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Spector focusing on Lighthouse Project, in pieces

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If you want to see what's likely one of Long Island's most supersized to-do lists, take a look over the shoulder of Marc Spector.

That's because Spector, 42, heads the Long Island office of the Spector Group in Woodbury, the architectural and design firm named associate architect of record for the massive Lighthouse Project in Hempstead, proposed by Islanders owner Charles Wang and Scott Rechler, chief executive of RexCorp Realty Llc.

That means that while Baltimore-based Development Design Group Inc. will be focusing on designing the overall master plan for the 5.5- million-square-foot development, Spector Group - assuming the project gets a green light - will zero in on designing the components: 30-story twin towers, a five-star hotel, a conference center, a sports arena and a shopping area.

"People are going to identify with particular buildings. Those pieces are what I'm concerned with," says Spector, who keeps pencil and paper near his bedside for late-night brainstorming. Asked how many sketches and models his team created for the initial plan submitted in November to the Town of Hempstead, he says, "You should only know!"

And that enormous project is only one of many.

During the summer, Spector assumed the reins of day-to-day operations of the Long Island office from his father, Michael, who started the firm in 1965 and who is now doing design and business development for the firm. (Spector's brother, Scott, 45, heads the firm's Manhattan office.) In addition, Marc Spector oversaw the redesign of the Woodbury office, a 25,000-square-foot building, as well as the staff's relocation there from North Hills early in the fall.

High-profile megaprojects are nothing new for him and his group, which has designed, among others: RexCorp Plaza in Uniondale, Jericho Plaza, CA headquarters in Islandia, and the headquarters building of the former Symbol Technologies in Holtsville. Of course, not all are corporate jobs: The firm is also involved in redesigning buildings in the Great Neck school district, including Great Neck North High School, Spector's alma mater, from which he went on to get bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture from the University of Michigan. ("Go, Wolverines" is still his cry.)

Spector says he understands well the principles of creating strong partnerships and calling in help when needed. Indeed, to ensure a smooth management succession, he, his dad and his brother worked for several years with a family business consultant to help the transition "occur seamlessly and without

disturbance to the client base."

While the business' core principles - inherited from his father and late grandfather, who also was an architect - remain unchanged, he says he knows he'll bring his own subtle imprints. For one thing, his style may be a little more informal, and he may communicate more with senior managers.

Plus, says Jane Felsen Gertler, the firm's associate director of marketing, "Marc is naturally more technology-savvy, so he is constantly accessible and communicative via phone, BlackBerry, computer. The flow of information is so rapid, and he is continually on top of every situation pertaining to the office and our clientele."

Still, something's got to give, right? Family life? Projects piling up at home?

Perhaps not. Following in his father's footsteps, Spector brings his three children, ages 13, 11 and 6, to job sites over the weekend, to do what longtime family terminology characterizes as "going to see the dirt."

As for home projects, he says architecture/design is his hobby as well as his profession, so he's seen his Roslyn home as a "residential lab." He's overseen five additions to the house, with the sixth to come this spring. "My wife is waiting for the next construction crew to start again," he says.

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