

STATE OF COLORADO

STATE BOARD OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Charles H. Adams, Program Director

1560 Broadway, Suite 1350
Denver, Colorado 80202
Phone (303) 894-7800
Fax (303) 894-2310
TTY: Dial 711 for Relay Colorado
www.dora.state.co.us/la

Department of Regulatory Agencies

D. Rico Munn, Executive Director

Division of Registrations

Rosemary McCool, Director

Business and Technical Section

Angeline Kinnaird Linn, Section Director



Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

April 1, 2009

Greg Williams
Association Manager
ASLA Colorado Chapter
PO Box 200822
Denver, CO 80220

Dear Planning, Building and Local Government Officials,

I am the Program Director for the Colorado State Board of Landscape Architects. I want to share some information with you about the Colorado Revised Statute (C.R.S.) Title 12, Article 45 that requires all landscape architects in Colorado have a professional license as of January 1, 2008.

Planning and building codes and professional licensing laws are meant to work together. Planning and building officials and the State Board of Landscape Architects (the Board) each exist to protect the public against unsafe design projects. The Board endeavors to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the general public by ensuring that all licensed landscape architects have the proper education and training, and pass a rigorous examination on technical and practice issues. County or local jurisdictions promulgate and adopt planning and building codes while their staffs enforce code requirements that are intended to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the general public. If planning and building officials require all construction documents for non-exempt designs to bear the appropriate signature and seal of a licensed landscape architect, then licensure will share the responsibility for protecting the health, safety and welfare of the public.

Colorado has limited exemptions permitting unlicensed persons to prepare landscape architectural construction documents for residential design services for single-and multi-family properties of four or fewer units excluding their common areas; irrigation systems design; and others. However, it is clear public policy that landscape designs of significant size or complexity exceeding the exemptions must be designed by Colorado licensed landscape architects.

Licensed landscape architects are, and should be, responsible for their professional services. The public, as well as planning and building officials, rely on their professional expertise. As a result, professional submissions such as planning and site planning documents that result in construction documents should clearly show the identity of the licensed landscape architect who prepared them by having affixed a seal and signature and otherwise complying with the requirements of state law. Without proper identification, ultimate responsibility for any deficiencies may not be clear.

The law and applicable codes in Colorado require that professional submissions be signed and sealed by the licensed landscape architect who prepared them or has taken responsible control for them. Specifically, this law is C.R.S. 12-45-117 and can be found on the State Board website at www.dora.state.co.us/la/Statute.pdf

As a general rule, planning and building officials should require that all construction documents have the seal and signature of either a Colorado licensed landscape architect as appropriate, or have a notation on the construction documents stating that the plans are exempt from the statute requiring them to be prepared by a licensed landscape architect. Planning and building officials facing litigation or defending their actions in other arenas should not have to explain why they could have required construction documents to be prepared, signed and sealed by a landscape architect, but chose to accept construction documents from an unlicensed individual when the law or planning and building codes may not have allowed that unlicensed individual to prepare the construction documents in the first place.

On behalf of the Board, I would also like to request your assistance in helping the Board regulate the unlicensed practice of landscape architecture. You can check the current licensure status of any licensee with our Automated Licensure Information System On-Line at www.doradls.state.co.us/alison.php and you can always report license law violations and unlicensed practice to the Board by filing a complaint form located at www.dora.state.co.us/la/complaints.htm.

Your planning and building departments and the State Board of Landscape Architects can work together effectively to protect the health, safety and welfare of the general public.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Board office at 303-894-7775 or email us at la@dora.state.co.us.

For the State Board of Landscape Architects,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles H. Adams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Charles H. Adams
Program Director