



Considering Feng Shui For Builders and Architects

By Sherry B. Ways, Principal, Design Scheme Interiors, LLC

Feng shui (pronounced “fung shway”), literally translated, means “wind and water.” It is a 4,000+ year-old Chinese natural science that theorizes that the environment is considered an integral element in the art of living. There has been an increased interest in feng shui in the business world since the early 1990s. Real estate developer Donald Trump is among those who have used it to position their companies for success.



This lobby was designed using feng shui techniques.

Chi (pronounced “kee”) is the life force energy that is influenced by all things and is a pertinent factor in all life forms. The purpose of the practice of feng shui is to maintain and increase the circulation of chi in our environment to allow us to be healthy on all levels through our energy system.

When our chi energy is blocked, we experience all kinds of negative factors in our homes, including sickness, loss of income, stress, depression and overall discontentment with life. Chi needs to be in balance in our lives and environments.

In addition, the concepts of yin and yang as well as the five elements must be considered. Yin and yang states that all opposites must

live and coexist within each other. Balance is achieved when two truly opposite concepts exist. The five elements provide those things in our lives that help us achieve yin and yang — water, wood, fire, earth and metal.

Architects, designers and builders are educated to pursue designs with originality and novelty. However, feng shui focuses on enhancing the lives of the individuals who will occupy the space being designed. Feng shui is all about helping individuals or dwellers to achieve the highest possible quality of life in whatever design style is chosen.

Here are some basics for builders and architects to consider in order to integrate the feng shui elements:

1. In the programming stage, it is best to ask the client(s) what is the primary purpose of each space of the building or home.
2. For site selection and analysis, first determine the energy of the surrounding area, the direction of the flow of energy to and from the property, the orientation of the building, shape of the lot, topography and shape and height of the building to be

developed. For developers, this will largely determine the occupancy rates and willingness of buyers to purchase down the road.

3. In construction document preparation and when exterior and interior materials and finish decisions are made, consider the affects of yin and yang and the five elements (earth, metal, water, wood and fire) and the impact on the appropriate energy level of the clients who will use the building.

For property developers, architects and builders, not only can feng shui be a valuable selling point, it can also help to improve your customer's satisfaction with your product. By working with your architects or drafts people at the design stage, we can develop a feng shui-friendly design to improve the energy flow of the proposed property and thus improve the property's popularity with buyers.

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