

**From:** "robert couturier" <[REDACTED]>

**To:** "Jeffrey Epstein" <jeevacation@gmail.com>

**Subject:** Re: Problems questions and delays...

**Date:** Wed, 12 May 2010 10:06:24 +0000

**Importance:** Normal

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OK... I think my head is going to split open

Sent via BlackBerry from T-Mobile

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**From:** Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>

**Date:** Wed, 12 May 2010 01:33:31 -0400

**To:** <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** Re: Problems questions and delays...

lets talk today... i very much appreciate candor and honesty, i hope you are not getting this flu

On Wed, May 12, 2010 at 12:07 AM, <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Jeffrey,

I'm writing to you because I'm concerned about how the project is going, and I'm afraid that if things continue as they are now, neither of us will be happy--either with the process or with the final result. So I'm sending you some thoughts which, although they may sound blunt, will at least, I hope, have the virtue of being honest. Whether we part ways or continue to work together, I think it's important that I be frank with you so that we both know what the issues are before we proceed any further.

Little Saint James is, of course, a wonderful property, but my fear is that the way we are currently approaching it is highly inefficient at best, and is, at worst, setting us both up for disappointment if not downright disaster. As I see it, the principal causes of this inefficiency are as follows:

(1) Four other architects have preceded me on Little Saint James--in just the past two years, no less--with the result that there is very little unifying thought behind the project: the parts that should work together do not, in fact, do so and buildings have been constructed in what seems to be an altogether random fashion, with no thought as to how they should cohere into a whole. This ad-hoc approach to the construction not only poses

significant problems for the aesthetics or "look" of the place; it also creates exceedingly problematic differences in ceiling, roof line, outside stairs, heights, hazardous walkways, and so forth. The kind of resources you are devoting to this property should, without question, yield a finished product that does not suffer from such glaring stylistic and technical flaws; given my own reputation for work of the highest caliber, I would not be satisfied in putting my name on a project that was, because of the chaotic conditions that doomed it to failure long before I appeared on the scene, bound to look shoddy and ill-conceived in its final form.

(2) Indeed, I am frustrated principally because decisions that I myself had no part in making--and to which I haven't been given the chance, at least not thus far, to come up with thoughtful, responsible, high-quality solutions. The way we have been working thus far seems to be to be the absolute opposite of the way in which good design is always done, which is to proceed from a general, well-thought-out, unified [stylistic and technical] overview that will in turn provide a logic and a framework for the particulars (such as the finishes in your bathroom, the arches you want to have in front of the main building, etc etc). At the moment, I feel you are asking me to start with a rather dismayingly haphazard set of minute details, and to work from there to come up with an overarching vision. I have never worked that way before, and I'm not comfortable that I will be able to do so in this case. Design thoughts do not--at least in my long experience--emerge from a vacuum. They require time and reflection and editing (allowing certain ideas to evolve and others to be eliminated along the way). By contrast, I have felt--to look just at the recent example of the library courtyard--that I have inherited "as-is" problems which couldn't, in fact, be solved as they were, I got the real existing conditions a week ago, and which thus meant a substantial waste of my time and work, and of your time and money.

Given, again, the specialness of the property, I would hope that you and I could come to an agreement about a different approach going forward--one that would allow me to formulate the "big picture" framework that alone will make the finished product harmonious and elegant, and that will prevent it from looking (as it is currently poised to do) like a bunch of

bits assembled willy-nilly with no serious thought or consideration. To that end, my professional recommendation would be to close down the job for a couple of months--at least stopping construction on the residential part--and use that time to develop an "as is" plan (as well as a carefully elaborated budget) for the project as a whole. I strongly feel that you need to do this, whether or not I remain the architect on the project. The last thing either you or I want is for Little Saint James to look--after all the time and money spent on it--weird and unattractive, yet that is exactly what will happen if work continues to proceed in the current fashion.

Inevitably, in that case, you will be extremely unhappy with what you end up with, and it will all be your architect's fault! Obviously, this is not at all what I want--for you or for me.

Again, I am leveling with you like this because I feel so strongly that both you and Little Saint James deserve better--and that I myself am capable of infinitely much better--than what is happening on the job right now. I do hope you will take my honesty in the spirit in which it was intended: as a respectful expression of my desire that this project be done *right*.

With best regards,  
Robert

PS: Don't know what is a consequence of what but I am getting equally as ill as you were last week...

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