and few required any additional time to ponder. The process was completed in fewer than three days. Three months later we occupied Anheuser-Busch Hall, and second-semester classes began as scheduled in the new building.

II. LESSONS I HAVE LEARNED

1. Esthetics may be as important as functionality. A building is the home of each of the school's constituents. Students, faculty, and staff, like a family, live there five-to-seven days per week. The building must meet their needs for an efficient work environment and also must meet their needs for decompression time. Alumni, like favorite relatives, come to visit from time to time. They must be made to feel good about returning to their institution. The contrast between the attitude of alumni toward Mudd Hall and their attitude toward the new building is dramatic. Apart from their appreciation of the new structure, the most salient expression of alumni has been bitterness at what they had to endure when they were in school. Mudd Hall was first occupied in 1972, and everyone whose law school career was spent there was in a relatively new building. New as it may have been, from the outset Mudd Hall engendered very bad feelings about the law school experience. This sentiment reveals the importance of having a structure that is both functional and esthetically pleasing to the vast majority of its occupants. We have gone from occupying a building that is the laughing stock of the campus to occupying (one of) the most admired. We immediately saw a difference in the attitude of our alumni and in our ability to recruit students; we anticipate that the esthetics of the building will help us recruit faculty, too.

2. Expect surprises. We encountered several unexpected developments. One, described above, was the existence of a subterranean creek running across a projected site for the building. Fortunately, that surprise occurred before we were committed to the site, and we were able to change our course at no additional expense. This was not the case with respect to our other major surprise. Part of the site preparation at our ultimately selected location was the relocation of a tunnel containing the utility lines that serve all the buildings on campus. The amount the university budgeted for this work amounted to only one-half of the actual cost, a difference of several hundred thousand dollars. I never did understand the reasons for this error, but we had to live with the consequences. Fortunately, because this occurred at the outset of the project, we were able to adjust other parts of the project without

blowing the overall budget.²⁶

To minimize the number and significance of the surprises, the importance of careful planning and scrupulous accounting is apparent. The inaccuracies in university's system became apparent only at the very end. We emphasized the importance of bringing the project in on budget, and the capital projects manager used a spreadsheet that broke the project down into approximately fifty categories, tracking each category on a monthly basis. For each category we kept an eye on the budgeted amount for the category, the amount spent to date, and the amount that still remained to be done. To the extent that the total for a category exceeded the budgeted amount for that category, we made certain that other categories remained at least that much under the budgeted amount. The system seemed to work fine until the last few months, when it became apparent that the capital projects manager had failed to track the expenditures accurately. The need for careful and accurate accounting cannot be overstated.

3. Flexibility is essential. From our first committee meeting to the dedication of the building, ten years elapsed. Over that long a time, needs and perceptions of needs will change. Even over the much shorter period from completion of the formal program statement to occupancy of the building—three and one-half years—our perception of our needs changed. Our average class size dropped to such an extent that we revised the architectural drawings to make a 90-person classroom into two 45-person rooms. Even later in the process, after the walls had been erected, enlargement of the breakout sessions in our practical skills courses from eight to twelve students led us to reconfigure three rooms being built for this purpose into two somewhat larger rooms.

On the other hand, inflexibility also is essential. If certain features are important, be prepared to resist pressure to abandon them. For example, for purposes of conservation and efficiency, the university and the engineers wanted a building with fixed windows and groups of offices on a single thermostat. We, on the other hand, wanted faculty and staff to have maximum control over their immediate environment. We had to be very assertive to ensure that the building did in fact have windows that open and a thermostat in every office.

If at times it is important to be inflexible, at other times self-restraint is the order of the day. Changes that occur during the construction phase of a

26. There were other surprises. Although we had drilled test holes to determine subsurface conditions, these test holes failed to reveal the true extent to which we would have to excavate rock rather than dirt. Still another surprise was the severing of a water line that lay outside the utility tunnel and was not shown on any of the university's drawings.

project can be quite expensive. The contractor may be tempted to overcharge, especially if the project is not as profitable as the contractor had contemplated at the outset. Even if there is no overcharging, change orders occur in a non-competitive bid setting, and the contractor has less incentive to make the change as inexpensively as possible. There is a fine line between meeting the needs of the school and blowing the budget. And the people who may be advocating most vigorously for change may not have a sense of the project's flow of funds. The task may fall to the committee chair or the university administrator in charge to "just say no" to proposed changes.

4. Communication with each constituency is critical for several reasons, the most significant of which is that communication produces good ideas. Students, faculty, and staff who are not on the committee or who are not involved in planning a new building nevertheless may have valuable insight into features that will help the community function well. Some of these suggestions may not be adopted because they are not feasible given the choices that need to be made (a suggestion that we have a day care facility for the children of students and staff springs to mind). Others, however, may be very feasible and might not have been thought of by members of the committee (for example, a suggestion that we have wireless microphone capability in the classrooms).

Communication is also important for political and social reasons. A building project may well be the school's largest undertaking in a decade or more. Communication helps all members of the community feel that they are a part of it. That feeling is significant if the faculty are to be a cohesive unit engaged in a common enterprise. To the extent faculty and staff are excluded from the project, the more alienated they may feel from the common enterprise. At the outset of the project, when colleagues expressed eager anticipation about having a new facility, I often stated that when the building was done, I would move on to another school, so that I would not be around to hear the inevitable complaints about what was not done or was not done properly. I was only half joking. I am pleased to say today that although the building is not perfect, I have not heard those complaints from my colleagues. I believe the reason is largely that the committee attempted to keep them in the loop during the entire process and solicited their comments and advice at every step of the way.

5. Sweat the little things. It is impossible to pay too much attention to apparently minor details. Little touches can make a difference in how well the facility functions. Examples abound. By building a bench in the oversized, handicap stalls in the bathrooms, we were able to create a changing area for students who do not want to wear interview clothing all day when they have a single thirty-minute interview. By specifying a

gooseneck faucet instead of a standard faucet, we were able to make it easy for the occupants of an office to fill a coffee pot or a watering can for their plants. By specifying that the hardware for office doors have a button on the front edge, we enabled each occupant to decide for himself or herself which was more important: the security of having the door lock each time the door closes or the convenience of being able to enter the office without using a key during the course of the day. These decisions, and innumerable others, make a building more habitable. Many of these decisions get made early in the planning process. Others are made late, some quite late. Because it is not worth convening a committee to decide, for example, if a faucet should have a goose neck spigot, much of the latter-stage decisions wind up being made by the person who deals with the contractor. Before turning management of the project over to the university facilities staff, the law school should decide whether it wants these decisions made by a member of the law school community or by someone who has no real stake in how well the building functions for its long-term occupants. No doubt my bias is showing. But all of these decisions get made only because someone perceived the need for a decision in the course of reviewing the drawings or the work-in-progress and thinking about the details. Management of the project is very time consuming, from the beginning to the end, but especially during the last half of construction. I confess generally to being a micromanager and control freak. Increasingly, I was drawn into the task. And increasingly, I enjoyed it. I wanted to review every detail, from the earliest drawings to the final appearance of the finished product. Even if a law school's representative does not suffer these characteristics, management of a major construction project is an absorbing activity. The school's representative—be it faculty member or administrator—must embrace the task and must be given the time to devote to it.²⁷

6. If married, the chair of the building committee needs an extraordinarily understanding spouse. My wife's true colors came out during the months when the dining room table was covered with blueprints that smelled like cat urine and when, upon our return from a two-week European vacation, I insisted on walking every inch of our five-story construction site before going home to unpack. From the evenings and weekends that I devoted to the

27. Fortunately, on our 24-month construction period, I had no classroom responsibilities during months 13 to 20. The purpose for this time away from teaching was to work on scholarship, but most of the time was sucked up by management of the building project, and very little scholarly work occurred. Any dean contemplating a building project should anticipate the time demands on the school's representative and arrange for that person to have available the time necessary for overseeing the project during this period. This is vital, as many questions arise that need prompt answers.

project to the innumerable times I dragged her, high heels and all, through the hard-hat zone to show the latest progress, her encouragement and support was constant.²⁸

28. Thank you, Dear.