Asks & Answers:
Interviews with archivists on born-digital design records

SAA Research Forum 25 July 2017

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Overview

- Who we are: CAD/BIM Taskforce, SAA Architectural Records Section
  - Past and current research efforts
- Current interview research project and goal
- Methodology
- Preliminary findings

Architecture design then and now

Hedrich-Blessing Photographic Studio, view of the drafting room, 1942, Albert Kahn Associates, Ford Motor Bomber Factory, Willow Run, Michigan, Gift of Federico Bucci © Chicago History Museum.
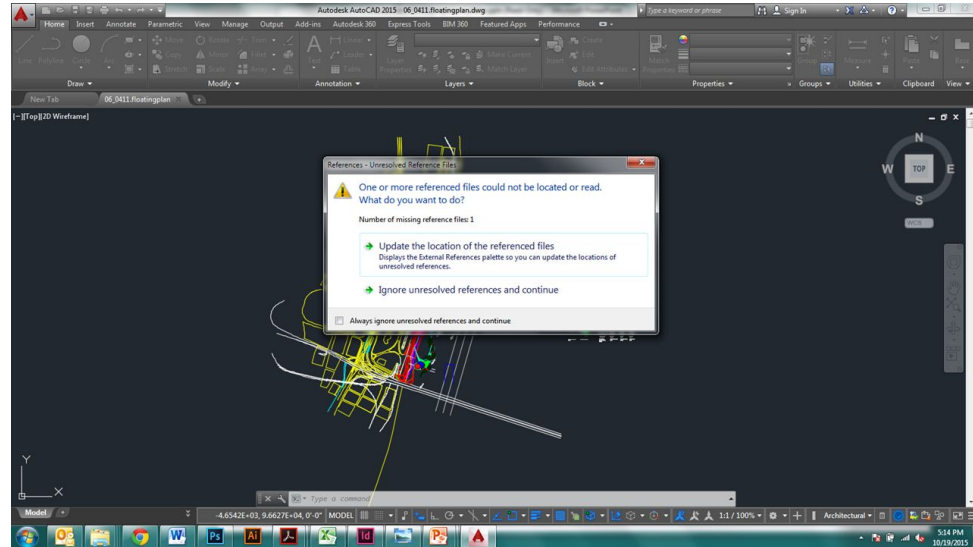
Floating plan drawing, St. Louis Riverfront project, Balmori Associates, 2001-2006. Balmori Associates Records (MS 1885). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

CAD/BIM Taskforce

CAD/BIM Taskforce past and current efforts:

1. Develop an advocacy group to develop strategies and begin to articulate our needs (2015)

2. Born-Digital Survey (2016)
   (Survey authors: Kurt Helfrich, Dana Lamparello, Aliza Leventhal, Christina Marino, Gwyneth Thayer, Jody Thompson, Cailin Trimble, Emily Vigor, Tim Walsh, Sam Winn)

3. Digital design software glossary (2016-2017)
   (team: Pamela Casey, Aliza Levanthal, Christina Marino, Tim Walsh)

4. Research Interviews: 13 in-depth interviews to date, more to come (2017)

Research Interview project 2017

Goal:

- Understand current practices and resources among peer institutions

- Understand how archivists are preparing for or managing these collections

- Understand the issues and challenges specific to born-digital design archives

Research interview team: Pamela Casey, Aliza Levanthal, Suzanne Noruschat, Molly Tighe, Emily Vigor

Methodology

"Digital Archive for Architecture (DAArch)." Art Institute of Chicago/Kristine Fallon Associates, 2007.
http://www.artic.edu/collections/digital-design-data

"FAÇADE: Future-proofing Architectural Computer-Aided Design." Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2006-9; Harvard University and MIT, 2012-ongoing.
http://osc.hul.Harvard.edu/liblab/proj/facade2

"Preserving Computer Aided Design." Digital Preservation Coalition, 2013.
http://dx.doi.org/10.7207/twr13-02

Methodology

Preliminary findings

1. Need to understand what **donor documentation** we should be gathering
   - Checklist of questions could be shared between repositories

2. Need for **training and understanding of basic competencies** for archivists with design software
   - Could our Section offer training sessions with designers/architects?

Preliminary findings

3. Concerns about **software preservation** (vs migration) and **accessing legacy proprietary software**

   - Emulation is the ideal to allow researchers access to files in native formats

4. Internal and external **advocacy** for these needs and resource allocation

   - Sharing ideas between section members to help make the case internally

5. How can we develop an understanding of **future research interests**?

   - Consider how to leverage existing relationships with design firms, architectural historians, academics, etc

Thank you!

Questions?

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