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Adams-Bickel Associates
3770 Ridge Pike
Collegeville, PA 19426

Re: Varenhorst Residence
Locust Street
Philadelphia, PA

Dear Jim,

You asked me to write a letter speaking to the quality of workmanship I experienced when I toured your above reference project two months ago. I herein submit the following:

Drawings lie. They exaggerate, prejudice and present bias-all towards an artists' intentions. All artists would acknowledge this commonplace observation. Working drawings, however, try not to be deceptive. Drafted by an Architect they honestly represent a contractual agreement between the Owner and the Builder. These construction drawings diligently present the three dimensional intentions of the Owner in two dimensional line drawings. I thought about this formulation as I walked through the Varenhorst Residence built by Adams-Bickel. The level of workmanship seemed beyond any drawn expectation. The precision and care in construction was apparent throughout the house.

It is no secret that traditional interior detailing has developed over time to allow for the vagaries of craft or material and sacrificed precision for ease of construction. The details and finishes exist to hide joints or layer materials on top of each other in an effort to minimize the need for accuracy or precision at any point in the process. On the other hand, the Varenhorst Residence is a contemporary interior built inside a 19th century rowhouse. Modern design brooks little margin of error, from pivot hinged frameless doors to the built-in casework this house required a standard of perfection that I marveled at. Nothing was hidden. Flush finishes and materials were beautifully rendered and carefully installed.

imagination
Architecture

innovation
Interior Design

inspiration
Planning



And it is not as simple as hiring craftsmen. The coordination of trades and integration of all the systems was critical in the quality of the finished product. This house was well crafted and obviously with a careful level of coordination. I felt as I toured the house that Adams-Bickel recognized the expectations of a modern design and surpassed the demands of the clean and smooth style.

For any Owner the prize is the finished building. An Architect has to acknowledge the set of construction drawings are only one step toward this dream. The Builder is ultimately responsible for making the dream manifest. As I walked around the house it was apparent in every material touched, every surface finished that Adams-Bickel invested a tremendous amount of attention and affection into this project. The Owner got their dream probably better than the Architect could have imagined or drawn it.

Respectively submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sean O'Rourke'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sean O'Rourke, AIA