



SIGN(S) of the Times

By Brad Anderson

Richard Jones Architecture Redesigning Delray Beach ...One City Block at a time

With each passing week we see more of them. The colorful and vibrant four squared signs have been seen on Atlantic Avenue, along A1A, in North Beach, Seagate, Lake Ida, and just about everywhere else in Delray Beach. They have multiplied, first 5, then 10, then 15. We call them the Sign(s) of the Times and they mark projects designed by Delray Beach Resident and Architect Richard Jones and his creative group working from their offices overlooking Atlantic Avenue and Old School Square. You might even say Jones has become the new "Go to Guy" for inspirational architecture and creative design solutions in Delray Beach.

When we spoke with Richard Jones we discussed Architecture, Delray Beach, and the economy. Yes the economy. Jones says, "I am cautiously optimistic for our cities economic recovery and I can see it happening every day, one project

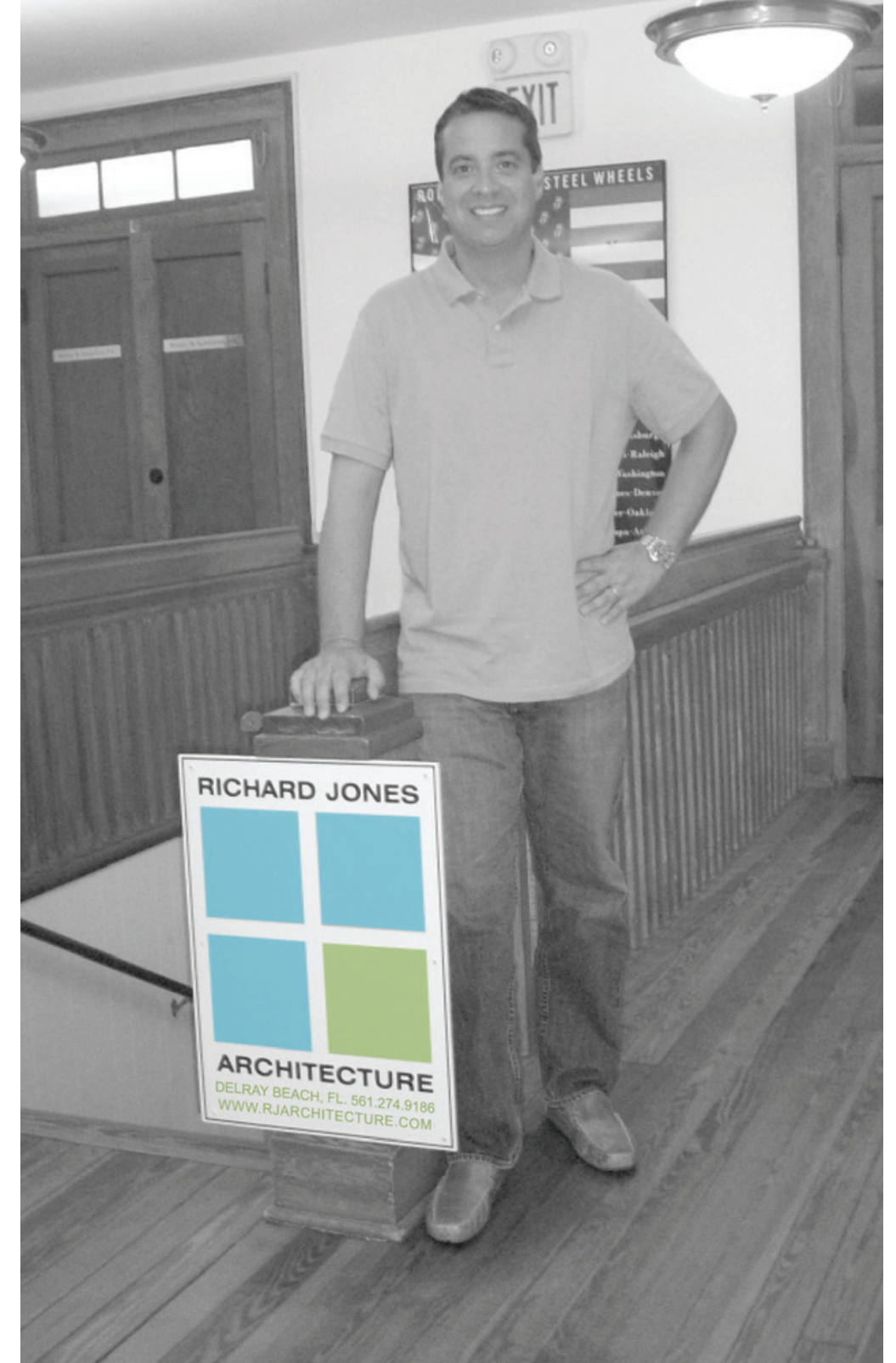
at a time. Construction has always driven our local economy and I am so glad to see projects being built. Delray Beach is very fortunate to be on the front end of any recovery. There are a lot of communities out there still hurting yet Delray

continues to experience modest growth." Jones credit's Delray's success to all the hard work, dedication, and vision of the current and former mayors, city commissioners, and city staff. "They started 20 years ago and some of them

are still at the plate. You see it in their eyes how much this city means to them," said Jones. Jones also credits a talented group of Delray Beach developers, builders, and Architect's and he is so thrilled to be able to contribute.

And contribute he is, in a big way. Just in Delray Beach alone, Jones currently has 8 new custom home designs under way in the North Beach and Seagate communities alone, 6 major renovation/additions in those same communities as well as Lake Ida, along with 2 large scale rental apartment communities, and several Atlantic Avenue hotspots. With many project types Jones is quick to point out his firm's diversity. "We feel equally comfortable designing custom homes, as we do commercial projects, affordable and senior housing, or restaurants. We will look at any size project, we strive to do more with less, by designing efficient structures, with timeless Architecture, and green design principles. We listen, and put are client's goals and objectives first.

Jones past work includes many waterfront condo's, mid-rises and large scale mixed-use communities in South Florida. His firm is licensed and has designed projects in 6 states. However, it's the work he does within the city that he truly loves. We asked Jones about the Atlantic Avenue restaurants, and his latest design which he likes to discuss, Spot Coffee, is under construction and will



CITY PEOPLE

5 Beach Houses | Delray Beach





open for this season. "Its right downstairs, how could we not talk about it.", says Jones. The ground floor that for years held the old Yama restaurant is within the 1923 Masonic Building where Jones also has his office. " I can see I'm going to be drinking a lot more coffee, says Jones jokingly, in fact we may even schedule a meeting or two down stairs."

The buzz around town is that all the beach area custom homes Jones is designing are quite unique. Jones spoke of his residential design philosophy and he again refers back to the economy. "We just ended an era of McMansionism," Jones exclaimed, "Now we are in the Recovery Period." Most of the homes we are designing are between 2500-4500 square feet. We get very creative with the plans and then utilize a historically correct Architectural Style for the elevations. It has been a great combination. But, just because these homes are smaller does not mean they can't live big." Jones combines indoor and outdoor spaces with large wall openings of sliding or folding doors, which he claims was a successful design feature he used on many of the Atlantic Avenue restaurant projects. "Who doesn't

like to be outside in Florida, why not open up your house to the outdoors, and capture courtyards as live-able space. Lets Live Outside the Box!"

Most of the courtyards in his residential designs include outdoor fireplaces that are open air and create that perfect atmosphere for get togethers, a glass of wine, or as Jones likes to say, "Roasting marshmallows with the family."

Jones experimented with these design concepts in

his family residence that he designed a few years back and which was featured in Atlantic Avenue Magazine's June 2008 issue. "I very much enjoy a quiet night at home with my wife and our two girls so when Karen and I designed the house we made sure we had those special spaces so we would always feel comfortable. I now try to incorporate unique spaces and courtyards in every house I design," he says.

Jones is certainly enjoying

his profession these days, a profession he also calls his passion. He still finds the time to do pro-bono design work for non-profits, Habitat for Humanity, and local church organizations. He calls it giving back to the community. One thing is for sure, we know that when we see one of those, Sign(s) of the Times, on any project in the future we will know that his designs already are giving back, in a big way.

