

HOW TO GET STARTED WITH YOUR HOME RENOVATION PROJECT

Identify your needs!

So you think you need more space or your existing home layout is not working for you! Start making a list of your dream project. Create a must have/would like to have list!

GATHERING

Start by gathering as much info about your current house as you can. Do you have a set of existing plans? How about a survey of your property. Start a file and keep updating it.

IMAGES YOU LIKE

Drive around the neighborhood and take notice of what elements you like in similar houses to your own. Many times homes are surrounded by other homes built by the same builder and over the years those homes have been modified.

WEB SEARCH

Once you have canvassed the neighborhood start looking online for images that appeal to you! Houzz is a great source for residential images and you can even keep an album or multiple albums of images.

CONTACT ARCHITECTS

Ask friends for recommendations or look on line for architects with positive reviews in your area. Set up an appointment to meet with them to discuss your project and see who you click with.

HIRE AN ARCHITECT

You found the architect that gives you a sense of confidence that the project will go smoothly and your personalities do not conflict; hire them!

PROGRESS

Your architect will interpret all your data and help you get to where you want to be. Keep an open line of communication and don't be afraid to express your opinion. Not all architects are like the ones depicted in movies! Many have your interests ahead of their own.

DRAWINGS ARE READY!

After careful planning and working through the plans and elevations with your architect its time for the final documents which your builder will use to secure your permits and construct you project. Don't be surprised if it doesn't all go smoothly. It's renovation work! There are many unknowns built in your walls that are sometimes impossible to predict. Have fun!

THE CHECKLIST

Part I

for renovation/addition

Once you decide you are financially ready to take the plunge what do I need to think about to get started on my renovation/addition project?

THE PROGRAM

Start to define what you want to achieve in your **interior** renovation/addition.

- o Do I want to open up existing walls to create an open floor plan?
- o Do I want more sunlight by adding windows (what is the orientation of my home)?
- o Do I feel my home is large enough?
- o Do I like the circulation in my house, do my rooms flow properly for the way I live?
- o Do I have room on my property for an addition out the back or side?
Homeowners can review their deed to see how their home is situated on the property and check if local zoning ordinances easily allow for an addition or if it makes more sense to go up.
- o If I am adding on or going up what makes sense, do I need to relocate during construction?
- o Do I want to be inconvenienced during construction by being displaced? Can I somehow phase the work so I can live in my home during construction?
- o If I go up do I want to change my ceiling heights? How does that impact the exterior of my home?
- o Raising ceilings may allow you the opportunity to have taller doors, is this something I love?
- o Raising ceilings may allow you the opportunity to have taller windows or transoms is this something I love?
- o If I do raise up the ceilings realize your interior stair will change as well, do I have room for this?
- o Is everything outdated and I am just looking for a new look?
- o Did I outgrow the space and need more room?
- o In the future will this renovation be sufficient?
- o Do I foresee any additional residents in my home? In-laws, more kids?
- o Does my kitchen work for me? Do I entertain and everyone gathers in the kitchen and I end up feeling cramped?
- o Do I like to see my kids while I am cooking in the kitchen?
- o While in the kitchen prepping a meal or entertaining do I feel isolated? Do I want to be more involved with my family/guests? How can I achieve this.
- o Is my laundry room inconveniently located? Is it in the basement, first floor? Where does most of the dirty laundry originate? Should I move it?
- o Do I have enough closet space/storage space?
- o Do I have easy access to my backyard? Can I go outside easily to grill? Is this important to me?
- o When I come home from shopping do I have an easy way of bringing in my groceries? Are doors located properly?
- o Do I have enough bedrooms and bathrooms?
- o Are people waiting to use the bathroom, should I add another bathroom or just an extra vanity and a private water closet area?
- o What are thought on lighting? Recessed, pendants, cove or surface mounted?
- o Finishes: so numerous and so many items... kitchen, bath, hardware (doors), trim, floors, walls, ceilings, colors, fixtures, etc.

THE CHECKLIST

Part II

for renovation/addition

Once you decide you are financially ready to take the plunge what do I need to think about to get started on my renovation/addition project?

THE PROGRAM

Continues to define what you want to achieve on the **exterior** of your home:

- o Do I need more curb appeal for my home? Do I enjoy driving up my driveway and looking at my home?
- o Is it just landscaping that can make a difference or will we need to make some modifications to the structure?
- o Do I like the finishes on my home? Is it siding, stone, brick or stucco? Or a combination? What homes have I seen that I love? Keep a collection of images and think about incorporating these images into your own home.
- o Maybe just new replacement windows and shutters will dress up the exterior or maybe its new siding with trim around the windows. The options are limitless. So start thinking about your personal priorities.
- o Did you do major renovation inside such as raising ceiling heights? Do I need bigger windows to accommodate these changes? Do I like transoms? How about my doors?
- o Colors... what colors do I like? Earth-tones? Whites and grays or something more bold.
- o How about your roof? Do I need some dormers to make it more interesting or just replace the shingles for a fresher look? Or even to the extreme of completely changing the roof line.
- o Am I looking to make more use of my attic, then sure lets pop some windows in the roof.
- o Do I like the look of a front porch welcoming me home? Will that work on my home?
- o Do I need a larger front porch for people to wait at if it is inclement weather? Or just so a package being delivered does not get weather damaged when you are not home.
- o Are my walkways adequate and welcoming?
- o Do I require a ramp to my home for someone elderly? Where would be the best location for such an element?
- o How about the garage? Do you like your garage doors? Do you like one big door or two smaller doors to the garage? Do you wish your openings were larger? Can my existing garage accommodate larger doors? Do I have room for my snowblower and bikes, maybe I need a larger garage. How does that impact the rest of your home?

Once you start to get a handle on your wants and needs the design process will go so much smoother. You will have thought about your home more carefully and will allow for a better collaboration with your architect. Each home is different and no one checklist will fulfill each individual project but it gives you an idea into the amount of decisions being made upon your behalf to create your perfect home.