

AIA Buffalo/WNY President Paul Herendeen, AIA with AIANYS Regional Director Russell Davidson, AIA formulated the enclosed response letter and sent it to the editor for publishing. Unfortunately this response letter was never printed, but we hope it will be used as a reference example in helping to curb the illegal practice of Architecture in future years.

**Response to Buffalo News article (4/11/10): West Seneca's inspector sold plans on the side, FBI is reviewing how Czuprynski ran office by Mary B. Pasciak.**

As president of the Buffalo Western New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Buffalo/WNY), I would like to applaud the efforts of your paper for educating the public about this disturbing situation. The article reported on a building official who forced well meaning and law abiding citizens to employ him as their architect even though he is not licensed.

As Architects, we're highly trained to prepare drawings and specifications that meet updated building and zoning codes. Architects coordinate detailed drawings and specifications with many highly trained local building officials throughout the area. As Architects licensed by the state we serve to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

New York State law's requires that all plans, drawings and specifications relating to the construction or alteration of buildings or structures which must be filed with a building code official must be stamped with the seal of an architect or professional engineer (N.Y. Educ. Law 7307 and title 19 NYCRR Part 1203.3(a)(3)(1).

The practice of certain builders, developers and contractors who attempt to have construction documents "legitimized" with a seal of a licensed professional after they have been prepared by an unlicensed individual is illegal. Such practice is known as "rubber stamping", and the licensee is guilty of professional misconduct (Sec.29.3(a)(3) of the rules of the Board of Regents. The penalties for professional conduct may include, but are not limited to, censure and reprimand, suspension or revocation o the license, fines, and others (N.Y. Educ. Law 6509 and 6510). In addition, the licensee may also be guilty of aiding and abetting an unlicensed person to practice architecture or use the title "architect", both of which are class E felonies.

The saddest portion of the story reported in the paper is that all of the individuals who were coerced into using this public official's services would have been better served by working with an architect. Architectural services are offered at a wide variety of levels of services and price and a typical successful project results in a cost-effective, safe, healthy, and sustainable project. Should the general public be in need of a local Architect, they can call our local AIA Chapter (774-3340), and visit our website at (aiabuffalowny.org).

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President – AIA Buffalo/WNY 2009-2010