



BUILDING BLOCKS

Mills Group Newsletter

In This Issue..

- [The Kump House](#)
- [Main Street Morgantown](#)
- [How to work with and hire an architect](#)
- [Intern Profile](#)

Quick Links

- [The Mills Group Website](#)
- [The Firm and Staff Profile](#)
- [Newsletter Archives](#)
- [Other Projects](#)
- [Lorna Vincent Venter](#)

Welcome to another issue of Building Blocks and our connection to you on the news and events of the Mills Group. We are finding the schedule for the summer with many new home projects, downtown revitalization projects, and construction starting on the continued restoration of the Metropolitan Theater in Morgantown, WV keeping the whole staff very busy.

You will find this issue sharing with you a project profile of the Kump House, notice of an award we recently received, an article from a presentation given at WVU and an update on our summer internship .

We look forward to your comments and input with our newsletter.

Michael J. Mills

PROJECT PROFILE

The Kump House- Elkins, WV

Mills Group, LLC was recently contracted by the Randolph County Historic Landmarks Commission to prepare Historic Structures Report and Adaptive Reuse Plan for the Kump House in Elkins, West Virginia. The purpose of the study is to assess the building condition, review functional and programmatic requirements, present concept plans, and to establish a preliminary cost budget for the scope of work.

A Brief History...

In a type-written letter dated 2 May 1923, future WV Governor and recent Elkins Mayor H.G. Kump explained to his brother Kerr:

"The stern facts which confront me are these: Our house is too small for the family. It is imperative to have more space. If the children are to enjoy a new home I must build it now although it will cramp me terribly to do so and I do not believe it can be done under \$35,000.00 and the costs will probably reach \$40,000.00".

Less than a month earlier on 17 April H.G had written Kerr, "Mr. Harding, the architect, was here from Washington a few days ago and we went over the house question with him and I suppose we are about to start into a big undertaking."

The 'big undertaking' was 2½-story, 42-foot square Neo-Federal Revival house situated in what was then a suburban corner of Elkins at the junction of two roads.

Kump's choice for a designer was Clarence L. Harding, a Washington, D.C. architect with a Martinsburg office who had established a solid reputation in West Virginia.

By July 1923, Kump was seeking contractors to build a "...residence at Elkins about 42 x 42, three full stories and basement complete. We expect this to be a brick structure finished in hardwood."

The lead contractor of the Kump House was one T.R. Whiteman. Whiteman is remembered as the city's premier builder. The National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Elkins Downtown Historic District included Whiteman as a significant factor for making the case under Criterion C.

All things considered, the Kump House cost between \$40,000 and \$50,000. H.G. Kump's earliest estimate figured the building might run up to \$40,000. In November 1924, Kump wrote to the Conservative Life Insurance Company of Wheeling seeking a loan of \$10,000 to finish the building, the costs of which were now estimated at about \$50,000. While the terms under which Conservative would lend did not suit Kump, the Drivers and Mechanics National Bank of Baltimore released \$5,000 to him IN June 1925 on the security of 100 stock shares in ventures as diverse as the Citizen's National Bank of Elkins and the Three Forks Lumber Company.

A New Life...

The Mills Group is excited to have the opportunity to work with the Kump House Trust, lead by Director Heather Biola, and the project stake holder to breathe new life into the building. We have much work ahead of us and must to discover but can see the full potential just waiting to be discovered.

2008 Main Street Morgantown's New Professional Business of the Year...

The Mills Group was honored with this award at the Main Street Morgantown Annual Meeting held at the Hotel Morgan on May 20, 2009.

How to work with and hire an architect...

(This is an article derived from a presentation given to a WVU School of Dentistry-Practice Management Seminar on May 22, 2009)

For many folks that do not know where to even begin with a building project it is first important to understand how to hire and work with an architect. What is an architect? By definition an architect: 1) A person who is responsible for inventing or realizing a particular idea or project, 2) A person who is involved in the planning, designing, and oversight of a building's construction, 3) A person who drafts a plan of your house, and plans a draft of your money. I would further and state the following defines an architect: 1) Professional and advocate that guides you through the design and construction process. 2) Licensed by the state to practice architecture having worked for a minimum of 3 years and having passed a series of exams thus allowing only licensed professionals having the ability to legally call themselves architects. 3) Specially educated and trained to provide clients designs for all aspects of the places in which people work and live. Above all as a licensed professional, an architect has the primary obligation to protect health, safety and welfare of the public.

An architect can help to fulfill the following roles: Creative Problem Solver on all phases of a project, Coordinator that oversees the work of the contractor and orchestrates technical and aesthetic aspects of the project, Budget Manager that helps to establish a budget and work to keep the project on budget. A Scheduler that coordinates key project elements for the client, a Mediator that works with consultants, contractors, and clients. Often the hardest step in the process is making the selection of your architect. The American Institute of Architects recommends the following four steps in the selection process that can make all the difference in creating a successful partnership.

Step 1 Make a list of potential firms and solicit information from them. Colleagues and acquaintances who have worked with architects are excellent resources, as is your local chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Contact those architects or firms and ask for information, qualifications and references. If you are ready to ask the architect for a preliminary proposal, send a written description of your project to help them in the process. Find out how the architect charges for services and ask about additional expenses that could occur as the project moves ahead.

Step 2 Evaluate your finalists. Consider your candidates' track record in general, as well as their direct experience with projects similar to your own. Determine who can best complete the project within your timeframe and budget. If possible, visit a few projects designed by your finalists. There's nothing like looking at the actual work of a candidate to decide whether you are a match.

Step 3 Interview two or three final contenders for the job. See whether your personalities mesh, as well as your concepts for the project. Clarify the proposed schedule, fee structure and areas of responsibility.

Step 4 At this point, you will probably have a good idea who is your leading candidate. To double-check your instincts, make a checklist. Look at relevant experience, technical competence, budget considerations and time frame. Finally, review the interview in your mind. Did the architect really listen to what you were saying? Did she ask the right questions? Did she offer reasonable solutions? Above all, did you feel comfortable?

It is important to understand that the range of an architect's experience can vary from dog houses to national monuments and from state capitols to museums. The process for effective project delivery is very consistent and is summarized below.

- 1.0 Programming the Project
 - Explaining your needs/Wish list
 - Discussing your budget
 - Tour of the site or building
 - Building code/Zoning envelope review
- 2.0 Schematic Design
 - Site Analysis
 - Measure existing conditions if renovation or addition
 - Rough sketches of design options
- 3.0 Design Development
 - Study models
 - Finalize proposed design
 - Consider finishes and materials to be used
- 4.0 Construction Documents
 - Working drawings
 - Specifications
- 5.0 Hiring the Contractor
 - Contractor list 3-4
 - Contractor walk-through/orientation/site viewing
 - Bids on the construction documents
 - Owner and Architect bid proposal review
 - Check references-visit other projects with architect.
 - Owner and Architect Construction Contract review
- 6.0 Construction Phase
 - Construction Begins
 - Owner's, architect's and contractor's role
 - Owners move in (everyone is tired but happy - drink wine)

Summer Internship at the Mills Group....

Matthew Riffle

A graduate from Fairmont State University with his Bachelor of Science in Architecture says "My experiences at Fairmont State University and Mills Group have increased my passion for architecture and design. I will be pursuing my Masters in Architecture at the University of Cincinnati this upcoming semester. The intent of my graduate coursework will be researching phenomenology of space. I am most interested in how perspective and light can be controlled to mold the experience of place. I know the experience and knowledge I have gained will facilitate my pursuit at the University of Cincinnati.

Ashley Shaver

A senior at Fairmont State University in the fall who is pursuing a Bachelor's of Science in Architecture says, "Working at the Mills Group has helped to expand my interest and knowledge in historic preservation and to understand what the design process is like outside of class. After graduating I plan to attend graduate school for a Masters degree in Architecture with hopes to share some of the knowledge I have gained at the Mills Group and Fairmont State University."

[Forward email](#)



This email was sent to mmills@millsgrouponline.com by mmills@millsgroup.biz | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Rapid removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

