

January 17, 2003

To Whom it May Concern:

I am pleased to write this letter in recommendation of Curtis Hacker.

In 2000, shortly after purchasing our house in Topanga, California, my wife and I decided to convert a bedroom into a kitchen and a dining room. We contracted with a local architect to draw up plans. In the process of planning the new additions, we discussed with the architect the need to plan for a future addition of a complete second story and the consequent need to design and engineer the kitchen/dining addition in such a way that, in the event we elected to add a second story, the work on the new kitchen/dining addition would not be disturbed by any structural needs. We then provided the architect our rough sketches of the floor plan for the complete second story and many of the details.

Unfortunately, after several false starts, and much to our surprise and displeasure, the local architect elected not to continue the project.

After interviewing several architects, I elected to proceed with Curtis because he demonstrated a quick grasp of the task that lay ahead and exhibited a no-nonsense personality. Taking over the project, he quickly coordinated the transition from the prior architect and worked closely with me to translate my ideas and desires into a comprehensive set of plans. Where the prior architect had been unable to bring a competent structural engineer to bear, Curtis worked hand in glove with Marvin Hornstein to design a cost-effective solution to the many framing issues posed by some of the unique design elements.

Curtis also coordinated the electrical and mechanical plans, the latter being especially challenging because of the fact that the house would essentially be split in half, divided by an open atrium. Curtis worked closely with the mechanical engineer and me to arrive at a creative and aesthetically pleasing solution to bring air to both sides of the house.

The project was made ever more difficult by the need to implement it in phases in order to comply with certain time and square footage exemptions of the local fire department. In all, Curtis prepared three sets of plans: phase one, which included a large roof deck; phase two, which showed the enclosure of the roof deck into a master suite; and phase one and two combined to provide a comprehensive set of plans for the contractor, my wife, and me.

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Although we hired a permit expediter to work the project through the process, the “expediter” turned into more of a “delayer” and was therefore let go. As a result, Curtis and I were required to step in at the last minute and complete the permit process.

In sum, my project was anything but routine. Curtis had to take over a faltered, complicated remodel project on a hillside in a high fire danger zone for two professional clients with strong opinions and high expectations, work with a permit expediter who was anything but, coordinate three sets of plans, shepherd them through a tortuous county review process and, in the end, give us plans that could be built for our budget.

In all respects, Curtis performed admirably. Indeed, I am especially impressed that during the moments of greatest stress – those times in all projects when there are disagreements, frustration, confusion – he stayed the course.

I hope this letter helps you reach the conclusion that Curtis would be a valuable member of your team. He certainly was a valuable member of mine.

If I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

I look forward to speaking with you soon; until then, I remain

Sincerely,

Andrew Matosich
General Counsel
Senior Vice President Business Affairs