

‘A home can only be built as well as it is planned’

Planning to Build

*Get the most out your investment: Take control of your project
and reduce the cost of building your new home:*



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*Simply written for individuals planning to build their dream home;
whether or not you are shopping for the perfect stock plan, or considering a custom home design*

A New Home..... Home Design Criteria..... Building Restrictions
Site Orientation.....Planning Phases.....About the Builder..... Building Process..... Planning on a Budget
3D Software..... Helpful Hints..... Glossary of terms

Introduction

Home is where the heart is. It's never been said better than that. That special place where warm and wonderful memories are built; our children raised; Where our good friends and not so good friends share company; where our family shares happiness and sorrow, but most importantly, time. One half to three quarters of our lives are spent at home, be it an apartment, a small house or a mansion; the place in which we dwell. Our home represents our financial status, our character, and our lifestyle.

Over the many long years I've been designing homes, I've greatly enjoyed meeting and getting to know the many clients I've had the pleasure of designing for; each one of them surprisingly unique. Interestingly enough, I've noticed that how someone dresses and what they drive says much about them, and the home of their preference will more than likely, perfectly match their ensemble and their ride. Chances are, if you are driving a Cadillac, or a Lincoln; you will want a large sprawling home, lavishly decorated, but not trendy. If you are driving a Beamer or a Volvo, the home of your choice will be quality, not quantity; quiet and sophisticated.

If a woman is dressed in bright colors, her hair teased and styled, heavy on the makeup, dripping in jewelry, there's a real good chance she will want an exterior design that gets noticed, and is located on an obvious building site; perhaps a corner lot at the development's entrance, and she won't stop there. The foyer will typically be very open to the main living area, the décor bold, the furnishings ornate, with a wide range of exciting colors.

That is the beauty of custom home design; allowing us to revel in our individuality and showcase our personality; If not for these brave and adventurous souls, our streets would be lined with monotonous structures, lacking in imagination and character; the builder's special.

Our homes not only have the mounting task of pleasing our eye, our pocket books and our life styles, offering comfort and space for ourselves, our loved ones, and our precious stuff, but these structures must also provide adequate shelter from the heat and cold; from driving rains and gale force winds; offering security from fire and theft; a safe haven.

Section I

A New Home...

The housing market is a broad spectrum ranging from charming older homes to fixer uppers; from brand new specs, to customized homes. If you've ever wondered what 'spec' means, it's an abbreviation for 'speculative.' The contractor builds a home with the intention of selling it after it is completed. There is a reason this is popular. The average home buyer has the need to see the product (supply and demand) and the builder's profit margin remains unknown.

Purchasing a new home is much like purchasing a new car, with its new house smell. Everything works perfectly, is in excellent condition; everything fresh and clean, and best of all, you get to choose the detailing and colors.

Most homes being built today have maintenance free exteriors. Although I'm not a big fan of vinyl siding, it does have its benefits, being cost effective, somewhat fire resistant and maintenance free, but some of us prefer natural materials inside and out which are becoming more and more expensive each year. Which materials you select for the exterior or interior of your home will have a great deal to do with, not only your taste, but your overall building budget.

A home can only be as well built as it is planned, and this begins with the land; the site on which you have chosen to build; Once you've decided on the fundamentals, such as size and amount to be spent, the next step is to determine what type or style home you desire;

It is wise to have the building site acquired before investing in the plans.

The style of your house should compliment the actual building site, or the property as well as the surrounding landscape and structures; For example, a ranch style home, or a one level home works best on a level or flat grade. If this style home were built on a sloped grade, there would be a tremendous amount of waste in foundation wall. A split level or lower level walkout requires a sloped grade. If this style home were built on a flat grade it would require a tremendous amount of retaining walls. The more extreme the slope; the more extreme the structure complexity;

It is preferable that your home looks natural, almost like it grew there. You wouldn't want to build a three story contemporary in a cluster of one level traditionals; nor would you want to build an English Tudor amidst a cluster of Victorians. Your home should represent your personal preferences and lifestyle, but most importantly, your home will need to be affordable.

There are a few things that greatly affect the cost of your home for as long as you own it; property taxes, insurance and maintenance. You'll be eligible for a reduced insurance rate if your home has a full brick or stone exterior because of its fire rating, or if you are in close proximity to a fire station, or fire hydrant; if your roofing material is fire resistant; if you have smoke detectors.

Did you know that in most states; if your roof has three layers of shingles, your insurance may not cover fire damage?