

Austin, TX's Gail Vittori and Maximizing Building Potential | Transcript

Charlie ([00:02](#)):

Welcome to Green Building Matters. The podcast that matters for green building professionals learn insight in green buildings. As we interviewed today's experts in LEED and WELL. We'll learn from their career paths, war stories and all things green because green building matters. And now our host and yes, he has every LEED and WELL credential here's Charlie Cichetti.

Charlie ([00:27](#)):

Be sure to check out the green building matters community where you can have unlimited exam prep for any of the professional credential exams. You're tackling next, as well as putting your continued education on autopilot, saving time with GBS reporting your hours on your behalf. Check it out gbes.com/join. Now enjoy this episode of the green building matters podcast. Welcome to the next episode of the green building matters. I'm your host, Charlie Cichetti. I've got Gail Vittori with me today. She's from Austin, Texas. I can't wait to talk more about maximum potential building systems and her career in the green building movement. Gail, how are you doing today?

Gail ([01:19](#)):

Doing pretty well. It's kind of hot here in Austin, but we're hanging in.

Charlie ([01:22](#)):

Sure. It's over a hundred right now as we record this podcast, that's still in the middle of the pandemic. It's just still some wild times out there, like we were talking about. How did you end up in Austin? Take us back, where'd you grow up and what'd you go to school?

Gail ([01:39](#)):

Okay. It's a little bit of a winding story. I was born in Washington, D C and we lived in the DC, Virginia area for about six years, moved on to Pennsylvania then to New York, and finally landed when I was just entering sixth grade in a town right outside of Boston in Massachusetts. So I think in terms of growing up, there was a lot of just adventurousness about it because we did

move so much. I think that has actually served me well in terms of just understanding what it means to be in a place and trying to get your arms around that and be ready to do what's needed to respond to change? Cause change was definitely a defining element of my growing up years. I went to UMass and Amherst studied economics there, but at the time that was a little bit unusual for a woman, a young woman to be delving into that. And that led me into doing a fair amount of politically oriented work for a number of years. And in,1977, I moved to Austin. So I've been here since then.

Charlie ([02:51](#)):

Economics though. Why economics at the time?

Gail ([02:55](#)):

Well, I think at the time I had really been influenced a lot in my high school years, what was going on in Vietnam. I had an opportunity to do some work with the United Farm Workers Organization. The folks who were around then during that time, they had initiated a national grape boycott and was very active in the town that I was in, in the Boston region more generally. It's just was something that spurred me to get out of the house and start to join in some activities to support the farm workers, including participating on picket lines in front of supermarkets and explaining the challenges that farm workers faced and encouraging people to make purchasing decisions that respected the farm workers and also encouraging people not to shop at stores that were selling the California grapes.

Gail ([03:51](#)):

I think it really imbued in me a sense of this connection to this web of life, the invisible part of what we know to be true, which is the people who are responsible for growing and harvesting the crops that go into the store and buy are largely invisible. I think we're doing a better job at making that visible now, but certainly at the time, I think for most people it was one of those out of sight out of mind and it really instilled in me a sense of the opportunity that we all have as consumers to influence policy and to influence practice on all kinds of levels. That was a real wake up call. In addition, Vietnam, as I mentioned protests for the war going on at the time. I kind of stepped into that and became conscious of so many of those realities being influenced by the economic system that we operate in. I think

that prompted me to sort of take a turn from what probably would have been a more liberal arts oriented college experience to getting into something that for me, represented more tangible edges as a practice. I had the good fortune of studying under some very prominent political economists at the time at UMass Amherst.

Charlie ([05:11](#)):

Fantastic. Thanks for sharing because some of our podcasts listeners may be thinking of getting a different degree, going back for a masters and it's interesting to hear your story there. I've got to ask, here we are 40 years later, Gail. Now farmers with supply chains being tested on the pandemic. I think you're getting more respect than they ever have. So it's just interesting that it's kind of come full circle. So buildings though, why did you get into buildings?

Gail ([05:37](#)):

Well, a lot of that really came together when I moved to Austin in 1977. It just so happened that I visited the organization where I've worked since 1979. Now the center for maximum potential building systems, which at the time was a nonprofit organization that also had a presence at the University of Texas at Austin, school of architecture with a laboratory and I'm teaching a class. I think just immediately struck with the missing piece for me and economics was about the place. The early work that I kind of got pulled into very much influenced by that initial visit to the open house at the center was about understanding the abundant resources as relate to basic human needs that any place can actually promote, whether it be water sources or energy or materials for building. We have such abundance that we've become very narrowly focused on a particular way to approach meeting the needs of the built environment with a small lobster of resources, types of materials that create dependency on some regions of the country and the world and miss the big opportunities in a more distributed sense of let's see what we have, where we are. Also, in terms of water and energy we've learned how abundant, the ability to capture both solar energy for electricity and then water through both rain capture and taking advantage of reclaimed water, capturing gray water and treating it and so on if needed for depending on the use, there's just so much where we are in our place. I think I just discovered, for me, what was a missing piece in my economics

training that really pulled me in. And so in 1979, I started working at the center. What is it now? 40 years later? Is that possible? I think it is. I'm still working here and of course there's been so much that's evolved during those years.

Charlie ([07:46](#)):

Yeah. I'm sure you must have recently accomplished a lot of fun, still love what you're doing. I've got to ask though, are there any others that had influence or someone you looked up to maybe open some doors for you along the way?

Gail ([08:00](#)):

Yeah, of course. I think like anyone, there are absolutely people. I would first comment on the person who's now my husband, Plinky Fisk, who was one of the co founders of the center and it was his presentation at the open house and then taking his class at the University of Texas school of architecture that fall in 1977, that really opened my eyes. And then I'd say Bob Berkebile, who many of your listeners might know, you might know from, BIM in Kansas City. I had an opportunity to work on several projects, kind of early as I was starting to shift from doing more in the office, work to doing project work. Bob continues to be a good friend, I think was just someone who made me feel that my voice was a voice that could matter and to just go for it. I'd say, I think he was incredibly encouraging and also inspiring. I give him great credit to times when I felt like maybe I didn't have the right training to do the work that I was stepping into. He was always someone who was a huge voice to just say, keep going, you're on the right track. I think that made a huge difference to me personally, to have that kind of confidence from someone who I respected like Bob,

Charlie ([09:19](#)):

His name has been mentioned as a mentor from several podcast guests, a big influence there. So tell us more about the center and what kind of work you do.

Gail ([09:28](#)):

Well, the organization was founded in 1975. So really early in terms of the work, what we would now refer to as green building. In fact, the term didn't

even exist then. So the focus initially was on more of an appropriate technology, environmental design emphasis, very consistent with green building today. I'd say we work in three main areas. We work on developing protocols, which is a way to think about how a design should be conceived. We work on prototypes, which are examples of implementing those protocols. So for example, it could be water balance. The building I'm in right now, one of our demonstration buildings on our site here is completely water balanced. We have both the protocol for doing that and we have the example, the prototype, and then we try to move those things into policy. I think the premier policy for us has been the initial conceptual framework for the Austin Green Builder Program back in 1989, which is recognized as really the first green building program in the United States.

Gail ([10:36](#)):

And perhaps even beyond was the only program from the United States recognized at the 1992 or summit in Rio. And it essentially established a basis for saying at a time when there was a lot of emphasis on energy conservation, to be able to expand that definition of what is, as we started to call it a green building and introduce water waste and materials. So the original framework of the green building program, as we partnered with the city of Austin to really put it together, was energy, water waste, and materials, all in kind of a systems framework. In the best case our work spans all three. We also do a fair amount of consulting work. And right now that is really focused on, on activities in the city of Austin, which I'm really happy about. And then for me, I created a more specific niche in the healthcare sector, having convened the green guide for health care in 2001, and saw that through its transition into LEED for healthcare and chaired that committee. I think for the first time we had an opportunity to have an explicit emphasis on health in a green building rating system. We know now at the pandemic, how essential it is to be focused on health in addition to equity issues. I think that is going to be the big shift. One of the big shifts coming out of the learnings from this, this pandemic,

Charlie ([12:11](#)):

Thank you for your work in the LEED for healthcare, first of all, and all your other work. It's a fantastic program, right? Sometimes the energy savings can be tough, but we can hit that red list pushing that even at the time when

maybe only living buildings were. So what else would someone that doesn't understand LEED health journey needs to know about that program?

Gail ([12:31](#)):

Well, I'd say the initial initial work was to begin to construct a, framing of all of the different LEED categories and credits to say there's a health issue related to every one of these. There was no kind of unbox check it off and say, taking care of health. It didn't matter if it was something about where the building is sited or how you're managing rainwater/stormwater, or how you're using water, how you're treating water, how your energy source is determined wherever it was. We created a health statement for each credit. So that really was the founding work and the green guide for health care, not all of it transferred into made for healthcare, but I think the emphasis on health really shown we created in the green guide and then much of it was transferred into LEED for healthcare, a different approach on how to address materials and the materials that are in resources sections.

Gail ([13:35](#)):

So we created an approach of sustainably sourced materials, trying to group them together as opposed to have separate categories for recycled and regional and so on and that work moved forward into late 2009. Actually, we had credits that we created for places of respite connection to nature, which had not previously existed in any LEED rating system. Those carry forward into the LEED before LEED for healthcare, a more comprehensive look at process water, which of course in a hospital environment is a very, very big percentage of water use and water process. Our process water is now part of every LEED rating, a BBNC rating for even the prerequisite now. So I think we think we expanded a range of issues to consider, and we believe for LEED for healthcare, that they were essential because they re represented realities for the healthcare sector. But in many cases, they extended into a much broader realm that now has influenced all of the LEED rating systems. And so I think all of us who were involved in that process, I think feel very happy that the work was influential and it brought health much more into an explicit outcome. So yeah,

Charlie ([14:58](#)):

Now we see this WELL, FITWEL and all these other great programs just help make sure we have healthier buildings. Let's talk a little bit about some of your proudest to achieve. As you look back on the highlight, Gail, what stands out?

Gail ([15:11](#)):

Charlie, I think going back to my high school years, doing that work with the farm workers, as I mentioned, the United Farm Workers, I think just feeling like there was definitely some change that happened from a high school or being out on Saturday at a supermarket outside of Boston. I think that that was a personal affirmation in terms of a difference that a person can make a roll into. Later years, I was very involved in establishing a small group in Austin that was successful to cancel a large mass solid waste incinerator project that had been planned for the city of Austin with \$22 million invested in it. Our little group was able to raise the health, environmental issues associated with that technology and got the city council to turn around a unanimous vote, supporting it for seven months.

Gail ([16:06](#)):

We were able to turn it around to get the thing canceled, even with \$22 million, having been invested in it that actually set up precedent for many cities around the country that were faced with proposals, for incinerator projects and help to keep them from happening, which I think was a hugely beneficial outcome. I think we all benefit those in terms of our health and the environment for not having incinerators be combusting, solid waste, much better things to be doing with it than doing that. I'd say the third thing, as I've referenced the green guide for health care, kicking that off, it was a big deal because at the time, I'm talking about the early two thousands health very different than today at that time, health was really sort of a hot potato. People did not want to talk about it. They didn't want to touch it.

Gail ([16:53](#)):

They felt like there was opening up too much opportunity for liability if you began to correlate filling design practices and materials and so on with health outcomes. We were successful in introducing a lot of concepts with the health care sector as the conduit to bring those into the realm of green building. I think it had great success. We were able with the green guide

actually to attract more than a hundred thousand people from around the world and more than I think a hundred countries by the time we sort of got that all wrapped up. So I think the message was very timely. I think it was delivered in a way that was easy to get for people who were involved with healthcare. How could you say you were okay with having a building that had unhealthy materials in it and yet you're to promote health. So trying to kind of raise the specter of some of the inconsistencies with what we were doing and not really paying attention to it and to say there's opportunities to actually shift the hallway we're conceiving design, construction, and operations of our healthcare facilities, as well as all other buildings too. So I think that was a very big push that involved lots of people from a lot of different levels of the interests, working with healthcare, including healthcare systems themselves, supporting it and seeing that through to its current state.

Charlie ([18:24](#)):

Absolutely. And just along the way, it's been about performance on these buildings. It's been about healthy buildings, but , let's talk a little bit about maybe LEED and just a good mechanism and goal for you. Can you speak to that a little bit?

Gail ([18:38](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. So I, I really have had a great honor to serve as both the chair of the US Green Building Council, answered on that board from 2001 to 2010, and then shifted over the next year in 2011 to the GBCI board and served as the chair of that from 2013 to 2019. So for many, many years, I can say I woke up and the first thing on my mind was, how are things going with LEED and other initiatives associated with those two organizations? I firmly believe that LEED is the way that we're going to scale this work, not just in the United States, but globally. And we see the numbers that really support that. Having content in LEED that is advancing the issues that we think are of most importance on the environmental side, on the human health side and on the economic side, I think is incredibly significant.

Gail ([19:38](#)):

It's something that my continued investment in supporting the ongoing evolution of LEED to ensure that it's continuing to raise the bar while not

eliminating an entry point for people. I think that's been one of the hallmarks of it. It's tricky. I know there's been a lot of dialogue over the years about LEED wimping out because it's not as aggressive as maybe, Living Building Challenge. I think we didn't have opportunities for people to walk in at more of a ground floor level. We would not be capturing the market that we need to be capturing. I think we need to, in my mind, keep those levels all very much open doors. And for people who want to get to the top, to net zero and beyond, we think here at the center about balance is really being a very strong determinant of success. I think we're not doing what we have an opportunity to do.

Gail ([20:36](#)):

I often think about it, because I do work as a LEED consultant on projects, happy to say mostly in Austin now. So I don't have to travel even if I could, but you understand when you're talking with the team about a certain credit and you're going through the requirements and maybe some of the terms of art that are part of it that people all over the world are having those same conversations. They're using the same terminology. They're referring to the opportunities the same way when LEED from 2009 to levy before shifted from calling what was called stormwater in May, 2009 to rainwater in LEED before, there's tens of thousands of people who are making that shift to which is a big conceptual shift, but once you do it, you're there. And you've made the shift from thinking about it as a kind of a stormwater as a waste and without value, really negative value to something rainwater as a positive. So just as one example, and I think that that global reach and span is without precedent of anything that we've seen in terms of a grading system like this. So I think there is much more to build on the great work that's happened to date. And I look forward to participating in a way other than, than supporting it as a board member

Charlie ([21:56](#)):

Definitely helps steer LEED as we know it today. So thank you for that to tell us real quick about sustainability to me, but what a great city, obviously growing up, how's sustainability there in your backyard. Are you proud of the work so far?

Gail ([22:11](#)):

Yeah, I think Austin has done a good job. As I mentioned, we had what's considered the first green building program in the world. Maybe not the world, certainly in the US, starting in 1989. We had a great kind of start with Austin energy green building their program that initially focused on the residential sector and now has spanned out to also include commercial buildings and multifamily. So we have a legacy in Austin that's very much rooted in an environmental ethic. We have a reality here of revered environmental quality that has had as a kind of a representation of that. Something called Barton Springs, which is a beautiful spring-fed pool public pool in the middle of downtown that is sort of referred to as both the crown jewel and also litmus test, because depending on what happens upstream, there may be some times when the water is too polluted for people to swim in.

Gail ([23:10](#)):

And so it's been a, it's been a kind of a reference point in terms of are we holding to the environmental values that I think most people in Austin want to make sure we stay on top of, we have a tremendous amount of development that's happening here. We've gone from a mostly horizontal developments and a lot of sprawl to very much a downtown with a lot of high rise buildings, both office buildings and condos. We have requirements in many parts of Austin to comply with Austin energy green building. And so that has kept the bar very high for a lot of development that's occurring in the city. Not just in downtown, we have the Miller development, which was one that we worked on as a LEED for neighborhood development, pilot program, 700 acres of a former municipal airport and the entire build out.

Gail ([24:01](#)):

We started in the early two. Thousands are required to hit certain certification bars for Austin energy green building and or LEED. And so you have that kind of as a test case for how it happens at all these different scales, residential, single family multifamily commercial office institutional that's where Dell children's medical center is. I should have added that to one of my proudest achievements, which was the learn the first LEED platinum hospital in the world, Dell children's hospital in Austin, which continues to set the bar, I think, were the hospitals in many places with thousands of people who have visited that hospital to see how did you do it?

So we have a lot of really, I think, important elements in Austin that are very much reinforcing a green ethic as expressed in our built environment. We also are learning all the time, too. The pressures of development are tough. It's challenged us in terms of transportation, a dependence on automobiles and the rush to build in a very hot market. I think it makes it tough to do all you might want to get done on a project in terms of some of the green elements. But I think we've got a showcase of many that are very much to be proud of.

Charlie ([25:26](#)):

Thanks for showing us that about Austin. I love Austin. Let's talk about the future, you've been in the green building movement for awhile. You've made a career here. Now, if you had a crystal ball, what should we be reading up on now what's around the corner.

Gail ([25:39](#)):

I think one of the areas that I've been involved with for a while is, is that of transparency. And I am on the board of the health product declaration collaborative that works on developing and evolving the health product declaration, the HPD, which is part of one of the materials credits. And we'd before I just generally believed that we need to know and can know what's in the materials and products that we procure for our buildings is essential. I think right now it's still very much in establishing the basic parameters of it, but there's over 6,000. HPDs now over five years, which has been a tremendous amount of growth. I think it's going to be, not even a question of whether you have an HPD in a couple of years. I think it'll just be a given that you do because the market and the consuming public is going to demand that we know what's in the materials and products that we buy, just like we do for food at the grocery store.

Gail ([26:37](#)):

And then I think as I referenced before, I think health inequity are going to be the two really of the next generation of the work that we do not abandoning all the other elements, but I think putting those front and center, I think a lot of things will come much more into focus in terms of how to eliminate that sense of tradeoff, but we have to get all of these things, right. We cannot any longer say, we really can't have a healthy material. If we want

to keep things on budget, or we really can't address social equity issues. If we want to have the right team at the table or that we want to be able to locate our building in the place where we want it, if it means displacing, , long time communities. So I think, I think in my mind, we're going to be less willing to see these things as presenting tradeoffs and instead looking for the solutions that embrace the totality of what our opportunity is, knowing that if we miss them, we're going to be setting ourselves back and not taking the giant steps that I think this pandemic is really setting up for us to be able to take.

Charlie ([27:49](#)):

In a society that's more lagging indicator, right? Save energy, save water, save me money. Sometimes these leading indicator health product declarations, we know it's the right thing to do. We need to do it. Maybe lead to more points, but may I ask a follow up on transparency. There's some large architects not to be named that actually say, instead of both product decorations because there's still some risks there. How about we just do some other products that meet certain labels. So what would you say to a design firm that could specify no, we need to get the HPDs and not always have to go for declare labels and other certifications?

Gail ([28:32](#)):

Yeah. So I think one of the important distinctions is that the HPD is that standard. It's not a certification. HPD is a standard format that enables manufacturers to provide data associated with their supply chain, the chemical ingredients, and then those are correlated with associated health effects. So if we think about this as an ecosystem, imagine the HPD is the place where your manufacturer fills out the form and submits their data. Whether it's declaring or creating a cradle or any number of other certifications can take that data that has already been uploaded once by the manufacturer and say, okay, so we're going to set the bar here. Declare may set it at a different place than cradle to cradle or some other certification. But I think the beauty of, if we think about this in terms of an ecosystem, is that the task that often the manufacturers find challenging is that I already did it for these people.

Gail ([29:37](#)):

Now they're asking me to do it for them. If there was a coordinated ecosystem effort and set of agreements, then I think we can eliminate a lot of what's been a hurdle for manufacturers. They are absolutely our partners in this. I can say for the health product declaration collaborative, there is a very active constituency on our board. There's a manufacturer, a group that is very actively informing the evolution of the HPD, giving their feedback on what's working and what's not. And I think the organization is a very open process to engage manufacturers, users, and then other ecosystem players to try to get this as working as a good system, if we kind of fall back in, , have it splintered, then I think that could be a direction. I think we will miss the opportunity to scale and get the buy in that we would want on a, on a much more aggressive approach to really bring in the majority of players. So that would be my take on it. Charlie.

Charlie ([30:45](#)):

Thank you for clearing that up. That helps quite a bit. Let's talk rapid fire questions here, Gail, this is great. Really enjoying our conversation. Now, a little more about you. Could you say your specialty or gift?

Gail ([30:57](#)):

I think I've been someone who really values the importance of listening and learning. I've had just opportunities that I never could have imagined, including the two chair roles for USBC, and GBCI never had the intention that I would be the person to just sit in that seat. And I think I learned a lot by working with people and getting a sense of how you move something forward in a concept, something you really believe in. And I'm not always in a rush, much less now than maybe I was 15 or 20 years ago. So I think I also value just, , it takes a while for things to mature to get to a point where the tipping point is right there and you can go with it. But I think overall listening and learning for me have been the, just the, if I was to say there's a skill set that have really served me well in advancing my opportunities with the projects and organizations and those that I've been in.

Charlie ([31:52](#)):

Cool. So as we get to know each other a little bit better, I'm not a fan of the bucket list. Why don't we go there next? So what are one or two things maybe on your bucket list?

Gail ([32:03](#)):

Okay. So for a long, long, long time, going back to when I was in high school, I wanted to be fluent in Spanish still. I'm not and so if there is a way that I could figure out how to do that, get myself in a context where I can really be in an immersive situation, I would absolutely be thrilled to say I was fluent in Spanish, at least verbally. The other is that I would love to have a shot at designing and building a dream house that for me, would serve as a prototype that could be shared with others. I think we all find ourselves living in places that are quite what we want. And if there was an opportunity for me to, to delve into not singularly, not just by myself, but with my family to get to a place where I can, , say, this is, this is what it looks like. This is what it is. I think it would be in many ways, the pinnacle of the prototype work again in a way that could be shared and replicated by others.

Charlie ([33:03](#)):

That's so cool. I love it. Tell us about some best practices, any good habits rituals you can share that keep you productive?

Gail ([33:11](#)):

Well, every day is kind of full of so many different things. And so I think one of it is just being organized and having a sense of clarity in terms of what's important to get done, making commitments and sticking to them. I'm very much of a mind that if you say you're going to do something, you do it and you follow through. Sometimes that means working late hours. And I think one of my family would have tested that is sometimes the reality, but I think it's just not looking over my shoulder to say someone else is going to take care of this really sort of grown up with a sense of personal responsibility to do what I said I'm going to do and really honor that. I guess in a sense, extend that expectation to the people that I work with as well.

Charlie ([33:56](#)):

No, we are encouraged here, Gail. That's really cool. I was talking about learning and books. I'm not sure if you'd like to pick up a book in your hands and read it, or maybe listen to some books, but is there a book or two you'd recommend?

Gail ([34:07](#)):

Oh wow. There was a book that Don Watson in architecture is very active in the early days of the AIA committee on the environment wrote co-wrote actually with Ken Labs called Climatic Design. So that for me was sort of a Bible in a sense of getting a handle on how much a building can do by itself, without relying on external systems. It was very methodical and scientifically put together. I think it was for me, just a sense of it's not that complicated to do good work. I think we let ourselves fall into having things become much, much too complex. If we let ourselves instead look at kind of simplicity and what's essential and take cues from those things. I think we can advance our work without as much effort and expense.

Gail ([35:08](#)):

So that is very important. I'd say the other thing, and this is more metaphoric, but I think right now we have a book in front of us in terms of what's happening with the pandemic and going back to Bob Berkebile, he often referred to 2020 as a year of perfect vision. I would sort of shift that around a little bit to say, it's the year of letting us see where the cracks are and what we need to focus on. I'm really sort of taking this this time as a wake up call to pay attention to those cracks and to do what we can in our small way to address them in terms of the way we approach our work, our relationships with other organizations and to hopefully come out of this with some clarity in terms of what is the new pattern language going forward?

Charlie ([35:59](#)):

Yeah, I hate to use the word uncertain because at the beginning is pandemic. We really told ourselves and my team, what does all this way possible? And I think we'll gravitate towards that. We can find where there's still some certainty and I know LEEDs growing internationally. I know we see a lot with healthy buildings of course, with the pandemic with WELL and FITWEL we're going before it. I hope LEED for health care is going, I'm not sure, but I have to assume it is right. So we're kind of still in the middle of this, right?

Gail ([36:28](#)):

Yeah. We're still in the middle. Some of the cracks are clearly about health and wellness and about equity and how our various initiatives can respond to what we're learning more about how to become more inclusive, how to

make health more and explicit outcome and benefit of the work that we do. I like to think of every action that we take relative to a building you put a health lens on and say, is it advancing health or is it not, is it advancing equity or is it not just being that literal about it? I think it will bring about richer dialogue around the table when people get together and talk about the projects, and much improved outcome.

Charlie ([37:12](#)):

Thank you. Thank you for that. Well, as we've started to come to a close here, let's just talk about two more things. One is, I think it was, should have known earlier in your career.

Gail ([37:22](#)):

I hadn't planned on this career, so I think for me, it's really been learning as I go and I've never really expected anything cause I hadn't planned for it. I hadn't trained for it. I didn't go to school for it. So I think there's, there's nothing I would say. I wish I had known maybe I would have known I was going to do this work and I would have, would have had early training in it then I ended up having, but in some ways I think there's a benefit in an odd way of not being trained. I would say I have maybe been a little more fearless in some of the efforts that I've undertaken and ready to, just to just kind of push forward.

Charlie ([38:07](#)):

If so, if there's someone listening, right. That's just now jumping in the green building movement. Gail, do you have any words of encouragement?

Gail ([38:15](#)):

I would say do it and do it in the way that speaks to your heart. I think that is often the way we motivate ourselves to do our best work. Also know that you're doing it for yourself, but you're doing it for a much broader community of people and that we need, we need practitioners. We need visionaries who are also the feet, the boots on the ground. However you find a place for yourself to do this work. Find someone around you. Who's going to inspire you and make sure that you can do more than you think you can do.

Charlie ([38:53](#)):

Well, everyone Jack Ruggert on LinkedIn. We'll put links to the book she recommended and some other resources. This has been Gail Vittori, LEED fellow and co-director of the center for maximum potential building center in Austin, Texas, Gail. Thank you so much. Thanks Charlie. You take care. 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 to continue to listen every Wednesday morning to a new interview with the 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.

Charlie ([39:37](#)):

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