

## Record Drawings, As-Builts, Measured Drawings

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### Summary

Architects should arrange with their clients prior to executing contracts as to requirements for record drawings. Record drawings should not be mistaken for as-built drawings nor for measured drawings.

### Background

The terms record drawings, as-built drawings and measured drawings are often confused.

- **As-built drawings** are those prepared by the contractor as it constructs the project and upon which it documents the actual locations of the building components and changes to the original contract documents. These, or a copy of same, are typically turned over to the architect or client at the completion of the project.
- **Record drawings** are those drawings prepared by the architect when contracted to do so. These are usually a composite of the original drawings, changes known to the architect and information taken from the contractor's as-built drawings.
- **Measured drawings** is the term recognized in the industry to describe the drawings prepared from on-site measurements of an existing building or space. It can be for a building to which additions or alterations will be made or for spaces which are intended for lease, and from which drawings the areas for lease purposes will be calculated.

It is prudent to determine whether the client requires the architect to generate the record drawings, how many copies will be required as well as the format, prior to finalizing the client/architect contract rather than leaving it for discussion at the end of the project. It is not unusual for clients to expect record drawings in electronic format.

The record drawings may be required by the client for a variety of uses, and it is recommended that the architect establish the extent of detail required by the client and prepare the contract accordingly.

Some clients may need a greater degree of accuracy in some parts of the drawings than in others. As well, verification of specific portions of the work that were changed from the original drawings may be critical to some clients.

Other uses for record drawings include background for furniture layout, facility management, historical record, and as reference for future additions and alterations.

The architect's fees should be structured to accommodate this service. A per diem rate is one equitable arrangement which recognizes that the extent of this service is indeterminate at the outset of the project.

Prudent architects will explain to clients and include in their contracts, provisions in regard to a client's use of record drawings, the copyright of the architect and the waiver in regard to the reliance on the contractor's as-built drawings.

Architects who are not engaged for general review services for both code and non-code related work are not in a position to be aware of changes during construction and, accordingly, should not prepare record drawings.

It is important that the architect not represent that the record drawings are claiming to be the way that the building was in fact constructed. The following sample statement placed on the record drawings illustrates this principle:

"The issuance of this record drawing is a representation by the architect that the construction, enlargement or alteration of the building is in general, as opposed to precise, conformity with the design prepared and provided by the architect, but is not a representation that the construction, enlargement or alteration of the building is in conformity with a design that has been prepared or provided by others."

It is recommended that a clear statement be made prominently on the record drawing disclaiming accuracy and completeness of information transferred from the contractor's as-built drawings. The following statement is recommended for this use:

"The revisions to these contract documents, reflecting the significant changes in the work made during construction, are based on data furnished by the contractor to the architect. The architect shall not be held responsible for the accuracy or completeness of the information provided by the contractor."

In some instances, the client may require the record drawings to incorporate all changes made via addenda and change orders. This can be extensive and prudence dictates that the client and architect should discuss and agree prior to execution of the contract whether or not this service will be required. Fees should be adjusted relative to the extent of service required.

## **Suggested Procedure**

If you are not engaged to provide general review services for both code and non-code related work, advise your client that you are not in a position to prepare record drawings since you will not be aware of all changes during construction.

If you are engaged for general review, discuss with your client at the outset of the project whether or not your client will require record drawings, the format required, the extent of detail and degree of accuracy in specific areas if required and whether these will include:

- transference of information from the contractor's as-built drawings;
- incorporation of known site variants not shown on as-built drawings;
- incorporation of addenda into the originals;
- incorporation of change orders into the originals; and
- incorporation of site instructions into the originals.

Establish whether as-builts to be prepared by contractor will be in hard copy or electronic format prior to the bidding phase. Include reference to the required as-built medium in the bid documents to avoid disputes and claims for extras.

If you are engaged to prepare record drawings, arrange with your engineers and other consultants to have them prepare record drawings for their respective documents in the same format, content and quality as you will be providing for your client.

Ensure that your fees are appropriately accommodated and set out the service and fee arrangement in your contract with your client.

Add the appropriate statements to the drawings to avoid misunderstanding of the purpose and intent of the record drawings.

It is recommended that architects remove their professional seal to help avoid the possibility that the drawings may be misused, e.g. as part of an application for a building permit without the architect's permission.

## References

Canadian Handbook of Practice for Architects (CHOP)

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