



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

nerej

2020 Year in Review: Dennis Swart, DJSA Architecture

December 25, 2020 - Spotlights



Dennis Swart, AIA
President

What was your greatest professional accomplishment or most notable project, deal, or transaction in 2020? While we had several great projects in 2020, we are very proud to have designed the Pelham House Resort in Dennis Port, MA. This project consisted of a brand new 13,000 s/f ocean front function facility, restaurant and bar located directly on Nantucket Sound. The construction schedule was very aggressive and continued through the spring to meet the construction deadline. From ownership to the contractor (Acella Construction), there was a great team on the project and we were all able to successfully coordinate and work together to deliver the project in some very challenging times.

What aspects of working from home have you enjoyed most? Personally, I am not a fan of working from home as I feel the social interaction of the office is critical to what we do here at DJSA. However, at least we now know that we can do so successfully if needed.

What was the most difficult part of working during the pandemic of 2020? Our office officially began working from home on March 23. While all staff already had the ability to log in and work remotely, the sudden switch to remote work did cause us to really think through our systems and how to best collaborate while all working from separate locations. Our design approach involves constant collaboration and feedback. Whether it is in house with staff or with consultants or contractors in the field we are always communicating. So, the work from home setup took a week or so to really adjust to.

What are your predictions for commercial real estate in 2021? While I believe there may be a slight tightening of activity in the first few months of 2021, I remain very optimistic for 2021 overall. Our firm has been involved with several industrial and multi-family projects over 2020 and we anticipate those markets to continue strong into 2021. Prior to Covid 19, hospitality represented about 30% of our yearly workload. We have many great hospitality clients who have been through a very tough stretch here the past 10 months. My hope is that the hospitality sector will start to come back as deployment of vaccines ramp up throughout the year.

What is the best advice you have received, and who was it from? My parents always stressed to always treat people the way we would want to be treated. This is simple advice but it is how it try to approach each interaction in business.