

Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Residential Project

The wish-list questions:

What do I like about where I am living now?
What don't I like about it?
Is there something missing?

Do I need more space or better use of the space I have?
Do I want to build a new house?

Are my space needs changing or about to change?
Are family members moving in or out?
Will my life style be changing?

How much of the time am I home?
Which rooms do I use the most?
Which rooms don't get much use?
Do I work from home or would I like to?
Do I have special activities or needs that require special space?

Where do I like to entertain?
How do I entertain guests?
How do other family members entertain guests?
How do I entertain for special occasions, such as holidays?

What do I want my home to say about me?
What styles of homes do I like?
Are there photographs, books or magazine clippings that demonstrate my preferences?
What are the styles of the homes in my neighborhood?
How important are the sensory aspects of my home (daylight, views, air quality, efficiency, natural ventilation, non-toxic materials)?

Are there one or two particular elements that *have* to be included in my project?
Are there elements that are non-negotiable for my project?

The reality questions:

What do I prefer: quality of space or quantity of space?

How much maintenance and upkeep am I willing to do and can I afford?

How long do I want to remain in this house?

What will happen when I am finished with it?

Do I have special collections or hobbies that need space?

Do I have a lot if I want to build a new home, or do I have enough space for an addition?

Do I know what my lot restrictions and neighborhood covenants are?

Do I currently own a lot that I want to build on?

Do I know how I want the house to be situated on the lot?

How concerned am I about energy costs and long-term operating costs?

Am I interested in sustainable design? Energy efficiency? “Aging in Place?”

Are there particular construction methods or design features that interest me?

The difficult questions:

Do I know how much I want to spend on my project?

Do I know how I want to pay for design costs?

Have I spoken with a lender to see that I qualify for the amount I want to spend?

Do I want to do some of the work myself to save money?

Do I have the skills and the time to work on my own house?

Do I have the skills and time to coordinate the interior finishes?

How will my current furnishings fit/look in my new space?

How much time do I have available to be involved in planning a project?

Do I need someone to be my advocate through design, construction, and warranty phases?

Am I the one who will be the “go-to” for questions on design and construction?

Do I have a date in mind for the completion of construction?

Is there a contractor I have in mind for doing the construction?

Do I need help finding someone to be my contractor?

What do I think is a reasonable amount of time to design and build my project?