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A Tradition of Innovative Quality Construction

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Building Success 101

Q: What is net-zero energy?

A: A net-zero energy balance is achieved when a home produces as much energy as it consumes over the course of a 12-month period. Though a challenge to accomplish, and almost always requiring some sort of on-site energy generation system (e.g., solar roof panels), achieving a net-zero energy balance isn't as unrealistic -- or as expensive -- as it was just 5

Develop your Building Team: Earlier is Better

Historically and traditionally, people have been conditioned to follow a certain, linear path to building a new home. That is, hire an architect or designer to create the plans, select a builder and then maybe bring in a stylist or interior designer to apply the finishing touches.

But the reality is that this step-by-step approach to getting a new house is not only outdated, but can be risky in terms of cost and quality. A better approach is to form your project team from the outset. Doing so fosters a cooperative rather than combative or competitive working environment that produces more satisfying results. It's also a dynamic that's more likely to ensure you'll get what you want in a new home at the price you can afford.

Dickson Development has been offering to our clients for new home and renovation construction our design and build service. By bringing your design and building professionals together as soon as possible, they can dedicate their efforts to meeting your needs and looking out for your budget.

Selecting a professional builder at the outset of your new-home project allows that person or company to work with an architect or designer to deliver plans and specifications that are realistic and can actually be built. It also increases the likelihood that the project will come in on time and on budget.

Too often, the old approach left builders having to argue changes to the plans and specifications that sometimes compromised a home's aesthetic value, if only to make it affordable. Downsizing is difficult. No one wants to be disappointed or feel like they had to sacrifice something -- especially a favorite feature or product -- because it was discovered to be too pricey.

This is much less likely to happen when architect and builder

years ago.

There is an increased construction cost that needs to be evaluated to see what the payback period term is in order to make a decision to try to achieve a net-zero energy balance.

are working together early in the process. By combining their expertise they can help ensure that what's drawn can be built without sacrificing design quality and staying within budget. This collaboration can result in a far better housing value.

Here are some additional reasons to hire a builder from the beginning:

Materials ordering. Some products and materials require long lead times -- perhaps months -- between order and delivery. A professional builder can identify these situations and be able to place an order so that product delivery will not delay the construction schedule.

Code compliance. More so than design professionals, builders know the applicable building codes as interpreted by the local authority and inspectors. They can help insure that plans will be approved for a permit the first time they are submitted. When plans are kicked back for changes, a home start can be delayed, or worse, a job may be stopped midway to address a code issue.

A professional builder also will know when and how to submit for a building permit and schedule necessary inspections during construction to establish and maintain a tight building schedule from the beginning.

Buildability. You can draw anything, but even something as seemingly simple as a window or door needs to be installed properly. If allowed to be part of your new home's planning process, professional builders and their subcontractors can quickly and easily identify potential installation issues before they become costly problems on the job site.

A collaborative effort from the outset allows ideas and information to flow among your design professional, builder, stylist, and you before anyone commits a significant amount of time and money to your new house. Sharing ideas and alternatives to achieve the best result is a far better approach than discovering a better idea too late, or not at all. We believe that this approach is the best one for building and renovating homes.

Warm regards,

Richard

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