



September 28, 2010

Dear Sir or Madam:

I highly recommend Michael Phinney and the services of Phinney Design Group for your project. Mike's firm provided Architectural and Landscape Design Services for the restoration of our building, Universal Preservation Hall (UPH). UPH is an 1871 church being renovated to serve as a performance and event hall; once completed, it will comfortably seat up to 700 guests. It is currently being booked for music performances (both classical and contemporary), theatre, dance, lectures, and other forms of performing arts. It is also rented for conferences, weddings, meetings, and parties. The space is also the permanent home for the Universal Baptist Church, the only African-American Baptist church in the Saratoga area. Mike has been intimately involved with the Universal Preservation Hall for many years – from the onset of our restoration back in 2001 to the first event held here in 2007 and to the present, helping to secure and promote events that highlight the Hall's best attributes and features.

From his initial involvement, Mike has readily taken charge of the design aspect of the restoration. As our building was in dire need of renovation, Mike personally oversaw the work being done, ensuring that the historic aspect of our building was never compromised. Not only has he given freely of his time and expertise, but he has also led the way by giving financial support, setting an example to volunteers and community members alike. The professionalism of his firm is also of the highest caliber and all of his staff members are easily approachable. They also give generously their time and effort not only to our non-profit, but also to other local organizations.

We are honored and grateful to have Mike involved with our on-going projects here at UPH. One only has to stand out front of our stately and beautiful building to see a fine example of his high standards, vision, and excellent craftsmanship. Our historic Garden Plaza, once completed, will serve as a model of his work for many years to come and we are proud to have Mike as one of our board members. Please do not hesitate to call me or contact me by email at manager@universalpreservationhall.org. On behalf of UPH, thank you for allowing me to submit this letter of recommendation.

With my best regards,

Mary Beth McGarrah
Manager, UPH