



For the past thirty years, David M. Schwarz has been the sole shareholder of David M. Schwarz / Architectural Services. But this has now changed. Those who have been with the firm longest and have played major roles in bringing the firm to where it is — Tom Greene, Craig Williams, Michael Swartz and Gregory Hoss, have become shareholders. To reflect this, the firm's name has changed as well. We are now **David M. Schwarz Architects**. Along with the name change, we have evolved our visual identity. We thought a new name deserved a new look.

THE MAN WITH THE PLAN



Rendering of Master Plan for Regent Square in Houston, TX.

By ninth grade, it was quite obvious that Michael Swartz was going to be an architect, even though architecture wasn't a part of his school's formal curriculum. He was the only kid in his small-town Pennsylvania high school with a subscription to *Architectural Record*. During biology class, he would doodle floor plans in the margins of his notebooks.

When his English class was assigned a project on William Shakespeare, most kids wrote a paper. Michael stumbled upon an architectural plan for the Globe Theatre in the appendix of a library book and handed in a 2x3 feet replica model of the famous performance venue complete with elevations and finishes. The Tudor style façade was fashioned from cardboard infill and popsicle stick framing. The model included details down to curtains on the box seats overlooking the stage. "I'm a procrastinator. I did most of it at the last minute. It was my first experience charretting," Michael jokes.

But what sealed his fate, says Michael, was a rendering of a new bank for his hometown that appeared in the local newspaper. "I didn't have a clue about urban design or good planning but I knew this bank looked ridiculous. It was a colonial suburban structure set back from the street in the middle of downtown." Michael wrote a Letter to the Editor articulating the design's deficiencies. The paper printed it. The bank got built anyway and Michael went off to Carnegie Mellon to study architecture.



Master Plan for West Village in Dallas, TX.

PROJECT UPDATES

Spartanburg Business School

DMSAS will complete Schematic Design on the University of South Carolina Upstate — George Dean Johnson, Jr. College of Business and Economics on July 31, 2008. This 60,000 square foot, three-story building will be the University's first building in downtown Spartanburg. It will be adjacent to the recently completed Chapman Cultural Center. DMSAS is partnering on this project with McMillan Smith and Partners — the Architect of Record.



Current Schematic Design model for the University of South Carolina Upstate — George Dean Johnson, Jr. College of Business and Economics

After school, Michael took a job with a very small firm in Washington, D.C., which afforded him the opportunity to design more than other kids fresh out of school. With a few years experience under his belt, Michael was ready for more. "At the time, there was tremendous growth in D.C. and I wanted to learn more about all these bigger buildings going up throughout the city," he recalls. In 1982, a David M. Schwarz / Architectural Services — now David M. Schwarz Architects (DMSAS) — building being built on Connecticut Avenue caught his attention. Shortly after, he interviewed with the firm and took a job. Since then, Michael says, he's seen no reason to leave.

"I liked the firm's approach to design and architecture. It had a practical process that appealed to me," says Michael. "We don't go in with preconceived notions of what things should look like. We look at the site. We talk to our clients. There's a logical progression. There are steps to creating the right plan."

Although Michael attributes it to luck of the draw, perhaps it's his appreciation of a good plan that has led him to focus on a lot of the firm's planning work. During his tenure with the firm, he has overseen many of the firm's master planning projects as project manager. He was involved in the firm's master planning work in Fort Worth and the West Village neighborhood of Dallas. He oversaw the master planning for Southlake Town Square and Duke University's Central Campus. These days



West Village in Dallas, TX.

he is wrapping up the firm's planning work for Regent Square, a 24-acre mixed-use development in Houston.

"Much of what has been built in the United States over the past sixty years has been the result of planning primarily for cars, not people. I live less than a mile from one of the largest, most successful retail centers in the country and my kids can't safely walk there. If we had planned our communities based on a different set of priorities, I don't think \$4.50 a gallon for gasoline would be such a big deal. I'm optimistic there's still time to correct things."

CREATING A DOWNTOWN FOR SOUTHLAKE

David M. Schwarz / Architectural Services was a well-established firm around Fort Worth by the 1990s, so it was no surprise when Cooper & Stebbins tapped them to plan the development of 135 acres of land in the suburb of Southlake. The mandate was to create a commercial center for Southlake, which up until this point was comprised of a series of residential subdivisions and several modest size retail strip centers. Together, the client and DMSAS ended up creating a true downtown.

One of the first things DMSAS did was illustrate for the client the true potential of the site. DMSAS did this by overlaying the

block grid of downtown Fort Worth on the site. They wanted to illustrate just how large and how much could actually be done with the site. From this exercise, they began to evolve the Southlake plan into a system of streets and blocks with considerations larger than just retail. "The beauty of a grid system is it's easily understood. You can find your way around and it gives you rational pieces of space to develop over time," explains project manager and DMSAS Principal Michael Swartz. "We wanted to develop a network of blocks that was irrespective of the program. A good master plan should be viable for the next fifty to a hundred years."



Concert in downtown Southlake, TX.

DMSAS wanted to create a denser, more urban feel than typically found in most Texas suburbs. They proposed two-story structures for Phase 1 with retail on the ground floor and offices upstairs. The combination of both uses would create a symbiotic relationship of support and bring more activity to the neighborhood. In a prescient move, open space would also be an important element. The client requested that a major public square be a focal point of the project. There was a great deal of precedence for this in small Texas towns. The client was particularly fond of the public square featured in the movie "Back to the Future". This incongruous film title

proved an appropriate epigram for the DMSAS's design team's careful analysis of traditional town planning principals and the building forms that characterize the American Main Street.

Halfway through the design process, interest in moving City Hall to the site was expressed. DMSAS studied several alternative sites and settled on a location that prominently overlooked the main public space with commercial avenues flanking both sides. DMSAS was asked by their client to sketch out a rendering of what the new city hall might look like. Rumor has it the rendering ended up hanging in the mayor's office, and not surprisingly, DMSAS was later commissioned to design the building.

The first phase of the development, which came to be known as Southlake Town Square (a quarter of the overall site), opened in 1999. The community immediately embraced it as a place to go — to just spend time and, of course, to shop. On the opening day, six national retailers broke first day sales records.

Over the next few years, Southlake slowly grew building by building, and community

programming such as "Art In The Park" and an annual July 3rd celebration took root. In 2003, the next big commercial phase — Grand Avenue — came to life bringing with it an additional 100,000 sq feet of retail space, a movie theatre and a hotel. Concurrently, a residential project brought 30 townhouses to Town Square, all of which sold before ground broke on construction.

"It has been really gratifying to go back to Southlake and to see people sitting in the cafes, using the parks and living their lives there," says Swartz. "It works as an environment and it demonstrates that there are better ways of building. Rightly so, our clients are looking for an economic return on their investment, but we're learning that when a project creates a real sense of community, it's an investment that pays even bigger dividends."

With about a fourth of the site left to develop, plans for things such as several office buildings and senior and condominium housing are being contemplated. But, as Swartz reiterates, "the plan continues to show its flexibility as the developer entertains a variety of future projects."



Southlake Town Square.

PROJECT UPDATES

Spoletto Festival USA

The producers of Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina have retained David M. Schwarz Architects to conduct a preliminary study to determine the appropriate major adjustments to their current facilities at Gaillard Hall.

Columns for Carmel

On July 23rd, Steve Knight and Craig Williams traveled, along with colleagues at CSO Architects and a small army of contractors and subcontractors, to Bybee Stone Company, Inc. in Ellettsville, IN. The group reviewed limestone fabrication progress for the Carmel Regional Performing Arts Center. All is going well as seen in this picture of Job Captain Steve Knight beside one of the massive, 10-ton, fluted column sections.



Limestone columns for the Carmel Regional Performing Arts Center.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MASTER PLAN?

A master plan is the framework on which the other elements of a place build. Think of the master plan as a kind of skeleton with the buildings being the organs, muscles, and skin; and the uses and programming the soul. All three come together to create the full essence of a place. Keeping its relationship to the whole in mind, here are some of the considerations that define a good master plan.

- It relates to its immediate surroundings and, ideally, forms connections with the larger community.
- It has a distinct hierarchy of streets which relate to the surrounding context and the uses accommodated within the plan. Streets aren't just for cars; they serve a multitude of uses and are the fundamental component of the public realm.
- It has a hierarchy of civic space. It looks for opportunities to create important sites for civic or institutional uses.
- It locates uses to take maximum advantage of existing patterns and conditions. For example, stores should be placed where they can thrive economically, where foot traffic is heavy and they are easily accessed.
- It takes pedestrians into consideration. The plan should foster a good walking environment. This touches on issues of block length, street width, open space and location of uses.
- It must consider access to the site. Unless there is a strong mass transit system, it must accommodate the car. Parking issues need to be addressed in a manner that functions well but that doesn't compromise the character of the place.
- It should be flexible and be able to change as the conditions of the marketplace shift.



Master Plan for Southlake, TX.

FAMILY NEWS



DMSAS Staff at the Annual Summer Party.

On July 19th, DMSAS hosted its annual summer party which was attended by more than 80 employees, family and friends. Given the firm's increased work in Las Vegas, there was a Vegas theme. The party included craps, roulette and black jack tables; a wedding chapel, an annulment center and, of course, Elvis photo-ops.

Best wishes to all in the David M. Schwarz Architects family celebrating a birthday in August: Francisco Herrera (Aug 3rd), Joseph Rapazzo (Aug 21st), Lisa Tzareff (Aug 23rd) and Craig Williams (Aug 26th).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

We welcome your feedback and comments to our newsletters. Submissions can be sent to newsletter@dmsas.com for potential inclusion in our next edition!

Here is some of the response we received from our last edition.

Dear Friends at DMSAS,
I particularly enjoyed issue # 3, in which you include delightful personal insights into Craig's early years and progression in the firm, which inclusion differs pleasantly from ubiquitous newsletters that merely stress the facts and tend to be overly commercial. There again, knowing the firm quite intimately over the past years, through our close professional associations in all the featured DMSAS' Performing Arts Centers across the country, why should I be agreeably surprised? Bravo on very readable and professionally written content! Sincerely,
Stewart A. Donnell, FRICS.
President, DCI. Tampa. FL.

Dear David and Tom,
I was very excited to read about all your successes in the performing arts over the past two decades, and especially pleased that you traced it all the way back to DOWNTOWN STAGES, our study with the League of Washington Theatres in the early eighties. Thanks for remembering. Very Best Wishes,
Howard Shalwitz, Artistic Director Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company

To The Editor,
Your newsletter is quite inspiring and exciting. Well done and well written! **CeCe Link, Design for Business Interiors, LLC (former DMSAS Sample Room Librarian).**