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Serving as construction manager to give shape to the owner's vision of a project

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Before plans are actually drawn for a new project, many decisions must be made. When TRB Development Group, Inc. serves as Construction Manager, we focus on the early stage at the time a project idea is conceived. We meet with the Owner frequently to learn what he envisions and help him identify project objectives. Becoming familiar with the Owner's ideas to set the direction of the project is most important, and consequently helping to give shape to someone's vision is rewarding and the beginning of a new client relationship for us.

The Construction Manager has at least 120 common responsibilities according to the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA), a primary U.S. construction management certification and advocacy body. Those responsibilities fall into seven categories: Project Management Planning, Cost Management, Time Management, Quality Management, Contract Administration, Safety Management, and CM Professional Practice (to help avoid disputes and claims). The CM must have a proven management system in place that incorporates all of these elements and guides the project to a conclusion that pleases the owner.

Often, owners and designers do not have the opportunity to know what materials and labor cost or what amount of time it will take to accomplish all that the owner wants let alone be versed in the responsibilities of the Construction Manager. That is where our experienced estimating can be of great value. Some of the elements we discuss with an owner are square footage, space design such as wide hallways or column-free areas, environmental requirements, climactic conditions that may determine types of building materials, operational/maintenance expenses, and site workability.

Recently, we worked in tandem with Chief Builders, who, after competitive bidding was selected to provide the pre-engineered, 45,968 SF building for the FedEx Ground Sorting Facility in West Lebanon, New Hampshire that we completed one year ago. We relied upon Chief with their steel erection background to work with us to develop a scope that satisfied the projects specifications. Many meetings were held to solidify the scope during the pre-order period. Value Engineering consisted of 3-plate built-up tapered sections for columns and rafters and cold-formed secondary members in "Zee" or "Cee" shapes, which Chief fabricates in their plant. This was a huge money saver on this project and insured the highest quality.

The locale, which we knew would subject the building to severe winter weather, was of prime concern, but Chief offered external walls and windows with factory-applied baked-on finishes that will remain attractive for decades without needing refurbishing. Also, proper insulation and the correct reinforced construction (the columns and rafters mentioned above) will protect against high wind and snow. Lowering energy costs will contribute to lower insurance premium costs, as well.

The Lebanon project had major site requirements for drainage, sewer, water, storm run-off control, and since it would be a distribution center, plans called for a heavy-duty warehouse and 22 truck

bays for 18-wheelers spaced on both long sides of the building.

Other very important elements of our pre-construction Construction Manager services for this project were to guide the project through the planning board process by participating in all planning board meetings and public hearings, provide civil engineering services, deliver architectural plans for permitting and structural engineering plans for foundation, and in the case of this particular project, deliver stamped plans for the pre-engineered building, as well as stamped plans for mechanical and electrical. Other services we provided included obtaining the building permit and setting up utility services. This project required many meetings with the Planning Board, Building Department, and site engineers before ground was broken.

Once construction began, TRB managed the schedule of all phases of work, coordinated delivery of materials, site safety, and qualityâ€”within a compressed timeline and under the watchful eye of a diligent town building department. The results were a developer as well as FedEx both locally and corporately who were very pleased regarding their new completed package handling facility.

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