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Ashkouri of ARCADD, Inc. has green projects in development in Newton, Kabul and Baghdad

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Dr. Hisham Ashkouri established ARCADD, Inc. in 1986, an architecture firm in Newton, Mass. The firm has taken on architecture in a new light, creating opportunities for itself on a national and worldwide scale to overcome the effects of an uncertain economy and lingering responsibilities in a war-torn Middle East and Central Asia, as well as maintaining work in the U.S. With a philosophy of socially responsible and financially profitable architecture that is green by design rather than an afterthought, ARCADD is generating its own projects through the combined role of architect and developer.

In light of this approach with an environmental edge, Dr. Ashkouri's most recent venture was the establishment of the Cold Spring Green residential development in Newton, Mass. featuring a full array of sustainable design. As the owner, architect, and developer of the Cold Spring Green project, Dr. Ashkouri was able to exercise full flexibility over planning and construction by knowing the details of the design as well as handling contract negotiations and contractor selection to best fit the project team and goals. Having sought out and acquired their own funding, and working with the sub-contractors as a team allows the firm to be in full control of the project budget and time schedule without having to resort to 3rd party assessments. Both the firm and its sub-contractors' passion for the project is evident as all perform in an effective cooperative manner to find the best environmental and aesthetic solutions for the buildings.

Implementing natural design concepts with innovative green construction techniques also allows the Cold Spring Green development to offer reduced long-term operational costs. The houses utilize the cutting edge of energy-efficient technologies, such as complete geo-thermal high efficiency heating and cooling that uses the natural temperature of the earth to regulate indoor temperature, thermal-photovoltaic systems that deliver both heat and electricity in usable form, sun-reflecting roofs, commercial grade construction, high performance windows, and Energy Star appliances. Each unit has an open floor plan, which allows for natural light to penetrate throughout the buildings and for air to circulate freely, which creates a chimney effect easing the task of heating and cooling the buildings by controlling the accumulation of heat through rooftop skylights.

On a much larger scale, but with the same focus on development, The City of Light - Kabul project was conceived after Dr. Ashkouri visited Kabul, Afghanistan in 2004. ARCADD took on the role of creating its own project for a war-torn region of Kabul's downtown district to aid in the reconstruction and rejuvenation of a faltering Afghanistan. On its own initiative, ARCADD developed and funded the design of the city area as well as took on the role of promoter to raise investment interest in the project and the region.

With a look towards the well-being of future generations, ARCADD based its planning of the city on environmentally responsive ideas. The City of Light employs extensive use of concrete, brick, glass,

and other local or recycled materials that are abundant in Afghanistan. In addition, the design utilizes higher architectural density and ventilated facades to cut cooling and energy costs in summer and winter. This development represents a quantum leap in life-cycle costs, maintenance, and long term environmental responsibility.

On similar principles, ARCADD created and developed the design for the Baghdad Renaissance Plan (BRP) and Tahrir Sq. in Baghdad, Iraq, in an effort to create new architectural and construction jobs to rebuild a 21st century Baghdad that reinforces the Iraqi Democratic Principles that its new constitution is based on.

Without losing its focus on environmentally responsible design, ARCADD developed the BRP on the concept of using naturally developed land from the river deposits along the dikes on both sides of the Tigris River. The premise of the plan is not to impose additional loads on the current infrastructure, but rather to use solar energy systems, as the city is located in a desert environment. Solar, wind, geothermal, and fuel cell technologies are essential to reduce the number and cost of conventional power plants using fossil fuels.

Dr. Ashkouri/ARCADD's developments are key to the advancement of the architectural profession yet unique and exciting to current and future generations of clients and users. ARCADD strives to create, manage, and develop project opportunities that focus on sustainable construction for an enlightened future.

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