

Remodeling Your Home

Where do you start?

BY Roy Bryhn, CR

A good start is to write a list of your “wants/needs” in prioritized order, then write down your “likes/dislikes” about your house, then share them with your spouse, to see if you are on the same page. These initial steps are usually all it takes to start dreaming and for the adrenaline to set in and to get the creative genes going. You end up watching more HGTV than you used to. You start to notice things about houses you did not before...



This is a good time to clip out pictures from magazines of things you like, and write on the picture what you like about it. It could be you like the flooring or the color combination in a room, the cabinets, the counter tops, or the large window by the kitchen sink. These scrap book collections can be helpful during the design of your project. The exercise can either give you more clarity in what you want, or it can be a link or clue for the designer to uncover what you have been looking for.

I have seen many scrap books in variations from a couple of clippings to organized three ring binders. However you do it; don't fuss over it. Your way is perfect for you.

Now that you've got that done; are you and your spouse still on the same page? If not then the same chapter is acceptable by this point.

So how do you then take that information and turn it into your new dream home?

It would be convenient if we could go online and “click to order” a new kitchen and put it on your VISA travel card, and have a new kitchen come via UPS and install itself, and then pay the credit card bill at the end of the month.

That is not how it works today. The transaction of purchasing home remodeling is process and it is not completed until the project is completed.

What you need is a team:

You will need a contractor and a designer/architect on your team. It is crucial that the three of you work well together.

You need a designer/architect that will listen to you, and take your concerns seriously. (After-all it is “your” home and you are paying the bill. Some can loose sight of that fact!) If the designer/architect and contractor don't work well together it will usually become your problem on your dime during construction.

You will need a competent contractor that you trust. The contractor along with his employees and trade contractors could be in your house for 4-6 +/- months depending on the size of the job. By the end you might know them better then some of your relatives!

By using this team approach at Bryhn Construction; we have been able to design and build large remodeling projects in less than 6 months from concept to completion. Our average unforeseen change order cost is below 2% which has significantly reduced time delays.

If you have a budget in mind, it's imperative that the contractor is present at all the design meetings and that he's estimating the cost as you go, along with providing practical input after performing an inspection of your house at the outset. That lessens the chance of unpleasant surprises that are out of your control during construction. When the contractor isn't involved from the beginning of the design, it's not uncommon to go over budget by 50% to 100%. This team approach is the closest thing to “click to order” remodeling in 2007!

To find a contractor go to www.NARI.org. NARI stands for National Association of the Remodeling Industry. Their strict Code of Ethics is such that not all contractors qualify for membership.

Author & Company Bio



Bryhn Construction



Bryhn Construction was founded in 1998 by Roy Bryhn, President of the Central Jersey Chapter of NARI. They were elected into the “Remodeling Magazine” Big 50 class of 2006. You can contact Bryhn construction at (908)806-2961 or visit their website.

www.bryhnconstruction.com