



2021 Ones to Watch: Stéphane Lefebvre, Stantec

April 20, 2021 - Spotlights

Name: Stéphane Lefebvre, PE ENV SP

Title: Principal and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) sector lead in the NYC area.

Company Name: Stantec

What recent project, transaction or accomplishment are you most proud of?

I am especially pleased with one of our team's most recent projects, the completion of the transit improvements associated with One Vanderbilt Ave. Our team helped design and coordinate over \$220 million in transit improvements to ease congestion in the Midtown East Area. This is by far the largest private contribution toward the NYC transit system to date and required six years of close coordination with multiple stakeholders to ensure full integration within the neighborhood, Grand Central Terminal, and forthcoming East Side Access project. This Transit Oriented Development (TOD) represents a big achievement in the realm of public/private development that sets the path for many more to come. In fact, we are already working on several other major TODs including 175 Park Ave. and Penn 15, which will not only significantly improve the community and transit experience, but also support NYC's economic recovery at a much-needed time.

How do you keep your team motivated despite conflicts and obstacles?

When working on TOD projects that are highly beneficial to the communities where we work and live, it's not difficult to stay motivated and inspired. But, with any project of this scale, obstacles and demanding project schedules are inevitable. The major keys I use to keep a high level of team engagement are thinking positive, thinking big, and thinking together. All obstacles can be seen as challenges or learning opportunities. By pulling the team to break challenges down one at a time and work together with the big picture in mind, it always tends to spark synergy and make the project a lot more fun and meaningful.

Who was/is your mentor and how did s/he influence/help you in your career?

For the last decade, Stuart Lerner who serves as COO – North America at Stantec has been very instrumental in my growth and recent successes. Stu has more than 30 years of experience in TOD and transportation infrastructure and his work stamina and business acumen are exemplary, if not extraordinary. He has not only gotten me involved in several opportunities throughout North America, but also provided me with a lot of exposure to various meetings and situations such as transactions, negotiations, and conflict resolutions for me to soak up and learn broadly and deeply. Stu has provided great freedom and autonomy on some of our team's most difficult projects, but still

has made the time to monitor and provide guidance at critical times despite having an extremely busy schedule.

What did you want to be when you grew up?

I never had a specific career or profession in mind as far as I remember, but, from a young age, I always loved to draw, design, and construct. I was deep into Legos for many years of my childhood, literally; and my younger self would be dumbfounded to see me doing pretty much the same things at a macro scale today. It all happened organically which is pretty amazing.

Top three things on your bucket list:

Purchase a home in Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat; learn how to kite surf like a pro; Stay a couple nights on Voyager Station with my wife and kids when open.

Favorite quote:

“It’s not the load that breaks you down; it’s the way you carry it.”

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