

Worcester Telegram & Gazette  
Sunday, December 10, 2017

## **Business Matters: Interview with Michael A. Pagano, president, Lamoureux Pagano Associates Inc.**



Posted Dec 10, 2017 at 6:00 AM

After 43 years with Lamoureux Pagano Associates Inc., the last 10 as president, principal architect Michael A. Pagano, 69, of Shrewsbury, announced in November his retirement at the end of 2017.

He joined the firm in 1975 and became a principal in 1987. Executive Vice President Kathryn “Katie” Crockett is stepping into the role of president Jan. 1.

*The firm’s extensive portfolio through Worcester County includes preservation, new construction and renovation in both the public and private spheres. What is your perspective on all that you and your teams have accomplished?*

“The growth of the firm — it essentially grew out of Lamoureux Associates — has really been pretty remarkable, from a very small firm to a company now that has the resources, experience to take on projects of almost any size and scale and complexity and type, as well. ... Diversity of our portfolio is another feature of LPA that I’m proud of. I like to point to the year we signed a contract for Worcester Technical High School (1998); within a few weeks, we also had an agreement to do a kitchen addition on a house on Salisbury Street. The size of the project was never really a motivating factor to take the work. Was it someone who would really benefit from our help? Was it a project of interest to us? We would take on almost any kind of project that we had interest in, when we thought we could be effective.”

***So much of your work has received acclaim — the Hanover Theatre for the Performing Arts, Mechanics Hall, Worcester Tech. Is there a project, perhaps a quieter success or a pro bono effort, that you most enjoyed working on?***

“One of the thoughts that came to my mind is the St. John’s Food for the Poor project. When we celebrated our 40th anniversary, instead of having a big party, we decided to commit ourselves to select a worthwhile cause and to provide the services pro bono, to design something, we didn’t know what. Frank Carroll, from the Small Business Service Bureau, called shortly after we made this decision and said he had this idea for a food distribution and kitchen that would serve the underserved ... And we did that project. It was very worthwhile work and with a very modest budget.

“One of my favorite projects also was a residence I did years ago in West Boylston. That one in particular pointed to the value of the services that we provide. The homeowner came to us and had a (photo) montage of a two-story, pseudo-Colonial, breezeway, garage kind of design ... After we saw the site and learned what attracted him to the site, very slowly we began to convince him that this was not the design for that site. To build that house on that lot, it would’ve destroyed the features that attracted him to it in the first place. It became a much more different design, and when they occupied the house, they spoke to how happy they were with the result.”

***How have you and your teams kept the two aspects (of project management and client relationships) in balance as drivers of your success?***

“Fundamentally, we provide a service. We help people to get to a place that they need to be ... whether it’s project management or the design of a particular building, whether it’s the architecture, it’s all one. Someone comes to us, puts their trust in us that we’re going to help them get to a conclusion, give them a building that will serve them well, won’t be terribly expensive to maintain, be within budget, on schedule and be a joy to experience — that’s what we do.”

***LPA is a corporate partner with Preservation Worcester. What guidance would you offer for planners and developers for the future?***

“We still have many interesting buildings that point to the roots of this city that should be preserved. Not every building because it’s old should be saved ... It’s important that LPA will continue to support Preservation Worcester, Preservation Massachusetts and other groups that

share that vision. We always embrace the opportunity to work with historic buildings and adapt them to contemporary uses ... We're committed to doing what we can to help the city grow and improve, and I know that after I'm gone that'll still be the case."

***Do you have an immediate project in mind once Jan. 1 gets here?***

"No, I'm going to be very selective and limited in terms of what I do for work. I intend to do more community service, and I would like to travel and spend more time with my (two) grandchildren ... I also intend to do whatever I can to help LPA ... I'm leaving at a time when I know that the company is very, very well suited for success. It will thrive going forward."

***Is there anything that I haven't asked that you want to discuss?***

"The one thing I would like this interview to convey to the community is the growth and success of LPA is attributable to the good people who work here. We've had amazing talent come through this firm and remain here ... A client comes to us and they're going to get the very best service that's available anywhere. The buildings we've designed speak for themselves."

— *Compiled by correspondent Laurie Schlatter*