

## Citizen Architect, Rick Neumann, AIA



Rick Neumann has enjoyed the fruits of a successful career in architecture, both in his role providing architectural services and as a citizen architect in Ann Arbor and Petoskey. As Rick shares, “While we specialize in buildings, architects are generalists. We are trained to consider the larger built environment and think about the systems that support and are supported by buildings – utilities, roads, sidewalks, and institutions, like education, healthcare and recreation. We are trained to think about how the individual components of the built environment work together to

make the larger whole function well. Architects provide an important perspective to develop ideas of how to improve our quality of life and how to get it done.”

Rick began his career in architecture in 1970 after graduating from the University of Michigan, working with Johnson Johnson & Roy and later Preservation Urban Design in Ann Arbor, focusing on historic preservation and restoration. In 1979, he started his own firm and moved to Petoskey in 1980 to live in northern Michigan, where he has practiced ever since. As a sole practitioner, Rick works from his 112-year old shingle-style house. His projects include new and remodeled homes and cottages, including historic cottage renovations, and small scale commercial and institutional buildings.

Rick has volunteered on many civic organizations over the years, starting with the Cobblestone Farm Association (1974-1980) and the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission (1976-1980), and continuing throughout his years in Petoskey with: Emmet County Construction Board of Appeals (1984-current), Little Traverse Regional Historical Society (1984-1986), Petoskey Water Resources & Development Commission (1982-1985) which became the Petoskey Tax Increment Finance Authority (1985-2009), Petoskey Library Commission (1982-1985), Petoskey Downtown Development Partnership (1987-1994) which became the Petoskey Downtown Management Board & Downtown Development Authority (1994-2002), and the Petoskey Planning Commission (2010-current).

As a member of these groups, Rick has contributed to projects that have changed the face of Petoskey and created the northern destination that we know today, including redevelopment of Petoskey’s waterfront park and redevelopment of Petoskey’s downtown.

As Rick’s involvement has demonstrated, architects that serve and lead impact how the profession of architecture is perceived and respected. They help improve the profession and the built world by teaching and showing others that we can make our communities better through great buildings, parks and downtowns.