Criteria for the Acquisition of Architectural Records - Clemson University Libraries

General Considerations

- The focus of collecting is upon records from South Carolina firms documenting primarily South Carolina structures.
- The physical condition and degree of arrangement of the records influences the decision to acquire material.
- The significance of the architect/firm and structure is important as is the uniqueness of the records.
- Material must be donated, not loaned. It is assumed that copyright will be transferred to Clemson University and the records made accessible to members of the general public as well as architects, faculty and students once they have been arranged and described. The donor usually has some level of immediate access to the records depending upon how well they are organized and inventoried.
- There should be an understanding regarding what happens to material that Clemson University Libraries does not wish to keep.
- A donation agreement needs to be signed prior to the transfer of material.
- Employees of the University Libraries will be responsible for the examination of records and determination of what is to be transferred and usually transferring the material.
- Unless special funding is provided, the arrangement and description of these records are fall into the processing priorities of Special Collections. Obviously we hope to have material accessible in a reason period of time but large collections of records take time to arrange or even provide a minimal level of access.

Priority Material to be Acquired

- **Records documenting the firm** - Articles of incorporation, partnership agreements, annual meetings of stockholders, annual reports, marketing publications (sample if a lot), newsletters.
- **Project files** - These are the heart of a firm’s records documentation. Records for permanent preservation include preliminary drawings, working drawings, visual materials, and accompanying textual records such as correspondence, notes, contracts, specifications, environmental impact reports, meeting minutes, reports, news and journal articles, and manufactures brochures if important for a project. Not every building project may need be kept and archivists need to consult with professional architects regarding the significance of a firm’s or individual’s projects.
- **Records documenting the firm and its partners/employees involvement in professional, governmental, civic, and philanthropic activities and organizations** - Architects and architectural firms frequently play leadership roles in national, state and local historic preservation and revitalization organizations, building programs for organizations they have joined, and conservation programs.