

To Whom it May Concern,

In 1998 we decided we wanted to build an authentic craftsman house in Willow Glen. Gil was on the list of architects we planned to meet. In our first meeting, it became clear that he was going to be the person we wanted to work with. His regard for excellent design and his honest, direct interaction gave us an adequate level of confidence that he had the ability and the discipline to help us realize the house we were imagining.

After further diligence, we enlisted Gil to design our house. We were surprised at how quickly he came up with the first realization. It required some tweaks here and there, but he had essentially captured everything we had discussed.

I'm sure Gil thought we were a little difficult to work with because we brought a lot of changes into the project as we got new ideas. Gil was diligent to make us aware of the cost and schedule impact of our ideas, but never showed displeasure or reticence to accomplish what we wanted to do.

As we got into the project, I was most impressed with his high level of creativity. The design was complex to begin with, and it didn't help that we changed the octagon to a nonagon mid-project. I have a strong engineering background, and during the course of the project, I developed a high level of confidence in Gil to work us through any and all of the difficult issues we encountered. He was a master at coming up with the right solution in spite of the level of technical difficulty.

The house is one of the shining stars in Willow Glen. For the first couple of years, people would stop their cars in the middle of the street and admire the house. We were proud owners the entire time we lived there. The following is a list of accolades and articles regarding the house...

- Published in the Spring 2005 issue of Arts & Crafts Homes
- Wendy (Gil's spouse) got an ASID interior design award for her work inside.
- Published in the San Jose Mercury News in 2006
- Several page layout in "Along Bungalow Lines" by Paul Duchscherer and Linda Svendsen published in 2006 and distributed nationwide.
- One of the stars of the show in the Willow Glen home tour

When we moved to Portland, we hired an architect to design a garage and shop for us. The difference was notable, in that although he came highly recommended, he lacked most of the things we appreciated about Gil. In particular, we missed having an architect who was not only involved in the design, but was often on site interacting with the contractor and owner in a team effort to ensure that what was being built was what was designed. Gil was pro-active on our San Jose project through final stamp of approval. It was obvious that he really cared about our project.

Later, when we decided to do two remodels of our Portland house, we enlisted Gil, even though he was 700 miles away. Again, he was a joy to work with, and the contractor was impressed with the ease at which he could work with Gil in spite of the distance. We plan to do more work in Portland in the future and expect to see Gil again.

A little background on me; I was a silicon valley techie for 35 years and held VP positions with both Microsoft and Cisco. I was chairman and COO of the Hotmail startup, and logged a few years at Apple, HP, and Sun.

Respectfully,
Rex Smith