

"Architecture should speak of its time and place,
but yearn for timelessness." **FRANK GEHRY**



Blueprints

ISSUE 11

Occasional Musings of a New Jersey based architect

WORK IN PROGRESS

NEW HOUSE, NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Our design for a new house in Chatham, NJ includes several building technologies that make the construction process easier, use more durable materials, and provide increased energy efficiency and comfort for the home. These are systems that are fabricated in a factory and delivered to the site as components assembled in conjunction with the standard building methods.

THE FOUNDATION is a Superior Wall system that combines the concrete, rigid insulation, interior metal studs, and integral waterproofing in a single panel. No poured concrete footings are needed, these panels rest on compacted gravel footings. A huge crane lifts each panel into place where the crew guides it into exact position. Joints are sealed, and it's ready to go. The entire foundation of the house was completed in one day. The interior metal studs will be further insulated with conventional batt insulation.

THE ROOF is also a prefabricated design- structural insulated panel system (SIPS). As the name implies, the structure and insulation are an integrated



system. 12" thick rigid foam insulation is sandwiched between plywood, with minimal additional wood framing to make connections and other details come together. It takes a lot of coordination on a house like this, with multiple roofs and varying slopes, to make sure every detail is resolved before the panels are fabricated and delivered to the site.

The advantage is a very tightly insulated roof system without the thermal break of wood roof framing every 16".

THE SHEATHING of the house—typically done as a layer of plywood or OSB (oriented strand board, or often referred to as particle board) with a water retardant house wrap before the siding goes up— is a ZIP system panel that combines the plywood with a layer of rigid insulation and an outside surface that is the water retardant layer all in one. The

extra insulation on the outside provides a blanket around the entire house and limits the thermal transmission through the wall's wood stud framing.

A growing trend of fully pre fabricated homes hasn't really caught on in our area, but the use of pre fabricated components is a valuable tool for improving the quality and performance of an onsite custom built home.

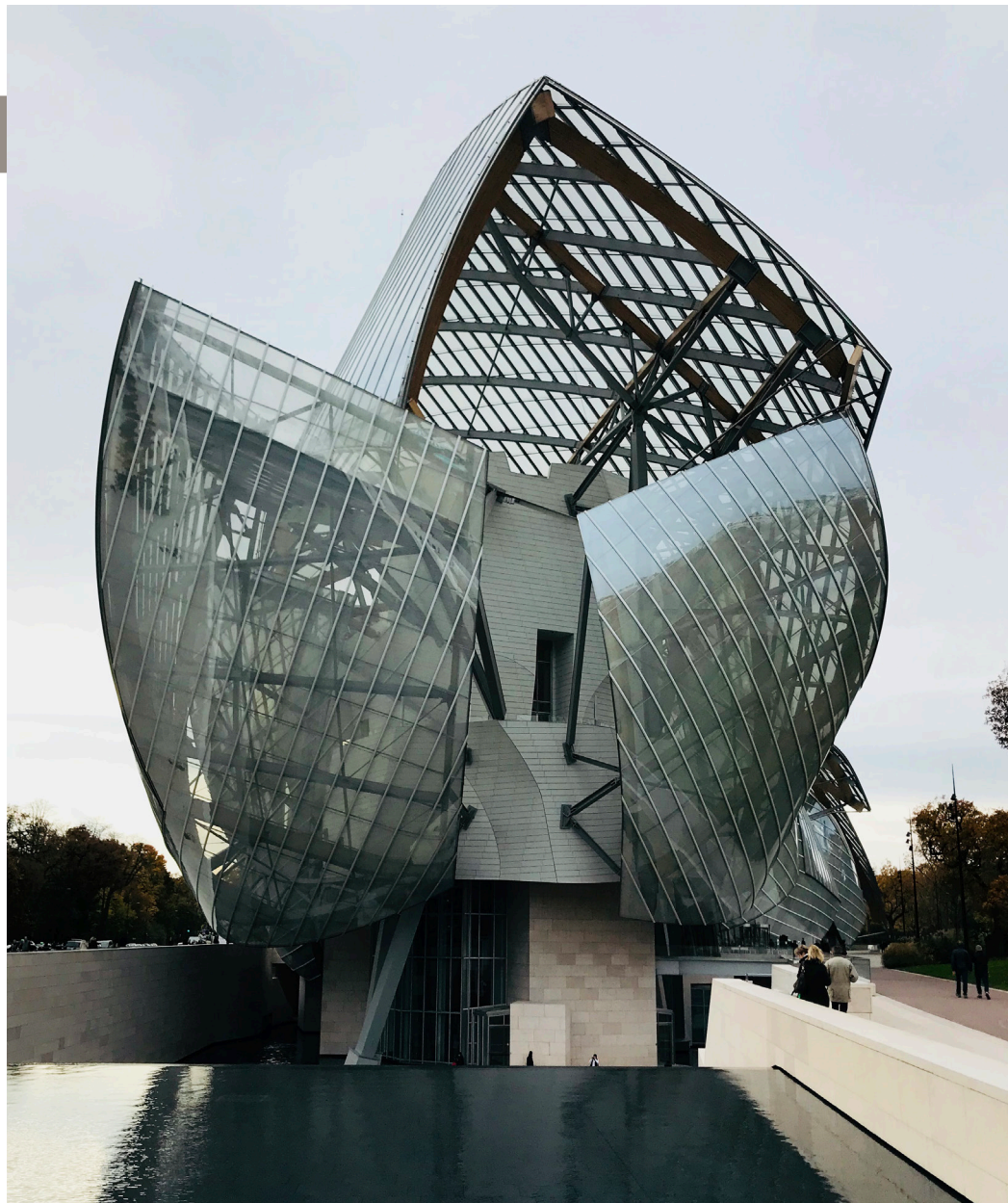
BUCKET LIST ARCHITECTURE

Fantasy blends with Form, and Takes Flight

VISIT PARIS, AND THAT FAMOUS plentitude of iconic monuments, museums, parks, plazas and boulevards will fill up every day of your trip. But sometimes it's fun to throw something different into the mix, and in Paris —more than any other old city— you will find a number of fascinating modern buildings worth a visit. For me, the most compelling among them is the Louis Vuitton Foundation, in the Bois de Boulogne.

Approaching on foot (a 10 minute walk through the park from Les Sablons metro stop) I first saw massive glass "sails" that seemed to rise and burst above the trees. As the entire building came into view I sensed that this visit was going to be something very special. I had previously experienced varying levels of disappointment with other Gehry buildings I had visited, but not this time. A manifestation of such daring vision is hard to argue with.

The Foundation was started in 2006 by LVMH and subsidiaries. Chairman Bernard Arnault stated that "We wanted to present Paris with an extraordinary space for art and culture, and demonstrate daring and emotion by entrusting Frank Gehry with the construction of an iconic building for the 21st century." The actual program



Gary Rosard Architect, NJ

matic part of the building was a small part of the overall structure, allowing the building to carry the structural and spatial gymnastics throughout and create exciting experiences from top to bottom. From the multi-level roof terraces to the ground level outdoor spaces, the virtuosity of Gehry's vision left me in awe.

I couldn't help wonder what it cost to build something like this. My first guess was well above \$500 million. In fact it was closer to \$900 million. Some may question the appropriateness of spending close to \$1B on a relatively small art center. And there was controversy about taking valued park space to build this center. The Eiffel Tower was also controversial and despised at the time of its construction, and now is the beloved symbol of Paris. The Gehry building will be studied and will hopefully inspire people for years to come, and may itself become itself as iconic a monument as any other in Paris.



How to find the right Contractor for your job



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ZACHARY GETTMORE

Selecting the right contractor is a crucial decision you'll have to make. Understand clearly your options when deciding which qualified professional to take on, as this home is surely one of the most important investments you will ever make, not only in terms of monetary value, but also in terms of your happiness and well being. Important factors in deciding on a contractor:

- *Experience level / appropriateness for your type of project.*
- *Cost.*
- *Availability.*
- *Reputation.*
- *Trust, and the right amount of chemistry.*

There are generally two ways to select a contractor—multiple competitive bids, and preselecting your contractor. Here is a summary of the difference between them:

1) Multiple competitive bids

ADVANTAGES:

- Multiple bids offer the opportunity to compare several contractors' pricing to try to get the best value.
- Going through the bid process provides an opportunity to assess a contractor's understanding of the project and methods of communicating before making a commitment.

DISADVANTAGES:

- Waiting until all the drawings are complete before getting accurate pricing of the project.
- Adds extra time to the pre-construction process
- Temptation to select a very low bid can lead to problems down the road.

2) Preselecting your Contractor

ADVANTAGES:

- Contractor becomes part of the team early in the design process.
- Project budget can be developed along with the design process.
- Can get the project started more quickly.

DISADVANTAGES:

- Not knowing if you're getting the best possible price.

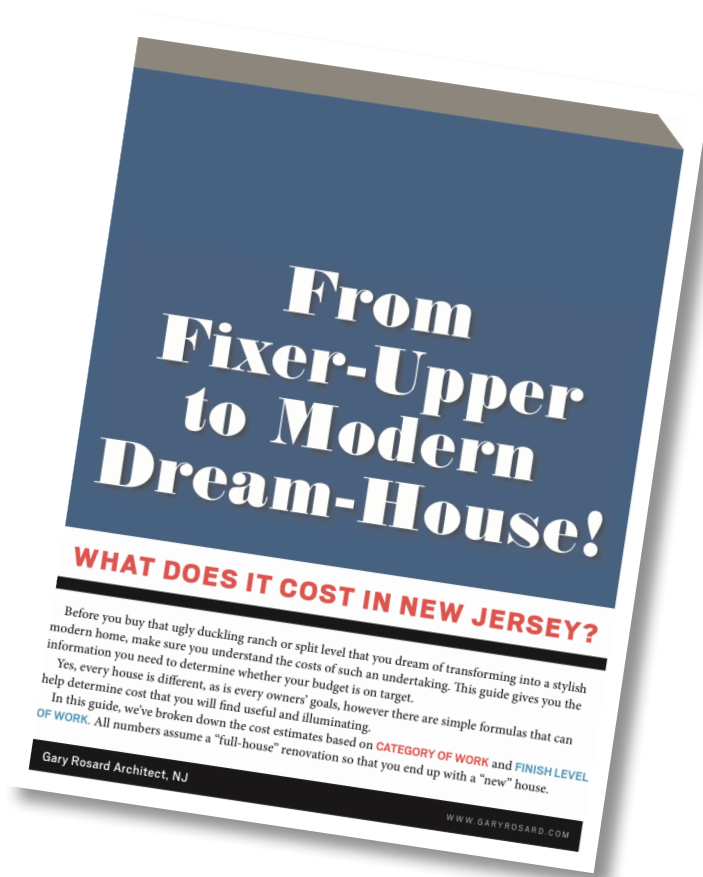
FOR MORE DETAIL ON THIS TOPIC, SEE THE LATEST BLOG POST ON MY WEBSITE.



“Modern” is more than a look;
it’s a way of being at the world. It means
rethinking stereotypes and questioning
assumptions of “how we’ve always done it”.
At Gary Rosard Architect, we continually
strive to find new ways of doing things,
while always heeding our mission of creating

“Comfortable Modern Homes.” See more about what this
means to us at:

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questions about custom home
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