



GENERAL ENGINEERING CONTRACTOR • LICENSE NO. 406464

July 18, 2006

Custom Home Magazine  
Pacesetter Awards  
One Thomas Circle, N.W., Suite 600  
Washington, D.C. 20005

**Re: Pacesetter Award Nomination for:  
Jim Murphy & Associates,  
"Management" Category**

Dear Selection Committee:

Jim Murphy and Associates has long been known as the "premier" custom homebuilder for the Northern San Francisco Bay Area. Their well-earned reputation for excellent service and the highest quality construction has rewarded them with a steady stream of return clientele. For well over 15 years, I have had the distinct pleasure of working with their management teams on a variety of projects as one of their site work subcontractors.

Why would a subcontractor nominate a general contractor for a top management award? That's simple. JMA's management systems, company philosophy and professional personnel consistently provide the structure needed for all their projects to run smoothly, and that enables us to optimize our work.

Their management procedure starts with the bidding process. Adequate time is given to all subcontractors to properly research and estimate each project. Each and every subcontractor is treated equally and with the highest of bidding ethics. A very detailed scope of work is provided with complete bidding documents; and specific inclusions, exclusions and clarifications are discussed in advance of bid time so that all bids can be objectively compared.

Almost unique to JMA is their provision at bid time of an anticipated construction schedule, and the current permit status. This information is hugely helpful for all subcontractors trying to optimize their crews and workload. Once successful with a sub bid, contract negotiations are simple because all the pre-bid documentation is included in their subcontract. Their contract terms and conditions are industry standard, and are consistent from project to project, so little time and expense is wasted setting up new projects to start.

Once a contract is signed, we are introduced to JMA's "Project Team" for that particular job. The team consists of the project manager and site superintendent, and the duties and responsibilities of each are clearly stated at the outset of the project.

A complete prejob is then scheduled with JMA, the owner's representative; the project soils engineer, the design professionals, and appropriate City/County agency representatives. Every aspect of the job is discussed, and each attendee is considered an integral part of the project team. Only then is a detailed construction schedule generated and provided to all to comment upon before committing to. With most other general contractors, unrealistic schedules are established without the input and subsequent buy-in from their subcontractors and outside professionals and the negative outcomes of such schedules is quite predictable.

JMA considers their primary role to be one of construction manager/facilitator. They pre-screen all their subcontractors prior to bid invitation to ensure that everyone on their team is qualified, experienced, and capable or working in such a transparent management group. Every member is treated with the highest of respect and consideration. While JMA retains a clear line of communication through them to the project owner, often subcontractors are invited to participate in planning and value-engineering sessions as respected members of the project team. Instead of apologizing for their subcontractors, JMA is proud to involve them in the process.

The simple things really do make a difference. Phone calls to JMA are always returned promptly. We are always told the truth, and not some convenient distortion fabricated to capitalize on a perceived opportunity. From a field perspective, there are clear communications between their project managers and site superintendents on a daily basis. We are never delayed simply because "the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing" on JMA's team.

Of huge significance to us is the fact that their site superintendents clearly understand their authorities and responsibilities. If we are ever given field directives to perform extra work, JMA has always stood behind the decisions of their field managers, and we were always paid.

JMA's management team is also strongly supported by their inside office staff. Change orders, monthly billings, pay requests and project correspondence is quite timely and professionally managed. Our calls to their main office are always returned in a timely fashion, regardless of who placed them.

Page: 3

From top to bottom when dealing with Jim Murphy and Associates, the process has always been smooth, professional, consistent and predictable. No excuses are made, no blaming someone else at the firm for a shortcoming that affected our company, as everyone on their team takes personal responsibility for getting the job done right.

Jim Murphy and Associates' successful business model is a simple one: assemble a team of professionals, treat them like professionals, exhibit excellence in planning and construction management, sustain the highest quality standards, and the highest business ethics, and clients and subcontractors alike will get in line to work with you. I can honestly and enthusiastically say that **Jim Murphy and Associates are the standard by which other custom homebuilders should be measured against.** Thank you for accepting our comments while considering them for this prestigious award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Douglas Hamilton", written over a horizontal line.

J. Douglas Hamilton  
President  
Oak Grove Construction