

THE ARCHITECT'S ANGLE

John W. Baumgarten Architect, P.C.

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John Baumgarten
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Do You Know That...?

- John W. Baumgarten Architect, P.C. is experienced in the renovation of large commercial kitchens. We have successfully completed several complex kitchen projects where we drew upon our multi-disciplinary expertise to coordinate a complex mechanical infrastructure.
- Our combined experience in both the Food Service and Health Care arenas gives us the ability to understand the phasing and logistics of undertaking a significant kitchen alteration while maintaining a code compliant Food Service delivery system.

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Up On The Roof

During the 1950s, the Drifters sang about how being "up on the roof" could make one's problems melt away. In recent years, we have often suggested that our clients also look skyward to solve some of their facility's spatial problems. Every health facility needs more space. Whether it is needed to expand an existing function or to support new programs, space is still a most sought after commodity.

In most cases, particularly in urban settings, a horizontal building addition may be difficult to construct. City facilities generally do not have the land required by zoning regulations to support "building out". Even if some land is available, it is usually being used for parking, service/loading bays or outdoor recreation space.

In the rare case where adjacent abutting parcels might be on the market, high land values usually make their acquisition cost prohibitive. When faced with such restrictions, the answer might be to "build-up" instead of "out".

In our recent project work, we have been able to use existing roof setbacks to construct building additions, creating new programs and amenity space.

The process starts with a review of the governing zoning codes to determine whether the addition can be constructed as-of-right or whether a variance is needed. Using the "right" design approach, a variance can most often be avoided.

Next, the building's structural system (beams, columns, joists and decking) must be evaluated to determine its carrying capacity. Roof decks are designed to support 30 pounds per square foot. Health care spaces require anywhere from 40 to 50 pounds per square foot. Large open recreational/dining spaces require 100 pounds per square foot.

Based on these structural requirements, an existing roof structure at 30 pounds would need to have 10 pounds of excess capacity to support a therapy suite requiring 40 pounds. In most cases, this level of addition can be done with only minor modifications to the existing structure. However, a 100 pound dining room addition would most certainly require significant structural modifications.

Although building a rooftop addition requires careful study by an experienced hand, the payoff in light, air and views can significantly enhance your facility's environment.

John W. Baumgarten Architect, P.C.: Recent Roof Projects:

