



EPISCOPAL
HIGH SCHOOL
of JACKSONVILLE

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June 22, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

In the fall of 2000, the Episcopal High School of Jacksonville made the decision to build a boathouse for our growing crew program. As Headmaster, I was pleased that we were able to secure the services of Jeff Peterson, who was in the process of starting his own firm, Peterson Architects. Jeff had recently handled the design and construction responsibilities at the Princeton University Boathouse, a beautifully conceived building considered by some to be the finest boathouse anywhere. We are pleased that, in our opinion, Jeff's success at Princeton has been exceeded by what he has created for us with the Walton Boathouse!

Although we hired Jeff in large part because of his specific experience with the design of rowing facilities, we were, in the end, just as impressed with other qualities he brought to the design and construction process. Let me highlight four areas.

First, Jeff's understanding of the unique qualities of the site led him to create a building that feels well suited to its location. For example, the exposed structural system subtly alludes to the many Live Oaks on the site, and the colors selected for the building are natural to its surroundings.

Second, we were also delighted by the qualities of the spaces, particularly those that do not necessarily relate to the building's function as a boathouse. The east-west axis of the second floor is striking. A glass-enclosed space looks back to the east. The beautiful gallery, with its maple wainscot, leads to the trophy room, and here the building reaches its apex as timbers rise above the adjacent rooftops and windows admit natural light. The beautiful trophy case serves as the focal point in this central place in the building. On the west side of the building, the axis terminates in our outdoor classroom, built-in bleachers under a dynamic shed roof.

Third, the lighting throughout the building is excellent - sometimes dramatic, sometimes understated, always sympathetic to the quality of the rooms. Perhaps even more important is the fact that the quality of light in the spaces is very different, but equally superb, during day or night.

Finally, the quality of the details is also consistent and thoughtful. Jeff has carefully selected and juxtaposed materials and colors in a skillful way. For example, the built-in bench in the east landing contrasts sleek maple with the texture of the colored concrete block, and the form of the bench recalls the shape and ribbed construction of the rowing shells.

Jeff has other qualities that should appeal to any prospective client. He is careful and thoughtful, thorough and responsive. He was also a diligent agent in controlling both the costs and quality of our project, and he understands issues of campus context. He has, in fact, provided us with some important thoughts regarding campus master-planning. He was a pleasure to work with, and we would be pleased to hire Peterson Architect again for additional campus projects!

Sincerely,