

SPECIGRAM

Official Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Chapter, Construction Specifications Institute (CSI)

Taming the Specifications Beast – Making Specs work for you

SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

5:00 – 7:00 PM

RM Creative (1st Floor training room), 20 Stanwix St, Pittsburgh, PA

Catering by Salem's Grill

Are you intimidated by writing specs for a project? Is your office master in disarray and you don't know where to start? This interactive panel discussion will bring together some of the top spec writers in Pittsburgh to discuss the importance of project specifications. They will discuss different aspects of spec writing and answer your questions about the best process to use. Hear war stories of how to tame the spec beast and avoid some of the same pitfalls that have befallen other designers. You won't hear this kind of information anywhere else in this freewheeling format. So bring your questions, and your co-workers, to learn how spec writing can be fun.

Networking: 5:00 pm

Buffet Dinner: 5:30 pm

Presentation: 6:00 pm

Catering provided by:

Salem's Grill (Mediterranean food)

REGISTRATION: <https://mp.gg/7rjubic4w>

Register by 5:00 pm Friday, Sept. 6

\$30 CSI/AIA members/ \$40 Non-members/ \$20 YAF member discounted rate

Parking is available nearby in the Woods Allies garage, 232 Boulevard of the Allies. Evening rate is \$6.

You can pay at the door (cash or check) or use a credit card on the MemberPlanet site which will add an additional processing charge. Everyone should register on the MemberPlanet site whether you are paying ahead of time or at the door (both options are available).

This program meets the AIA/CES requirements for continuing education and qualifies for 1.0 HSW Learning Units.

SEPTEMBER 10 PROGRAM

PANELISTS:

Kelly Brown, AIA, CCS, Principal, RM Creative

Dennis Buirge, RA, CCS, CDT, CSI, Lead Specification Writer, CDM Smith

Scott Keener, RA, CCS, CDT, CSI, AIA, SCIP, Specification Writer, DRAW Collective

Marty Thornton, CCS, CSI, Specifications Writer, AEWorks

William Vernon, AIA, LEED-AP BD&C, CSI, CCS, Specification Manager, Macgregor Associates

If you have questions you want to ask the panel you can submit them ahead of time (giving the panelists some time to think) or bring them along and we'll answer as many as we can.

It's not just
a conference,
it's a career
investment.

CSI NATIONAL
CONFERENCE 2024

October 16-18 | Houston, TX



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by **Brian Trimble, P.E.**

For those of you who may have forgotten, CSI stands for the Construction Specifications Institute. Specifications is our middle name.

We sometimes forget how important specifications are to our industry. Over 75 years ago, the construction industry was not so smoothly structured when it came to construction documents and how designers and contractors communicated. It was a free for all during a time that the U.S. construction industry was booming. Specification writers in government agencies stepped in to develop some standard formats for everyone to follow. What we take for granted now, was a monumental step forward in allowing all parts of the construction industry to speak together in a common language or manner.



This month's program, "Taming the Specifications Beast" is meant to help all parts of the construction industry understand the importance of specs and how to make them easier to develop. The days of the master specifications writer toiling away with his green plastic visor are gone. We now have many designers developing their own specifications, sometimes with guidance, and sometimes all alone. CSI and our Pittsburgh Chapter are always here to help newbies (and the established) understand specifications and make their jobs easier. Our trusted advisors, our product reps, are here to educate you about how to specify products and to understand today's complicated building systems. Where else can you learn about door hardware, roofing installations, overhead doors, millwork and masonry all in one place?

Make sure you attend our meeting on **September 10** and try to convince a co-worker to attend. Although they are afraid to say it, your co-worker really doesn't really know the simplest way to develop a good spec section, but maybe you can help them by inviting them to the next CSI meeting. The start time is a little earlier than usual, and its right downtown, but we're serving food from Salem's Grill so you won't want to miss out. See you there!

CSI Pittsburgh Chapter Governance and Bylaws Change

The CSI Pittsburgh Chapter Board approved changing the number of board members at its July board meeting. At one time, the chapter had over 200 members but in recent years we have been hovering around 70-80 chapter members. Due to this decrease, it was felt that we should shrink the size of the board as well. To allow members to move up the officer ranks quicker, it is proposed to eliminate the 2nd Vice President (VP) position. Eliminating the 2nd VP will allow a member to become President within 2 to 4 years instead possibly 8 years.

It is also proposed to eliminate the position of Advisor and replace it with the Immediate Past President position which occurs with most other organizations. In the past, a president would be an advisor for 3 2-year terms which means that person would be on the board for over 10 years.

Hopefully these changes will streamline the chapter and make us a more nimble organization. As required by the current bylaws any change to the bylaws requires a 2/3 majority of the voting members present at its next regular meeting on September 10.

Section 2. Composition of Board

- A. The board shall consist of not less than ~~fifteen~~ eleven (1511) members as follows: ~~1) President, 2) First Vice-President, 3) Second Vice-President, 4) Secretary, 5) Treasurer, and Sixteen (67)~~ Immediate Past President, and three (3) Advisory members. The three Advisory members shall be recent past presidents including the Immediate Past President, who choose to serve and who shall form a Long-Range Planning Committee among other duties. Emerging Professional members may serve in any of the elected positions.

Other sections which mention these positions will be updated.

A section on indemnification has also been added since this occurs with most boards.

Section 7. Indemnification

- A. Directors, officers and other authorized employees or agents of the Chapter shall be indemnified against claims for liability arising in connection with their positions or activities on behalf of the Chapter to the full extent permitted by law.

IN MEMORIAM - CHARLES A. BROWN

Charles Alden Brown

Charles A. Brown, 82, passed away peacefully on August 25, 2024, in Edison, New Jersey. Born in Chicago to William and Margaret Brown, he lived in Pittsburgh for most of his life before moving to NJ in June. Charlie was a prominent Pittsburgh architect and a devoted man of faith who shared personality traits with the comic character who shares his name. He leaves behind a legacy of dedication, both in his professional life and in his commitment to his community and family.

As he was finishing his Architectural studies at the University of Illinois, he was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Vietnam conflict, and used his drawing skills in a mapping state-side position. After his discharge from service, Charlie married the former Marie Maudlin and worked for the American Baptist Convention, helping congregations site and plan church buildings.

After working for the WTW architectural firm for a number of years, Charlie formed a partnership known as the Brenenberg Brown Group architectural firm. There, he specialized in the design of churches and other nonprofit buildings. His firm's design process was a deliberate and patient process that involved all stakeholders and relevant committees in defining needs and generating ideas. He was a longstanding member of the Pittsburgh Construction Specification Institute, where he was an educator for younger members and served as president. He was passionate about his work, as it brought meaning to his life and he considered it part of his service to the community.

For many years, Charlie was an active member of the First Baptist Church of Crafton, PA, where he was involved in ministry and leadership. He also served the broader community through his involvement with the American Baptists Association of Pittsburgh. His contributions to these organizations were marked by his passion for service and his unwavering faith. Charlie had a quiet presence, never seeking to be the center of attention or demanding his way, yet his influence was deeply felt by all who knew him. He had a playful, self-deprecating sense of humor that played off his Charlie Brown character and he was universally liked. Despite being thrifty, he was known for his generosity with his time and money.

As a hobby, Charlie worked for years renovating his home. It is hard to remember a time during which part of his home was not under construction and he practiced all trades. He loved jigsaw puzzles and games, and had a passion for computers and technology. After retirement, he transitioned to becoming a full-time caregiver for his beloved Marie, who suffers from Alzheimer's disease. Charlie and Marie were known for their frequent walks in their neighborhood during the time he cared for her there.

With his own serious health issues mounting, Charlie moved with Marie to NJ under the care of relatives this past June, only to experience additional setbacks. Through it all, he remained the same kind, gregarious person he has always been, charming hospital staff with his humor and soft-spoken manner. He left this life as the same loving soul who cared for others and had deep faith in humanity and his religious convictions throughout his life.

Charlie was predeceased by his parents, his daughter, Heather Brown, in 2010, and his brother, Gorden Brown, in 2024. He is survived by his loving wife, Marie Brown; his brother, Donald Brown, and brother-in-law, Chris Parsons, of Los Angeles, CA; his sister-in-law, Jean Brown, of Peoria, IL; his son, Alex Brown, and daughter-in-law, Priscilla M. Hockin Brown of Metuchen, NJ; his son-in-law, Craig Hinds, and daughter-in-law, MaryJo Hinds, of Manalapan, NJ; his beloved grandchildren, Erica, August, Forest, Rowan, William, and Parker; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins. His family, friends, and colleagues will remember him as a man of humble integrity, abundant kindness, playfulness, and dedication to serving others.

A memorial service will be held to honor Charlie's life and legacy on 11:00 am September 21st, 2024, at the First Baptist Church of Crafton, 1 Oregon Ave, Crafton, PA 15205. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in his memory to the First Baptist Church of Crafton, the American Baptists Association of Pittsburgh, the Alzheimer's Association, or the Lupus Foundation of America.

Charles A. Brown will be deeply missed by all, but his spirit will live on in the hearts of those who knew and loved him.



September Anniversaries

1st	Jenna Glover	RM Creative
1st	Cameron Fine	National Gypsum Co.
4th	Michael Andrews	Allegion
9th	Jason Henze	Overhead Door of Pittsburgh

Current Membership: 73

CSI Members

BY OCCUPATION:

- Architecture, Design
- Building Product Manufacturers
- Construction, Contracting
- Specifications
- Engineering
- Other



BY ORGANIZATION TYPE:

- Firms
- Manufacturing
- Contracting, Development and Management
- Academic and Association
- Government
- Other



Tiffany Peter

What is your company and what is your position?

I am a Project Architect at IKM Architecture. My work over the past few years has focused more on healthcare design and planning but I also still enjoy being involved in the detailing and working through tricky construction conditions.

What is your education background? Undergrad? Grad?

I received a bachelor of science from Kent State College of Architecture and Environmental Design and went on to complete my Masters in Architecture from Kent State as well. I was fortunate to also study abroad for a semester as part of that education and I highly recommend it if anyone gets the opportunity to do the same.

How many years have you been in the industry?

I have been working in architecture for nearly 13 years now. I am from a big family of contractors, though, so I've been around construction and the trades my entire life. (Somewhere in my mom's photo albums there is a picture of me as a toddler, happily eating lunch on a rooftop with my uncles working in the background.)

If you weren't in your current job, what would you be doing?

I would probably be working with plants in some way. I would love to be a master gardener at a botanical garden somewhere.

What was your first job?

When I was 13, I started my own gardening and landscaping service for several of my dad's window washing clients. My dad would drop me off in several neighborhoods in Moon, Sewickley, and Hopewell and I would do everything from mulching and weeding to snow blowing, and hanging Christmas decorations. Eventually, I got jealous of other teenagers with more exciting jobs, so my first 'real' job was as a waitress at a country club when I turned 16. I still miss those days spent outside though, and occasionally still take on the occasional landscaping jobs for friends and family.

Tiffany Peter

What year did you join CSI?

I just joined this year! I'm looking forward to getting involved and meeting everyone!

Tell us about your family.

I currently have a 2 year old daughter, an awesome husband, and the best dog. I am an only child, but had the privilege of growing up close with my large extended family and many many cousins.



Do you have a favorite architect?

I love the texture and organic forms prevalent in Antoni Gaudi's work, but I also greatly admire Julia Morgan for her attention to detail and proportion. She is often relatively unknown by the general public but her influence on west coast architecture and her legacy for female architects who've come after her cannot be ignored.

What are your hobbies?

When I get a few moments to myself, I enjoy putting in my tiny Dormont garden. I've managed to grow a respectable strawberry patch, tomatoes, peppers, and an herb garden that has taken over a corner of our property. I'm also constantly working on DIY improvements to my very old house. So far, we've fully gutted and expanded the kitchen, built a new first floor bathroom, and refinished all the original hardwood floors along with several smaller projects along the way. Finally, when we're not doing stuff around the house, my husband and I love camping and hiking with our toddler.



Playlists or podcasts?

Playlists when I'm exercising,
Podcasts when I'm cleaning.

Music festival or art festival?

I tend to enjoy the musical performances at Art Festivals!
I love live music, but full music festivals are a big commitment for me these days.

by Brian Trimble

Marty Thornton and I traveled to Fairfield PA (near Gettysburg) to attend the CSI Middle Atlantic Region's Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Conference in mid-August. This is the region's yearly conference to educate CSI members about the workings of the various leadership positions within a chapter.

It's great when a group of like-minded people gather to improve their organization. We learned, discussed common issues, but we also had fun. I've developed some great friendships over the years attending region events. Its good to know designers and product reps from around the region that you can call on if you have any questions.

Sharon Clark of the Richmond Chapter talked about what does CSI offer to members. Her assessment is that membership allows us to build better buildings.

Brant Lingle an executive coach and process consultant provided two sessions – “{Buy(ing) your Why” and “Improve your leadership by managing F.A.C.T.S”.

Both sessions provided some thought-provoking ideas the we can use in our chapters. Good communication requires buy in – have you bought into CSI and why? We all have our reasons for maintaining our CSI memberships and we hope you have buy in.

In the end, Marty and I are bringing ideas that are chapter can use to grow and maybe allow each of us to build better buildings.





CDT EXAM PREP FOR THE PROJECT DELIVERY EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Project Delivery Education Program (PDEP) provides a comprehensive overview for anyone who writes, interprets, enforces, or manages construction documents. Project architects, contractors, contract administrators, material suppliers, and manufacturers' representatives realize the advantages of being Construction Documents Technologists.

By being able to understand and interpret written construction documents, Construction Document Technologists (CDTs) perform their jobs more effectively. By understanding the roles and relationships of all participants, CDTs improve communication among all members of the construction team.

Getting your CDT means:

- Adding "CDT" after your name, to your business card and to your resume
- Understanding how a project unfolds from conception to delivery
- Gain in-depth knowledge of the documentation involved

Virtual Teams Meeting format with expert lecturers for each topic who will be available to discuss topics. The PDEP is led by experienced industry professionals and is provided by instructors from the Middle Atlantic Regional Chapters.

The course covers the following subject material:

The construction process
Construction contract types
Modifications and substitution procedures
Contractual relationships
Rights, duties, and responsibilities
Contract provisions
Relationship and organization of construction documents
Use of construction documents
Organizational formats
Interpreting construction documents

FALL 2024 SCHEDULE

Class:	9 sessions starting Tuesday, September 10th
Time:	6:00 pm-7:30 pm
Location:	Virtual Classes will be held via Microsoft Teams Meeting
Cost:	Fee is \$50 for CSI members, \$150 for non-members
Registration Deadline:	September 1st, 2024
To register:	Click Here Scholarship opportunity available for those experiencing financial hardship. E-mail: cowens@glaveandholmes.com if you have questions.

- Session 01: Fundamentals - September 10, Winnie Sung & Cindy Cordo
- Session 02: Project Conception & Delivery - September 17, Marvin Kemp
- Session 03: Design Process - September 24, Hana NguyenKyn
- Session 04: Construction Documents – October 1, Bill Vernon
- Session 05: Procurement - October 8, David Stutzman
- Session 06: Pre-Construction - October 15, Kevin Grega, Chris Atwood
- Session 07: Construction - October 22, Clint Newton
- Session 08: Life Cycle Activities - Monday, October 29, John Spain
- Session 09: AIA A201: General Conditions - November 5, Mitch Miller or Katherine Good

CSI and AIA members earn 1 LU for each presentation they attend by self-reporting. Each class is taught by industry leaders that can answer questions and provide important insights. Classes include presentations that are supplemented with short quizzes that help reinforce the content of each session.

Our thanks to the CSI Middle Atlantic Regional Board and CSI Institute for the support of CSI's Project Delivery Education Training Program!



Construction Documents Technology (CDT)

CDT credentials are evidence of proven knowledge, education, and experience with construction documents and project delivery. Holding a certification demonstrates professional commitment, credibility, and reliability to employers, colleagues, and clients.

Class Materials

All class participants are required to purchase:
the [Project Delivery Practice Guide, 3rd Edition \(PDPG\)](#)
the [CDT Study Workbook](#) (recommended)
and download the free [CDT Handbook](#)
All material is available at the [CSI Bookstore](#)

Project Delivery Practice Guide, 3rd Edition

The Project Delivery Practice Guide (PDPG) provides fundamental knowledge for the documentation, administration, and successful delivery of construction projects and focuses on leading project delivery methods and the steps in each to deliver quality work that fulfills owner intent. The PDPG will define the roles and responsibilities of every party, the deliverables during each phase of the facility life cycle, and the types of information flow that help ensure a successful project.

PDPG Pricing:

- CSI Member price (Printed Book and Electronic Copy): \$119
- CSI Member price (Electronic Copy): \$99
- Non-member price (Printed Book and Electronic Copy): \$169
- Non-member price (Electronic Copy): \$139

CSI CDT Study Workbook [Digital Workbook in PDF Format]

The CDT Study Workbook is designed to be used with the Project Delivery Practice Guide, 3rd Edition by candidates preparing for the Construction Documents Technology (CDT) Certification Exam. This digital workbook is comprised of interactive elements to enhance your learning experience.



Workbook features include:

- 100+ interactive learning activities
- 35 case studies for real-world knowledge application
- Self-assessments to customize your learning
- Inline answer key functionality
- Cross reference of PDPG sections, figures, and tables

Workbook Pricing:

- CSI Members = \$49.95
- Non-Members = \$79.95

CDT Handbook for Certification Candidates -PDF- FREE

The CDT Handbook for Certification Candidates is a free resource. It contains pertinent information regarding candidate requirements, application procedures, knowledge domains, reference materials, and CSI certification policies.

JOIN CSI TODAY AND SAVE!

Leverage your CDT Certification by joining CSI and save money in the process! Becoming a member saves on the cost of the exam, the practice guide, and study workbook! For more information on the benefits of joining the CSI chapter.

[click here](#)

Listed prices are subject to change. For the most reliable information, go to csiresources.org





Masonry Continuing Education Seminars
September 26, 2024



Architectural Brick Details

Presented by Jim Tann, Belden Brick

Brick buildings are known for their design flexibility in providing aesthetics effects. This presentation covers several architectural details common to brick masonry walls with emphasis on building code requirements for wall stability.

Masonry Cleaning: Stain Identification & Removal

Presented by Mike Starkey, Prosooco and Jeff Konkle, MAK CPG

A survey of types and causes of staining common to new masonry construction, with recommendations and guidelines for cleaning and product selection.



8:15-8:30 am	Registration (enjoy bagels and donuts)	Highmark Stadium, 510 W Station Square
8:30-9:30 am	Architectural Brick Details	3.0 AIA Learning Units/ HSW
9:45-10:45 am	Masonry Cleaning: Stain Identification & Cleaning	
11:00-Noon	Hands-on Bricklaying, Stone Finishing and Tile Setting along with <i>Bricklayer 500</i> competition	
Noon	Lunch and continuation of hands-on with Juniors Competition	

Stay for the whole event and watch the excitement as the best masons in the region compete in the *Bricklayer 500* for the chance to go to Nationals in Las Vegas!

Register here: <https://info.imiweb.org/specmix-bricklayer-500-competition>
Designers who attend have a chance to win a \$500 Amazon gift card!!

LAY IT ALL ON THE LINE!

REVISED LIST OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS

CSI Pittsburgh Committee Chairs - FY 2025

Awards	Miki Vargo (tentative) – Chair
Certification	Bill Vernon – Chair
Hospitality / Holiday Party	Kelly Brown – Chair Matt Lander – Co-chair Marty Thornton – Holiday Party Coordinator
Industry Liaisons	Joanna Beres Judy Reilly Brian Trimble
Membership	Bob Bailey Dan Barra Carly Helbling Susan Henshaw Judy Reilly
Newsletter	Bob Bailey – Editor
Nominating / Tellers Committee	Matt Lander – Chair
Programs	Jenna Glover – Chair Brian Trimble – Co-chair
Publicity / Social media	Carly Helbling – Chair
Sponsorships	open
Sporting Events	Dan Barra – Chair
Strategic Planning	Dan Barra – Chair
Student Outreach	Joanna Beres LouAnn Fornataro
Technical/Education	Bill Cauley - Chair
Website	Kate Schuster – Chair

Pittsburgh Chapter Leadership FY 2025

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-- open --

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-- open --

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