

No house should ever be *ON* a hill or on anything. It should be *OF THE HILL*. Belonging to it. Hill and house should live together each the happier for the other.

- Frank Lloyd Wright



# Blueprints

ISSUE 3

*Occasional Musings of a New Jersey based architect*

## A BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE

### THE MAKING OF AN ARCHITECT, PART 1



A question I am often asked is when I knew I wanted to be an architect. Unlike many other professions or businesses, I suppose people see architects as having a calling to do what they love. So it's often interesting to hear how that spark was first ignited, and I've heard great stories from some of my colleagues. For me it started on a bridge.

I grew up in suburban Philadelphia, my mom was from Forest Hills, Queens, and her whole family was still

in that area. So we often went to visit my grandparents, and other relatives for weekends. I always loved those trips, it was a pretty raucous New York Jewish family, and I was also dazzled by our trips into the city to see the sights and the big buildings. To get to Queens from Pennsylvania in the early 60's you drove through the Lincoln Tunnel, across town, and through the Midtown Tunnel into Queens.

When I was 9 years old, my parents left me to spend a week with my grandparents, and they were to bring me back home the following week. Instead of the usual route, my grandfather took us over a new bridge from

Brooklyn to Staten Island that had just opened, the Verrazano Bridge. I was in the back seat and awed by the scale and simple grandeur of this new bridge. It was then that I first recalled thinking I wanted to be an architect. OK, I was 9, I didn't know that most bridges aren't designed by architects, but there must have been the realization that designing structures was something I wanted to do.

To this day, I'm inspired and get a special pleasure driving over that mighty bridge.

# Feng Shui: POSITIVE PLANNING FOR YOUR SPACE

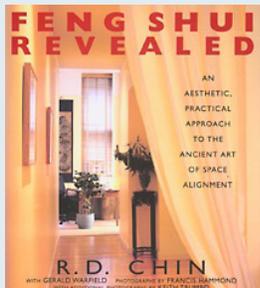
*Master Feng Shui practitioner, RD Chin offers insight into this ancient practice.*

Feng shui continues to be accepted and embraced by the American mainstream, in both commercial and residential design. But what exactly is feng shui, and what does it do?

Considered to be an art and a science, feng shui (the proper Mandarin pronunciation is feng shway, meaning wind and water) is an ancient philosophical system with Chinese roots.

Feng shui is about the interpretation of the universe's energy (known as chi and pronounced as chee) in a particular space and balancing that energy through specific placement of items in the given area. In architectural design, a feng shui practitioner uses an eight-sided design template that indicates the yin and yang qualities of each space. These refer to: 1.Wealth + Power, 2.Fame or Reputation, 3.Marriage + Relationships, 4.Future + Creativity, 5.Helpful People + Travel, 6.Career, 7.Knowledge + Spirituality, and the 8.Family.

...."It's really about the energy. Rather than saying North, South, East, West, I would ask, 'Are you an early morning person, or are you a late afternoon nightbird?' So if you are an early morning person, let's make sure that the best room for you to work in is in the East because that's when you want to have your best



energy. If you're a night person, let's put all of your rooms on the West side, in the afternoon, because that's where you like to work best."

*Here are some tips for you to consider when you do a feng shui architectural design:*

- Be sure that the placement of the bathroom or toilet is not in the far left or far right corners of the home or building; **this position symbolizes that money is being flushed away** or a relationship will be adversely affected.
- A fun paint color to use is Benjamin Moore "Million Dollar Red"; this idea and intention of using **this color to enhance our prosperity** is a very popular choice for many clients.
- When designing the Master Bedroom,

make sure that there is equal space on each side of the bed as well as matching end tables and matching lamps; **this arrangement will represent an equal balance for a relationship for a couple.**

- No computers, iPhones, or TV's in the bedrooms! The reason is to promote "Good Health, and Mental Clarity."

- A very interesting note is that the Chinese word for Food has the same sound as for Wealth; therefore, if you **design a mirror or install a highly reflective material** to "double the burners, then you double your money!"

- Water features such as fountains, fish ponds and aquariums are considered to help enhance both our health and our prosperity; water is considered to be a very positive "life force energy"!

- One of the fundamental principles of Feng Shui is Nature; so, it would be great to **include green plants into your design schemes** such as room for large potted tree plants, or even a living plant wall.

[www.RDChin.com](http://www.RDChin.com)

## Client Profile

Emily grew up in Bucks County, PA and lived in Manhattan as a young adult. Kevin was born in Manhattan and grew up in Westchester County, NY. They met on a blind date in Manhattan. After the birth of their first child, New Jersey was chosen for it's halfway point between their respective families.

Emily's studies in social

work and the non-profit world eventually led her to a career in event planning, primarily for non-profits. High profile national clients include the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (one of the perks of the job she enjoys is access to concerts).

Kevin teaches college math, and can wax eloquent

about the creative possibilities of calculus problem solv-

ing. He's also the cook in the family. He first learned to cook

as a way to help out his mother. Later a roommate who was a chef inspired him to up his game, and he continues to research and hone his culinary skills, relishing opportunities to host large dinner parties ...Emily organizes, Kevin cooks!





## Iconic Modernism: Fallingwater

**D**esigned by famous American architect Frank Lloyd Wright in 1934, Fallingwater is quite possibly the most famous private residence in the world. But why?

Most of Wright's European modernist counterparts designed houses that stood apart from their environment, idealized forms in

the landscape, machines for living. But Falling Water was conceived to be intimately tied to the land and reaches out to grasp it in all directions.

The unique design makes it look like the house stretches out over a 30ft waterfall, with no solid ground beneath it.

This isn't the case, obviously, but the innovative design captured everyone's attention when it was finalized in 1939, and is now a national historic landmark. There's

even a Lego version of this architectural masterpiece! However, the home suffered from structural issues- the cantilevered balconies began to dip over time due to insufficient reinforcement, and the roof leaks were a constant source of aggravation to the original owner, Edgar Kauffman Sr.

Now a museum, the house has undergone extensive repairs over the years, and in 2002 the cantilever beams were permanently fixed. [WWW.FALLINGWATER.ORG](http://WWW.FALLINGWATER.ORG)



I love to turn Ugly Duckling houses into modern, elegant Swans. Mid century ranches and split levels are ideal candidates for makeovers for an owner who wants to create something different than the typical luxury home in this area. See the blog post on my website that features a dramatic makeover of an early 60's split level in Scotch Plains. If you hear of anyone who might be interested in a similar type project, feel free to pass on the link.

<http://www.garyrosard.com/from-unloved-orphan-to-cool-kid-on-the-block>

## FAQs

### Custom home Design Projects

#### DO I NEED BOTH AN ARCHITECT AND INTERIOR DESIGNER FOR MY PROJECT?

THAT DEPENDS ON YOUR CHOICE of architect and your preferences. Typically, architects are responsible for the space planning, structure and exterior of the building, while interior designers are called upon to do kitchens, bathrooms, and select interior finishes. However, some architects (including us) also excel in interior planning and finish work, so you will have a **single source of both creative vision and responsibility**. If you use a separate designer, make sure they collaborate with the architect so all decisions are coordinated to achieve an harmonious design throughout.

#### HOW CAN I GET A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENT DESIGN STYLES AND FIGURE OUT WHAT I LIKE BEST?

UNTIL RECENTLY, PEOPLE WOULD buy design magazines and cut out pictures they liked. Today's online resources provide a much easier process and more comprehensive range of images to search and select from.

A great website for residential design is houzz.com. They have an enormous library of images submitted by architects, designers and suppliers that are easily sorted by room type, style, and budget. You can create "Ideabooks" on their website, where you save images you like. Use them like file folders to separate different aspects of the project. After a while you will notice patterns develop that illuminate exactly what "your style" is. This is also a great tool to **share with your architect, who can then help you synthesize this into a cohesive design aesthetic** that you helped to create.

Pinterest is another source for searching for images with keywords. Like houzz, you create "Boards", which are collections of images with links back to the original source. You can "pin" photos from almost any source to your Pinterest boards, so you're not restricted to their own web site for reference material.

#### HOW LONG WILL MY PROJECT TAKE?

THINK ABOUT AND SHARE WITH your architect key target dates that are important to you. When do you want to start and finish the project? Bear in mind, as a rule of thumb, depending on the scope of the project, it takes **at least 4-8 months to finalize the design, prepare construction drawings, hire a contractor, and obtain building permits before construction work can begin**. If you need a zoning variance to build your project, this process can add several months. You are less likely to be disappointed if you allow at least 6-9 months for work on existing homes and about 12-18 months for new homes. Times may vary depending on the scope and complexity of your project.

Gary Rosard Architect, NJ

WWW.GARYROSARD.COM

Find answers to frequently asked questions about custom home renovations at our website:

**GARYROSARD.COM/RESOURCES**