



Executive of the Month: Chin, SVP of healthcare, at Structure Tone brings a unique perspective to project approach; 30-year construction industry veteran, 20 years in healthcare

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After 30 years in the construction industry, 20 of them in healthcare in N.Y.C., Joe Chin knows that collaboration is the fulcrum upon which successful project delivery balances. "To best meet the needs of the hospital, or other healthcare client," said Chin "Requires the architect, the engineer, other consultants, the construction manager, and, of course, the client all working in tandem from the earliest possible stages."

Chin brings a unique perspective to his project approach. He was trained as an architect, graduating from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with a bachelor of architecture and a bachelor of science in building sciences. From the start he was focused on both design and construction.

During Chin's course of study, the master builder was the individual that fascinated him most. "The master builder was the architect, engineer and construction professional all in one. The ability to provide the client with an end product that met the budget, and that could be constructed within the schedule without compromising the design, aesthetics and functionality of the space all rested with the master builder." Chin's fascination has never waned and it has guided him in the design and construction industry ever since.

As Chin's career evolved he had opportunities to work in both design and construction, honing his understanding of the master builder. As he gravitated to construction, he was able to interact with more complete teams (owners, design architects and engineers) and to experience the growth of design-build and the benefits of all forces working together.

"My experiences progressively showed me that collaborative efforts with the design team and trades more reliably produced projects that were constructed as designed, under budget and on schedule," said Chin. "More importantly, it met the client's needs and requirements without the typical conflicts." More and more, Chin found that he was able to contribute his experience to help the design team to work out construction details in a cost effective manner, producing documents that equally addressed design intent, constructability and schedule.

Looking back at benchmarks in his career, Chin sees collaboration as the hallmarks of these efforts:

- * 12 years carrying out renovations and build-outs for Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
- * Design-assist for the curtain wall systems for the Bloomberg building at 731 Lexington Ave.
- * Three weekends at Ground Zero after 9/11
- * Design-build of an eight-floor, state-of-the-art wet lab in a 50-year-old building for Mount Sinai Medical Center
- * A scheme for NY Presbyterian Hospital to construct a mobile crane on a rail system on the roof of the hospital (positioned over the FDR Drive) to facilitate not only steel deliveries but also sequenced steel erection and precast facade panel installation to enable construction of an addition on top of

an operational and occupied hospital with minimal impact to the hospital staff and patients

After 20 years of practical experience, Chin said, "A sequential process from concept to plan to design to construction to testing and commissioning is no longer most prudent or effective." Based on his experiences, he recommends collaboration in the pre-concept development stage (bringing the owner, architect, engineers and construction manager together before a plan is evolved). This offers far greater cost and constructability certainty through accurate budgets and schematic design. From the beginning, a project is looked at in its entirety rather than from the siloed perspective of a discipline. This results in a cost efficient process without compromising design intent. "Constructability is reviewed concurrent with design so that changes due to fabrication and construction issues are included in the design and do not become changes after contracts have been let. This, we all know, results in the dreaded change order and delay," says Chin knowingly.

Chin notes that owners thinking that they cannot assemble a team at the early stages of a project, before approval or funding, is the old way of thinking. Now, with design-build and design-assist, owners can engage teams for feasibility studies and preconstruction services to assist them in establishing all of the details of a project that need to be considered. "It's all done before the shovel hits the ground. Collaborative efforts and maximum results...utilizing resources most effectively and providing the client with real certainty about cost, schedule and quality," said Chin.

Having joined Structure Tone healthcare last fall, Chin will continue advocating for collaboration as early on as possible and all throughout the project delivery process. "I am committed to providing our hospital and healthcare clients with the best professional team at the start of the project to achieve maximum results in project delivery and cost certainty."

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