

UAI

urban architectural initiatives, RA, PC

Urban Architectural Initiatives RA PC (UAI) is a design-oriented architectural and planning firm with expertise in community facilities, educational, residential, health care, religious, commercial, transportation, historic restoration and urban revitalization projects. The practice draws on the varied experiences of its principals and staff, combining a strong interest in urban building types with a broad and in-depth knowledge of the construction industry.

David Hirsch and Tony Shitemi formed UAI in 1996 after its predecessor, Hirsch/Danois Architects PC, divided into two firms. The two principals own equal shares in the corporation and divide the responsibilities equitably. One principal directs each project but coordination of the office and the work is monitored by both through frequent conferences.

Mr. Hirsch brings considerable prior urban design, architectural, and administrative experience to UAI. He has been affiliated with major architectural firms in New York and has served as senior urban designer of the New York City Mayor's Office of Development. During the sixteen years he was a principal at Hirsch/Danois Architects PC, he was responsible for the management and design of urban planning and infrastructure projects for New York City's municipal agencies as well as historic restoration projects.

Mr. Shitemi brings to the firm twenty-one years of experience in the full range of architecture from predevelopment through to construction. He has successfully completed multifarious new construction and rehabilitation projects including: affordable, seniors, and special needs housing; commercial and community facilities; civic buildings.

At various times the firm's principals have assumed the roles of developer, planner, project manager, construction supervisor, community group executive member, and development fund board member. Familiarity with the owner/architect/contractor relationship has therefore been gained through direct experience. Their expertise enables the principals to lead an office capable of designing and producing a great variety of projects.

Each project begins as a blank slate in which the architect's role is to identify, organize, and prioritize a variety of design-influencing factors such as the site condition, the client's wishes and the entire consultant team's recommendations. The office is especially committed to maintaining the highest quality product resulting from a well-founded design approach, proper documentation of the construction requirements and meticulous supervision during the construction process.

