

Principal & Co-Founder at RODE Architects - Eric Robinson

Transcript

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Introduction: Welcome to Green Building Matters, the original and most popular podcast focused on the Green Building Movement. Your host is Charlie Cichetti, one of the most credentialed experts in the green building industry and one of the few to be honored as a lead fellow. Each week, Charlie welcomes a green building professional from around the globe to share their war stories, career advice and unique insight into how sustainability is shaping the built environment. Settle in. Grab a fresh cup of coffee and get ready to find out why green building matters.

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Charlie: Hey, everybody, welcome to the next episode of the Green Building Matters podcast. I'm your host, Charlie Cichetti, and I just love once a week I get to interview architects, engineers, contractors, but really green building professionals somewhere in the world. And today I've got Eric Robinson with us. He's with Road Architects. He's a principal and co-founder in the Boston area. Hey, Eric, how are you doing today, man?

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Eric: Good morning, Charlie. Good to see you.

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Charlie: I'm excited to learn more about you because you came highly recommended from our guests, which is saying something. Eric, I love to get that origin story first, though. take us back. Where did you grow up and go to school?

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Eric: How far back do you want to go, Charlie? I can start at the beginning of time.

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Charlie: I want to know those influences. Some grew up near nature. Some traveled the world with their parents.

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Eric: I grew up in the Washington, D.C. area outside of Washington and Alexandria, Virginia, actually. I spent my formative years there from first grade through high school. We lived really close to the Mount Vernon Estates, George Washington's house, quite beautiful along the river. My father worked downtown in D.C. He was a lobbyist on Capitol Hill for Detroit Diesel Housing, which is a subsidiary of General Motors and its military division. We had a lot of cool things growing up. We would go on helicopters and PT boats and aircraft carriers because he was putting the engines in them. We had this kind of very dynamic kind of youth from seeing some things that were really cool. Spent a lot of time with him and sort of his ventures. We had a house and did a lot of work on the house. He was one of these guys that I am similar to now, my adult life where we worked on the house a lot and I think being an architect now, I reflect back on that a little bit. I was very into the place that I lived in. In terms of the structure in the house we put in skylights when I was like 12 and I was up on the roof with him doing these things. I learned a lot about things, probably not consciously, subconsciously about space, light, kind of three dimensional aspect of that just by doing it and kind of living it a little bit with him. I was always doing art classes and art things with different programs and such, not so formal in a lot of ways, but informal and then in high school I took a couple technical drawing classes, sort of like the basic architecture classes that everybody could take. That was interesting to me, because I had two different teachers. The first one was awesome, I'll say, and the second one was not so awesome. We had a difference of opinion, I'll say, on the final class project in high school about our dream house. He said we were designing our dream house. My dream house was pretty, pretty dynamic. It had curves and all this crazy stuff. I got into this huge fight about it and I was like, "Well, it's my dream house. What are you going to tell me?" I remember he screamed one time, "He'll never be an architect." I

didn't even know that was really what I was thinking. I kind of finished high school with no real plan, like a lot of people. I went to just a four year college to sort of find what I wanted to do a little bit. During that time, I took an art class with one of my professors and he said, "Hey, have you ever thought about architecture?" And I said, "Probably in there somewhere." But then he recommended that I transfer to NC State actually, and went into the design program in NC State and transferred in and started there and kind of that was the sort of. Basis of my education and early life.

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Charlie: Those influences and how you describe the house and skyline that had an influence on you. Good Will Hunting reference. "How do you like them apples?" Hope that high school teacher knows where you're at.

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Eric: I tried to look them up. I've tried to look them up. I won't use his name. I don't know if he's even still around or not, but I think it's one of these lessons that you learn in life or you reflect on in your life, whereas you have these sorts of influences and they can be good and they can be bad. I think you sort of take those and it's not that he spurred me to do this, but I think that he sort of always stuck in my mind. How do you kind of put that label on somebody or sort of talk about things in that way? A lot about it and how that starts to influence all the things you know you do after that.

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Charlie: Thanks for telling us that story. Now we know how you got into architecture. What about green buildings and sustainability? When did that first come on the scene for you?

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Eric: It started when I really probably went to NC State. The NC State program is interesting and I honestly didn't really know too much about it. I have an environmental design and architecture degree, so it's kind of sustainable. It was the basis of the design work that we did at NC State. The

program is based around thinking about sustainable principles from the beginning. Before LEED and before all the sorts of programs that are in place or at least familiar with me, where it was all about thinking about sitting your buildings how they're placed on the site, sort of in their exposure to sun and nature. It was really sort of the inherent kind of basis of design principles of sustainability. That was kind of really the sort of eye opener to the basics of it in terms of my brain.

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Charlie: Mentors, if alluded to some, anyone else maybe along the way you looked up to maybe open the door for you. Any other mentors?

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Eric: I think my first real job, but my first real job coming out. I finished NC State and then I went and worked for a couple of years in Richmond, Virginia for two or three years between graduate school and undergrad. Architecture program is fairly brutal and grueling. I was tired and needed a little bit of a break to reset myself. I worked for a couple of years and then I went to University of Virginia for grad school. When I was at the University of Virginia for grad school, one of my last year visiting professors came to the school from Boston, and it was a husband and wife team, Maryann Thompson and Charles Rose, who had a firm called Thompson and Rose. I had no idea who they were or anything, to be honest, and signed up for their class and spent the semester with them. We did an amazing project, which was actually a real project in Wyoming for the office for at risk kids from South Central L.A. We're being flown out to Wyoming to learn different skill sets. And here we were in school, working on the real project for the office. We flew out there and spent a couple of days in Wyoming, and it was just unbelievable. When I kind of finished up that class or that semester, Charlie and Marianne said, "Hey, if you want to come to Boston, we'd love to have you work at our firm." My wife's from North Carolina. We were sort of southern based in some way and never thought that would happen. But when you come to graduation and you need a job and you

might have one, I said, "Well, let's go." We moved to Boston and I started working with Charlie and Marianne. I think they really took the sustainable principles and then layered on conceptual design work and forward thinking design as really the hallmark of their firm. I learned a lot from them and how to kind of pull all that together. I worked there for about eight years and learned a ton. I was doing work all over the country, very sort of forward thinking, design work, and it was an awesome time to learn more about me as a designer and learn how to sort of. Design excellence and the projects we were doing. So it was all kind of integrated into that aspect of a career.

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Charlie: Mentorship and also them taking a leap of faith on you. It got you to Boston and been there since. Tell us about what it took to start your own firm here with your business partner.

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Eric: As I mentioned, I was working all over the country. I was working a lot. Architects tend to work a lot. We feel very passionate about our work and we tend to work too hard, probably in some ways. But I had been there for a while. It was a good run, no question. But my father actually passed away in that same kind of time. I had a young kid at the time that was traveling a lot and didn't see a lot and then had another kid. It dawned on me that family matters. And not that I didn't know that, but I was away so much and traveling so much that I really needed significant change in my life. I basically told Charlie, I'm leaving and I'm going to start my own firm. I just needed to have more control over my life. And that was really the seminal moment for me. In that sort of same kind of time and cycle, Kevin Dabler, who's my business partner, so I'm the R of RODE. He's the D the R. We were undergraduate classmates at NC State. We were both in Boston. We were friends, we didn't work together, but we were connected. He was kind of going through a similar thing, not necessarily personal sort of issues, but needed to move on from his sort of career where he was.

Honestly, we just said, "Hey, let's try to do this together." And that was about 17 years ago. The rest is history in some way. We both needed a change. So timing's everything, I think, in a lot of ways we took that leap of faith together and here we are.

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Charlie: I've looked at the team profile, the cool projects you're on, and we'll get to that next one more look back, some of your proudest accomplishments. What's on the highlight reel?

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Eric: I'm reflecting back on starting this firm. It's really kind of the thing that's amazing to me. The fact that we sort of just got together and said, "let's try this." We had the right kind of situation to kind of foster this kind of relationship we had was built on respect. They say don't start a firm or a company with a friend. But I think we've learned that you've got to start it with the right friends and it has to be based on a level of trust and understanding. It's not going to be easy. I look back and I think it's transformed my whole life in terms of what I would sort of never could have anticipated. We would be 30 people now doing the projects we're doing, talking to folks like yourself and being recommended is even crazier in my brain. It's just one of these moments that worked out for me. We work hard, don't get me wrong. It's luck and timing and some other things that kind of go into it. But that's really probably one of the sort of moments that I can reflect on. I think that that course is at UNC Greensboro, when I was just sort of figuring it out where my professors said, "Hey, have you ever thought about architecture?" Because I certainly wasn't thinking about architecture at that time. I feel very lucky that things happened and sort of stars aligned in some way. It's all been fairly fortuitous in some way, but that's okay.

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Charlie: I see the passion and you're really proud of your team and projects, you can't pick a favorite kid or favorite p I'm not asking for your favorite project, but there are one or two projects that stand out. Sometimes they're even the small ones, man. That was just a really fun project to work on. There are one or two. You could give a glimpse into that.

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Eric: You're right. We have many, many projects. I love them all. We have been really sort of given a lot of amazing opportunities. What I feel like they all encompass, I guess, or sort of are related is we have super clients actually. Clients appreciate us for who we are and what we do. We are not a cookie cutter architecture firm. We're a firm that thinks about design as a sort of transformational tool. We want to do work that is engaging and sort of thoughtful. Our clients have really been able to understand what we do and respect us for that. All types of projects we've done from the tiniest thing you can imagine to we're doing massive master planning projects with four buildings and a hotel and a residential building and affordable housing building. It's really hard, but I think they all embody a very similar sort of aspect of thinking about the users that are there, the the places that we're designing. We are very site specific. We do a lot of work on making sure the work fits and sort of is knitted to good sort of citizen in its context in terms of the community we're building in. And that's really where we hang our hats. Change is hard for anybody. Boston is sort of still in a massive boom that we've been in. A lot of the projects we do are in the neighborhoods of Boston where it's their established neighborhoods. The people have been there for a long time. And change is sometimes tricky and misunderstood. And I think what we've come to the table with is to talk about how we're approaching the work and what the benefits of it are for the community. So that all said, we have, you know, a couple kinds of highlights, I think, which are for the firm we are working on right now. And it's under construction, the largest supportive housing project in the city of Boston for certain. In some ways, it's kind of one of those career projects of inspiring user groups. Supportive housing for those who don't know, it's really for people that are

formerly homeless and they basically come off the streets and provide them with a space that 's akin to a little bit of a hotel room size, but it has a kitchen full service. We're doing 140 supportive housing units with 76 low and moderate income units as well. So there's 202 units in this building with all the support services for more for the support of housing units for those residents. But the best part about it is obviously that it is amazing and inspiring, especially the groups that we're working with, which is the Pine Street in which is the city of Boston's largest sort of homeless advocacy group and works to shelter these folks. It's in a community. It's in a neighborhood. Here's a project that could be seen with some negativity. And we've built or designed we're building it now. It's under construction, a building that will fit into the community and be a good citizen neighbor with this population. And so that is one of those projects that you just kind of can't believe. It's we're seeing this more that we're doing affordable housing projects which are to go back to your podcast, they are sustainably based though. So this will be a LEED silver building, which is awesome. Right now we're also doing another project that's fully affordable in the city of Cambridge, which will be 140 low moderate income housing that will be a passive house. Amping it up a little bit more. We are also learning how to adopt and adapt these sort of principles to larger buildings. We have done some smaller passive house projects. We actually have done the first certified Passive House residential project in the city of Boston. So that was another one of our projects. It's called Birchwood. It's three single family houses in a standard neighborhood. They're contemporary for certain, but the Passive House, they're built and designed and completed now, but to pass false international standards. It's a high caliber project that we learned a lot about, and our office embraced that. It's amazing to see some of these sort of principles and sort of projects really come together and be the basis of these projects. I think that's something that we're super excited about.

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Charlie: A cool set of projects. It's in your community. It's got the sustainability aspect. I'm a big fan of Passive House and it almost sounds

like it's part of the ethos there at your company. Current day. What's the day like for Eric? Tell us a little more about your architecture firm and we're going to try to take it.

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Eric: As I mentioned, we're 30 people and a mix of architects, designers. We have interiors on staff. We have four interior designers on staff. We have our operations folks that help us keep the lights on and the business going, which is crucial. We are in an open studio environment. We're all sitting in the same space, no offices. We work in an uber collaborative environment. We are in each other's business. We are on top of each other. We talk about design, we talk about the projects. So really my role as I'm learning it as a principal and owner. It's interesting, right? We started this firm. We didn't know what we were doing as owners and principals, and we're learning it still 15, 17 years in how to be firm owners. But we are designers at heart, both Kevin and I. We want to be in the weeds. We can't always be in the weeds because that's not what our role is. We want to be part of the process because the studio is a very exciting environment. We've built a ton of models which people are blown away by, like physical models, like a lot of people are 3D models, but we build models. I'm actually in the shop right now and we test and explore and think about our design projects as a group. I spent a lot of time on the phone, of course, with clients, but my energy comes from the studio and I want to be here. I want everybody to want to be here. That is sort of, I think the basis, as you said, or the ethos of our firm is to have an environment where you're respected as an employee. We don't want you to work 80 hours a week. We want you to come in, give us your best for the time you're here, and we will do it together. We want to be respectful of that. You're on your personal career path and you might be here for a year or you might be here for ten years, and we want everybody to be here forever. But that's just not how it works. We really work hard on ensuring that the culture of our firm is really the foremost and the important piece.

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Charlie: It sounds like an awesome place to work and I do want to compliment you on your project map, on your website. I love the colors. You can see all the diverse projects and all around where you're at. I guess one follow up there is you have chosen to have all these different disciplines, all kinds of different projects, different green building rating systems. Do you have to continually make sure the team is trained up or when you're hiring someone, it's maybe they bring a new skill set you didn't have. I always hate it in business as an entrepreneur or someone says, oh, focus, focus on one thing. Can you speak to that a little bit? How do you stay up to date, make sure the team has these different diverse skill sets so you can do all these different projects?

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Eric: We do a lot of that. We're very diverse. We think we can even be more diverse. We're talking about bringing on graphic designers and some other people, maybe even some landscape designers. When we envision projects and work on projects, we see we look at it holistically. We're not looking at a specific discipline or a difference, we think about it's a design problem or challenge. So that's important. The firm is made up of a high 57. Everybody has come from a different place to bring in their talents and their skill sets that road. We work extremely hard on finding the right people. We have a policy, but we're not really policy driven. We have a policy that we don't hire for projects, we hire for the firm. We want to find people that want to be here, can contribute to the environment we have here and be part of something special in our mind. Everybody brings their skill set. We talk a lot about people coming in with ways they've done it at their firm or previous employer or whatever it is we talk a lot about, That's cool. How do we do it the RODE way? What's the best way for RODE? Need to do it because we're different and we think differently. Those pieces kind of really come together in a way that we don't always understand, to be honest. I think in terms of the sustainability aspect of the firm, one of the things that we have really, I guess, made a conscious effort is to push that a little bit

more forward in the sort of premise of who wrote he is. And we've always been a sustainable firm from a sort of core principle aspect of it, but it hasn't really been pushed to the forefront of who the firm is in terms of if someone looks up sustainability, we're probably not coming up on the first page of the Google list. That's just not who we are, but we are that in the core. For example, we've hired a woman who came from another firm and sustainability is really in her DNA. She has been here about a year now and just crushing us and pushing us forward and making sure we're doing the right things and getting it a little more organized and a little bit more on top of it. She's gotten us signed up on the air 2030 commitment. We are into that. She's also starting to fine tune the way that we talk about sustainability in terms of some pillars and trying to make it make a little bit more sense and sort of approachable so that it's not esoteric. We want people to think like this and design like this and build like this. She's really helped us to kind of hone our skills. She's going to help us make sure we have those things. A lot of that stuff has been outsourced, to be honest. We'll bring in consultants, we'll bring in people that will help us along while we're understanding and learning, of course.

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Charlie: It's a bold move to say, "Hey, let's welcome that in. Let's change things as they say. What got us here won't get us there." I hear you saying there's more you could even do, even though you're doing a lot of great green building projects. There's more you could do, it sounds like, with the firm. A good segway to my next question, one of my favorites, what's next in this green building movement? What are you excited about? What are you reading up on? What do you think's coming at us in this green building movement?

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Eric: I think what we're seeing maybe I mean, we're obviously seeing things like Passive House. The general jurisdictional codes for like a better term. The building codes we have to adhere to are definitely picking up and

creating more stringent standards in terms of a baseline. I think that's good. I feel like the government needs to help lead us on this a little bit because it does come down to dollars. I think that so I think those pieces are great and I support that. The city of Boston is looking to try to be very kind of progressive on this. The new mayor is pushing us hard on obviously we have resilient resilience issues here in Boston with the water and flooding. We're seeing these things needing to be addressed. And that's to me, that's powerful and that's good. Some of the other nuances we probably will and we're seeing it, but I think we'll see more and more modular sort of type construction and maybe not modular in the way some people think about in terms of like the box and the whole sort of space that's built, but component components being more modular. We're seeing bathroom pods, kitchen pods, sort of smaller components that can be factory assembled. So you can track waste better. You can sort of be more efficient. It's built in an environment that is more controlled, obviously, and then brought to the site, you know, put in, cooked up, moved on. We're going to see more and more of that. We're seeing quite a bit of that already. I think that will be something that will carry us for a while. We're seeing much more personalized construction, similar things on exterior walls. We are starting to do and look at more and more CLT buildings, cross laminated timber buildings. We're working on a very cool hotel downtown Boston that will be 12 storeys. We are sort of. Really incredible kind of historical three story building base that we're going to kind of carve out and then create a tower up above for a hotel, which we're looking at cross laminated timber CLT for that building, which will be so cool. We're doing a lot of research on it and understanding it and learning about how it goes together. The building codes are starting to catch up on it a little bit. I think those are some of the trends, I guess, for lack of a better term, that we will be going down.

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Charlie: Amazing trends. You do have a really good feel for it and I love the timber, the embodied carbon side of things, not just efficiency. I'm really impressed is the modular construction that in the in the pods that's

something we're going to start talking a lot more of here on our podcast from time to time, because that's a place I'm spending a lot of my time and so you've got a good feel for and those second, all those trends. Let's get to know you more, some rapid fire questions. What would you say is your specialty or gift?

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Eric: I have a knack of strategy, In some ways thinking about things in a transformational moment and I don't have all the answers. I don't know all the sort of pieces, but I feel very lucky to be able to think strategically about things and visualize things and talk about things. We'll find out how my rating on this podcast is. In a way that I think it's human. I'm not I'm not a high, high, high sort of intellect, to be honest. I'm a guy and we're trying to do some special stuff. But I think at the end of the day, I'm just a guy who's trying to sort of make a living and sort of take advantage of the skills I have. A lot of it is getting the right people around you. To me, probably one of the biggest kind of lessons of this is like hire the right people. People hire people that are better than you, smarter than you, and give them the ability to pull me along. And they do.

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Charlie: Thanks for sharing good habits or routines or rituals. Do you have any good habits or routines you could share?

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Eric: I drink a lot of coffee. That's definitely my ritual. A lot of coffee, way too much. I don't know if I do or not. It's a good question. I will try to think about that a little bit more. I'm approachable, sort of want to be accessible. I want to be there for my staff. I don't run 100 miles a day every morning. I play squash every once in a while. I'll run into the office every once in a while. I don't really have a ton of routines and rituals, to be honest. I'm kind of like one of those guys.

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Charlie: Oh, you're creative. For some, it's even planning ahead. Like, I like to visualize my next day or just sometimes it's the planning. Maybe it's the pen and paper to do a list or not to do list. But I think just the approachability here for your growing team is. That's important, man. How about bucket list as we get to know each other more? I'm a fan of the bucket list. What are one or two things maybe on your bucket list? I don't know. Maybe adventure, maybe some travel. Maybe you want to write a book? What's on the bucket list?

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Eric: Oh, boy. I've never been to Scandinavia. That'd be cool. I think there's sort of like some beautiful architecture and sustainable aspects, so that'd be cool. That'd be a good trip. I'm an avid sailor. I've been sailing my whole life. I sail a lot now. It's my. It's my therapy. I like to say I get out on the water, so I'd love to sail to the Caribbean or something and take some time and be out on the water. It's a special time for me to be out there and think about things. Get away from the craziness of this and the city and things like that. Finding some time for yourself is something I think is important. And I do it on the boat and I do it when I'm working. In my house. I'm very handy. I like to do things. I find time to do stuff with my hands and build and construct and do stuff. Those are sort of some things. The firm is a bucket list item. I don't know if it's checked off or not yet because I feel like the reality of it is I want it to be a legacy firm when I'm gone. I am setting this up with. Kevin, we're both locked in on that, that we want this firm to be a place for people to be part of once we're gone, whatever that means. I'm working on it. I just got a Tesla last fall like that, it's awesome. I've always been interested. I had a plug-in hybrid Prius for a long time and I love technology helping us move these things forward. It's great for me. I haven't been to a gas station for 11 months. I think it's awesome. It makes me really think about what we do because a lot of our projects require charging and sort of we have to have them EV ready or equipped. Thinking about that sort of whole sea change of how we think about fossil fuels and sustainability, I probably think a lot about it more than I probably think I

do in some ways. All of our buildings now are going all electric. It's no longer or not as much. I need gas cooking. Nope. Induction works. We're seeing this stuff happening right now in front of our face. It's something that we as people should embrace and should think about and really sort of envision it. Up here in Boston, it's windy. There's a ton of wind farms planned out in the ocean and sort of these. It's so inspiring to sort of think about how we're trying to kind of really do this. I wish it could happen faster. I think maybe not everybody, but I think I wish it would. But I think we're starting to see it take hold in a way. As designers and architects, we all know buildings are massive energy hogs. We have to do everything we can as leaders to try to think differently about the way we're building buildings and architectures.

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Charlie: I'm a fan of electric vehicles. I've been driving electric cars for about ten years. How about books? Is there a book you'd recommend to our listeners? Could be anything. Doesn't have to be about buildings.

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Eric: I am in a book club, but I'm not that avid of a member. I think they're about to kick me out. I kind of actually asked them if they can rename it book and social club. I do listen to TED Radio Hour quite a bit. I actually don't even go into the TED talks. I'm a TED radio guy where I like to listen because there's shorter stories and sort of different aspects. I do listen to that fairly regularly and there's some amazing sort of ones out there. I think there's one that is called the power of spaces that I don't know when it came out. They interviewed a couple of different people. One of them is Michael Murphy, who was the founder of Mass Design Group, which is a phenomenal design organization that actually was featured on 60 Minutes, I think, in the beginning of the year or earlier in the year, and, you know, really doing some unbelievable work. But then it was also kind of tagged or one of the other stories was David Byrne from Talking Heads was talking about the power of the spaces from the standpoint of him as a performer

and talking about how the different venues he performs in is super important to his show and influential in his show. TED Talk or the TED radio hours are like phenomenal little sort of snippets into things and it gives you a nice overview. If you want to pursue it and take a look at talk, but that's kind of where I sort of spend a little time.

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Charlie: You've inspired me. I've asked that question about books for 250 interviews, and I'm going to change it to a book, documentary, podcast or TED Talk. I'm going to start. Changing it up because I'm glad you went there and that we'll put a link for our listeners in the podcast show notes so they can check out that radio. Last two questions. One Career Advice. Is there anything you wish you had known earlier in your career?

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Eric: I'm lucky. Early in my career, someone did sort of tell me about this sort of notion of hiring people that are smarter than you. I think that's kind of stuck with me. There's the one thing that or a couple other things I think I can think of, I could talk forever. As a firm owner and a business owner and then an architect trying to understand my role, I think that for us, my connection to our clients and the relationships I build with my clients is ultimately critical. I think that the building industry in general, I'll say, it's tough. It's tough to build stuff. The process is somewhat kind of I don't say upside down, but we've been doing it for a lot of years. But it's complicated. We draw something, we hand it off, somebody else is interpreting what we draw and then all of a sudden we build it right. It's not always perfect and it's not a linear process. Those relationships are key when issues come up. We're not perfect and we make mistakes and things are so and I'm a super strong believer in saying, we made that mistake. I own it, we'll fix it, we'll take care of whatever we need to take care of and we'll build out from that. Nobody told me this, but these are things that I think we've learned over the years that you really do need to manage the relationships, because that's what gets us here and that's what I believe. I think that's the ultimate. The

last piece, I guess, would be to really invest in your people and your company. We want to be on the cutting edge of whatever we are doing. So if it's technology investment, if it's time investment, whatever it might be, it can be different things for different people and different situations. I always feel like we need to keep reinvesting and reinvesting in what we're doing to keep us moving forward.

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Charlie: Great nuggets there, man. Thank you. I think people are going to start lining up to come work with you. And that's a good thing.

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Eric: We could use some people. We're hiring.

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Charlie: Our last question, let's say someone is listening to this podcast, man. They're getting inspired by your story. We've talked about a lot of things, cool projects, Green Building Company, what's next? Let's say they're just now jumping in either architecture or maybe green buildings. Any words of encouragement for them?

00:43:13

Eric: Wow. Hopefully the last hour for 45 minutes has been that. Try to continue to learn as much as you can. We are continually pushing people to be uncomfortable. We believe when you're uncomfortable, you're learning. The green industry or even just business owners or whatever it is, it's all about sort of learning what you need to do and I think be true to who you are and don't be afraid to ask questions and raise your hand and do all the obvious things that I think people lose sight of. It's all there. It comes out of us. I think that being true to that, I think is really sort of my only words of wisdom. I believe in it. We talk about our firm as just a bunch of regular people trying to do great work. And that's who we are. And I think it doesn't have to be. I don't think it has to be more than that, to be honest. It just has to be true. I think people really appreciate just being honest and sincere

about what you're trying to achieve and being true to what you believe is a vision. And I guess the rest hopefully will take care of itself.

00:44:39

Charlie: Oh, man, you got me fired up. That's some good encouragement. One of my favorite business authors is Patrick Lynch, and he says you need to hire people that are humble, hungry and smart. Sounds like he got a whole bunch of that going on. Humble, hungry and smart. Eric, thanks for spending time with us. To all of our listeners, check out RODE Architects Connect with Eric on LinkedIn and. Oh, man. Thanks for your time today.

00:45:01

Eric: Thanks, Charlie. It was awesome. Really appreciate it.

00:45:05

Charlie: I just want to say thank you to our loyal listeners. We actually are celebrating over one year here on the Green Building Matters podcast. Me and the entire team were stoked and just so glad you continue to listen every Wednesday morning to a new interview with a green building professional here in this industry, or just some pro tips that we want to make sure that you are getting straight from us, straight to you. Thank you for listening to this episode of the Green Building Matters podcast at GBES.com. Our mission is to advance the Green Building movement through best in class education and encouragement. Remember, you can go to GBES.com/podcast for any notes and links that we mentioned in today's episode. You can actually see the other episodes that have already been recorded with our amazing guests. Please tell your friends about this podcast. Tell your colleagues and if you really enjoyed it, leave a positive review on iTunes. Thank you so much. We'll see you in next week's episode.