INSPECTION OF THE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Proper organization of inspection activities benefits all stakeholders.

Inspection is an important element of the construction process and can reduce the detrimental effects of errors and misunderstandings during the fabrication and installation of construction systems.

The inspection services need to be properly organized to be effective. This starts with a clear understanding of the terms used and the role of each of the design and construction team parties.

Terms:

“Inspection” is the examination of construction activities and products for the purpose of verifying compliance with the construction documents and other project requirements. The Owner normally obtains this service under a direct contract with the Inspection Service that specifically delineates the inspection scope and documentation requirements.

“Observation” is the collection of information, visually in most cases, during project walkthroughs. This normally occurs from time to time during the project and is intended to allow a design professional to become familiar with the progress of construction and the general conformance to the design intent.

“Testing” is the physical measurement of attributes of the construction products such as strength, density, flow, temperature, system performance etc.

Inspection Responsibilities:

Owner (Owner’s Inspection Agent)

The Owner or the independent inspection agent can provide complete inspection of all systems to give the Owner confidence that the project is accurately constructed in accordance with the Construction Documents.

The Owner may expand the normal services of one or more of the Design Professionals to include more participation in the field up to and including providing inspection services. This can be advantageous to the entire project team since the Design Professionals have a thorough knowledge of the project and are already committed to achieving success.
Different building codes mandate independent inspection of much of the structural work to be performed for most commercial projects. The Registered Design Professional in responsible charge shall submit a statement of special inspections identifying the inspection services required and approved providers as a condition for issuance of the building permit.

**Designer**
On most projects the Designer will make periodic site visits. During these visits which are generally scheduled at intervals appropriate to the “Contractor’s operations”, the Designer will observe the Work to ensure that it is consistent with the design intent and approximate percentage of completed work. The Designer must advise the Owner of any deviations from the Contract Documents.

The frequency and nature of these visits does not constitute “inspection”. These visits should give the Owner confidence that the intent of the design is being properly installed. Providing “inspection” services would be beyond normal basic services provided by Design Professionals, and may be included as additional services.

For a more complete description see the Guideline “Project Visits”.

**Contractor**
The General Contractor and the Subcontractors have the responsibility for Quality Control. The specifications may require some other types of inspection as well.

These inspection efforts vary widely and are not under the control of the Owner or Designer except to monitor their effectiveness from time to time.

**Testing Agency**
The Testing Agency performs the material acceptance and other tests required in the Specifications and any other testing that may be ordered. Many Testing Agencies provide Inspection also but only if specifically ordered.

For a more complete description see the Guideline “Testing Services During Construction.”

**Recommendations:**
The Owner should retain an independent Inspection Agency or expand the services of one or more of the Design Professionals to perform and document complete inspection services.

- This may also include quality assurance services to provide confidence that the testing and inspection required by the contract documents is also being properly performed.
• That the contract documents clearly indicate the inspection and testing required of the Contractor and the services planned to be provided by the Owner or Owner’s Agent.
• That any deviations from the Contract Documents be brought to the attention of the Owner, Designer and Contractor as soon as practical.
• Inspection services are different than Testing Services. Refer to the separate Construction Guideline on “Testing Services During Construction.”

REFERENCES:
International Code Council Code Books
AIA Standard Form of Agreement between Owner and Architect
EJCDC (Engineers’ Joint Contract Documents Committee) Standard Form of Agreement between Owner and Engineer for Professional Services
Construction Guidelines “Project Visits”, “Commissioning” and “Testing Services During Construction”
CSI Project Resource Manual
AIA A201 General Conditions
ConsensusDOCS Form 240 Agreement between Owner and A/E
ConsensusDOCS Form 200 Agreement between Owner/Contract and General Conditions

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