

FET 8th Principle Update

Facilities Expansion (FET) and the Architecture Advisory Group (AAG) are resolved to incorporate the 8th Principle ideals during the planning and construction of Beacon's new campus at 695 Springfield Avenue. FET/AAG conducted a search for the architectural firm understanding the importance of having a diverse team working on all phases of our building project. Our initial research included black-owned firms as well as women-owned firms. Due to historical factors, only 2% of registered architects in the US are Black, according to the National Council of Architectural Registration Board (2020). FET reviewed 25 Black-owned firms. Honoring the lessons learned from the building project at 309 Springfield Avenue, our most important criteria for the selection became finding an architectural firm with experience building spiritual spaces and demonstrated expertise in acoustics. This process resulted in selection of Louis Cherry Architecture, whose principal is a white male with all female associates.

The architectural firm represents slightly less than 10% of the project's total cost. We know that the construction company we choose will be the next significant component of the project cost so we are focusing on this selection closely.

Louis Cherry has expressed interest in the 8th principle and he voluntarily obtained information from his four main consultants about diversity in their offices and reported the following:

- Silman 37% of staff are minority, 40% women;
- Loring: 52% of staff and half of principals are minority or women;
- Langan: provided information on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and policies and on employee resources groups (such as Queer@Langan, BlackProfessionals@Langan);
- Viridian: 100% women owned and certified as Women Business Enterprise and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise.

Cherry is also committed to working with us to establish a diverse team of contractors and vendors for the construction of our project.

As we move forward with the project, we recognize the importance of developing a protocol for seeking out Black-owned companies when hiring contractors, vendors and consultants. We are considering assembling an 8th Principle Advisory Group to research Black-owned and BIPOC led businesses. If anyone is interested in joining this group, please contact Michele Blanchard (mblanchard423@gmail.com) or Steve Cramer (steve@riklawfirm.com).