



# nerej

## **Chairman's message: We remain steadfastly optimistic**

May 13, 2009 - Construction Design & Engineering

When May rolls around and the warm weather is finally upon us, we welcome the sound of birds chirping in the morning. We usually also welcome the booming sounds of jackhammers, dump trucks, and bulldozers the rest of the day. While these sounds may not be pleasant, they tell us that people are working, jobs are being created, and our economy is prospering. This spring, unfortunately, all we seem to be hearing are the birds.

For the construction industry, the road to recovery seems littered with detours. While there are several reasons for these detours, such as low consumer confidence and the slow disbursement of federal stimulus money, another large reason inhibiting our recovery is the availability, or lack thereof, of credit. Some banks appear to be cautious in lending money to developers and retailers who wish to finance their projects. That is not the fault of the banks, but rather a failure on the part of many to be fiscally responsible in past times.

The federal stimulus package includes provisions designed to give banks the latitude to help turn the economy around by beginning to lend again. But many banks seem intent on holding onto our federal tax dollars to shore up their reserves, instead of using them to make loans. Until banks begin lending the money that is so desperately needed to finance future economic development projects, economic recovery will be slowed down. As the federal stimulus money begins to be released in Massachusetts, I hope that we will soon be able to once again wake up to the sounds of a vibrant economy.

At Associated Builder & Contractors, we remain steadfastly optimistic that economic renewal is on the horizon. In advocating for our core values of open competition for construction projects, we are confident that local communities, state government, and private developers will realize that competitive bidding enhances the quality of the craftsmanship and reduces the overall labor costs. Our association looks forward to advocating for our principles and working with all industries to ensure that our nation's economic recovery will leave no one behind.

Gerald Simmer is president of the Associated Builders & Contractors Mass. chapter, Burlington, Mass.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540