



DONALD KING ARCHITECTS

for S

13 January 1998

President and Board Members
African American Heritage Museum & Cultural Center
2301 South Jackson Street - Suite 101-G
Seattle, WA 98144

Re: **Comments and Questions on the Architect Selection Process**

Dear President Flowers and Board Members:

Over the past few months, I have heard disturbing news about the resultant award of the architectural contract for the Heritage Museum and Cultural Center. In the process of seeking the planning and design contract for your facility, the Donald King Architects (DKA) Team expended many hours of work and thousands of dollars. I owe my team members an explanation of the rumors regarding events following our unsuccessful competition for this contract.

It is my understanding that the firm awarded the contract was neither of the firms the selection committee represented as being selected, nor was the awarded firm ever in competition for the contract. If true, this is highly irregular, improper and unfair to the other firms competing for the award. I've outlined the following comments and questions relating to questionable issues of the selection and contract award. I would appreciate a written response to each item.

Increase in Fee After the Selection Process

I have information that the fee represented during the selection process (\$50,000) was subsequently increased to nearly \$80,000, prior to award of the contract. Prior knowledge of a possible larger fee would have enabled competing firms and their team members to expend more finances on the Statement of Qualification and interview process of the competition.

Did the selected architect have prior knowledge that the fee would be increased following the selection?

Reduction of Scope After the Selection Process

If the scope of work was reduced, following selection and/or award of the contract, it would be a great benefit to the winning prime consultant. A prime consultant who can delete tasks, which involve subconsultants, is able to retain more of the fee for his firm. The ability to get more money for less work would have been an additional incentive to the other competing firms.

Was the selected architect involved in negotiating a higher fee and reduction of scope, thereby increasing the fee for his firm?