HOW TO START PLANNING YOUR DREAM HOME

PROJECT PLANNING GUIDE

Proctor Architects, LLC ©

Getting Started

Congratulations on making the first steps in creating your dream home. Whether it is new construction, building a much needed addition or renovating your existing home, getting a project constructed can be a challenging endeavor. Proctor Architects, LLC can help guide you through this process by developing creative and cost saving solutions. Home construction is an exciting, but also very time consuming undertaking. That is why it is so important to seek the expertise of the right professionals. Hiring our Firm can benefit you in many different ways and can provide you with piece of mind knowing the project is being handled by an experienced professional who can assure the design and building process goes smoothly.

What are the first steps to getting my project started?

What is the role of an Architect?

How does the Design Process work?

What can I build on my property?

How much should I budget for my project?

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Included in this Guide:

- Working with Proctor Architects, LLC
- Establishing Project Requirements
- Role of an Architect
- Typical Design Process
- Understanding your Property's Opportunities and Constraints
- Budget Guide
- Tips

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Working with

Proctor Architects, LLC

Proctor Architects, LLC is a full service architectural design firm which focuses on quality, thoughtful design. We are dedicated to providing outstanding professional service and client satisfaction while in pursuit of creative architectural design solutions.

We view architecture as an active relationship between the user and the built environment and pride ourselves on our sensitivity to site, materials and the environment. We strive to have all our buildings fit seamlessly into their environment by designing solutions which are a contextual response to the surrounding landscape. Whether taking full advantage of a view or working with the natural site amenities, our goal is to appreciate the context of the site.

The most important aspect of our design process is the relationship with the owner. The partnership between owner, architect and builder is a collaborative design process which we take very seriously. We listen to our client's needs, desires and concerns and develop the design solution that is right for them. We are our client's advocate throughout the construction, watching over even the smallest of details to ensure every aspect of the design is fully integrated. We strive to make every collaboration creative, inspiring and rewarding for all parties involved.

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A little about us:

Proctor Architects, LLC is led by Hope Proctor. Prior to starting her own firm Hope worked for several award winning firms and was a vital member on the design and construction of many high-end residential projects throughout Connecticut and Rhode Island. While Residential architecture is her passion, she also enjoys working on commercial and institutional architecture. Hope often collaborates with her husband, Brian Proctor, owner of Proctor Woodworks, LLC. They have teamed up on several small design–build projects. You can even find some of their work published in Fine Homebuilding Magazine.

An advocate for community outreach. Hope is a member of her local Planning Commission and an Advisory Council member to the Sister Cities Essex Haiti Board of Directors. She has designed both a Library and an Education Center in Haiti. Hope truly believes good design can make a positive impact on a community.

Education Center. Deschapelles, Haiti

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Establishing Project Requirements

Before you begin looking for an Architect it is helpful to consider your design goals. One way to organize your thoughts and focus on what you are trying to achieve is to write down your project requirements as either a short checklist or an extensive, detailed collection. If you don't know the answers yet, don't worry. This guide is meant to help you figure out what you are looking for and where to go next. Below are some of the important issues you will need to begin to address:

- **Project Purpose:** What is being designed? New home, addition, renovation, Vacation home?
- **Site**: Is the property purchased yet? Where is the construction? Are there any site restrictions to be aware of, i.e. flood zones, wetlands, building setbacks, etc.?
- **Must haves:** Are there a few must have design features that need to be worked into the house? It could be locating the house on the site to take advantage of views, an extra large walk in closet or incorporating certain details to accommodate special physical needs.
- **Quality Level/Amenities:** High-end finishes with custom details, builder's standard, somewhere in between?
- **Schedule:** Do you know when you are ready to start designing? Do you know when you are ready to start construction? Do you have a deadline when you want to move into your new space?
- **Budget:** Do you have an idea of what you want to or can spend? Do you know the cost of construction in your area?

Need more help?

Need help developing your design brief or determining what you can build on your property?
Contact me at: hope@proctorarchitects.com or call us at 860-767-0767

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Now take a moment to consider the questions on the previous page and jot down your initial answers.

- **Project Purpose:**

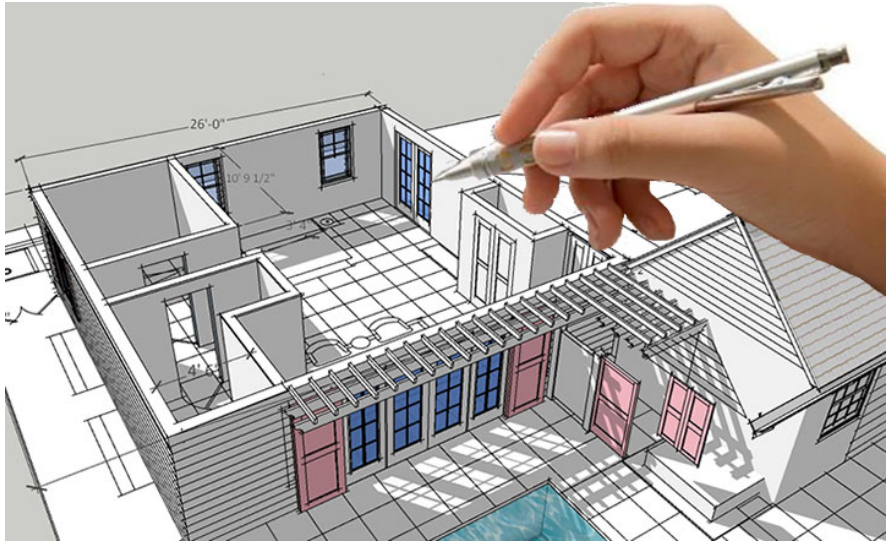
- **Site**:

- **Must haves:**

- **Quality Level/Amenities:**

- **Schedule:**

- **Budget:**



What is the Role of an Architect

Our role can vary depending on the scope and scale of the project.
Regardless, it is our job to represents the homeowner and look out for their interests. Architects are professionals who lead the process of creating functional spaces, from concept and design to a full realization of those designs. These assets will save you money over the lifetime of the house by cutting energy and maintenance costs. A well built, beautifully designed home is a great investment.

1. Greater understanding of your needs
Architects study a homeowner's lifestyle and use of their current house. We draw up construction plans that address both the owner's desires, space needs, and the structural requirements. By listening to you, we are able to transform your needs and wishes into an architectural expression that also complies with building codes and best construction practices.

2. Provide creative ways to solve problems
Architects deliver more interesting and creative design solutions. Through education and experience, we understand how to integrate the building into the site and develop a superior functional floor plan. We will find the right strategies and materials to make the project cost effective according to your budget, while still bringing an interesting design to the table.

3. You can save money
Preparing detailed and accurate drawings significantly reduces construction mistakes. Today's technologies allow designers to exercise a greater control over each part of the building by designing and presenting architecture projects in 3D. This in turn ensures that all the critical, and most of the minor, decisions are made and approved long before the construction starts. This approach will also make it easier for the contractor to precisely estimate and build your project.

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4. Good design is a profitable investment
Good design adds extra value to your building. Well-designed homes have a greater resale value.

5. Understanding the Building Code
As state, local and national building codes are being updated and revised, the Architect's role has become even more critical. We design buildings to meet all the latest code requirements and translate those requirement onto their construction documents. These are the drawings the contractor needs to receive a building permit and to construct the building properly.

6. Integrating energy efficient details
Building orientation, location and layout are important design factors that optimize the amount of natural light and heat coming into your home. We understand the importance of utilizing energy efficient building materials which in turn help you save on electric bills over time.

7. Project coordination
During the design and construction process you might require additional services such as engineering, landscape design and interior design. Proctor Architects, LLC will coordinate all these professionals in order to keep drawings and ideas consistent and help avoid conflicts. In addition, we will help you get through the complex procedures to obtain the required building permits.

Did You Know?

The biggest difference between an Architect and a "home designer" is qualifications. Not everyone can call themselves an Architect. To use that title, you must first earn an architectural degree from an accredited institutions (5-6 years). Then gain enough experience (3-5 years) to sit for a licensing examination set by the State. This intense registration process means that when you employ a registered Architect you know that they are qualified and experienced.

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Design Process

PRE-DESIGN SERVICES

In this phase Proctor Architects, LLC will begin developing a detailed program for your project. This involves documenting the requirements of your project, including evaluating space requirements and the relationship between spaces. This phase also includes the zoning/code analysis. If necessary, we will set up an initial meeting with town officials to review the parameters of your project and determine if there are any special requirements for your site or the house. Proctor Architects, LLC will research all applicable zoning and code issues that may impact the design of your home.

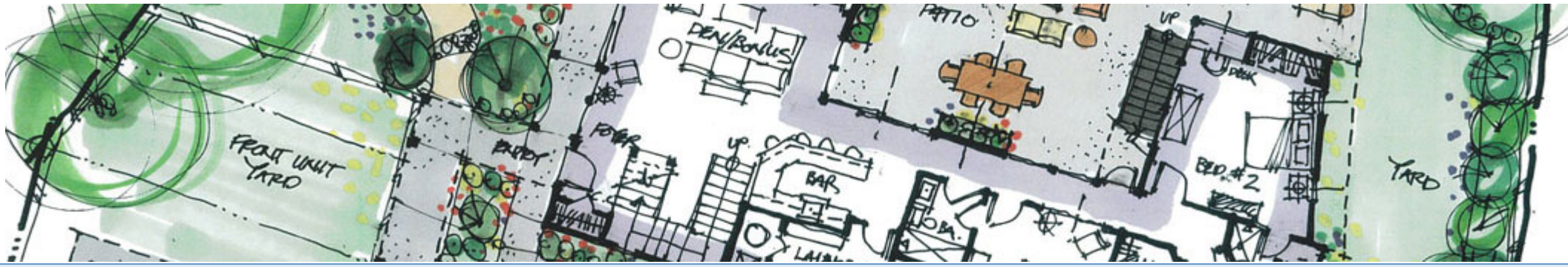
DESIGN SERVICE

Schematic Design Phase

During this phase we will sketch up the initial design concepts and prepare plans and elevations for review. The sketches will convey approximate sizes and locations of rooms, walls, doors, windows and built-in features. They may also provide a conceptual site plan showing the house as it relates to the unique features of your property. Prior to us producing the site plan, it is important for the owner to obtain a survey of the property. This will establish the boundaries of your property as well as give a precise location of all existing structures on the property.

Design Development Phase

When you have approved the Schematic Design, Proctor Architects, LLC will then begin to develop more detailed drawings to further define the scope, scale and character of the home. It is during this phase that most detailed design decisions are made. Exterior materials, finishes, doors, windows and other permanent fixtures will be selected. We will review many of the functional issues including heating, cooling and structural systems as well as any specialty design requirements distinct to your home. This set may include floor plans, exterior elevations and a 3D digital model of the house. The Design Development drawings should be approved by the Client prior to proceeding to the next phase.



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Design Process

DESIGN SERVICE

Construction Documents

This phase is the production of the drawings and specifications that will be used by the contractors to estimate their bids. These drawings describe the scope of work of the project and provide the contractors a clear understanding of the design intent. These drawings will also be submitted to the Building Department for review and approval for a building permit.

The Construction Documents may include, but not be limited to:

- Architectural floorplans
- Reflected Ceiling Plan
- Exterior Building Elevations
- Interior Elevations
- Building Sections & Details
- Schedules and Notes
- Specifications - This is an outline in writing of the requirements for materials, equipment, systems and the standards of workmanship needed to renovate or construct your home.#

Did You Know?

What you don't see is sometimes more important than what you do see. What happens inside the wall is critical, not only for saving energy but also for your comfort level. You can always change paint colors. It's not so simple to go back and add a superior insulation. Do it right the first time!

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Bidding and Selection of Contractor

Some clients prefer to send their project out to several contractors for competitive bidding. Others prefer to select a contractor in the early stage of design process. Selecting a contractor early allows the design team to receive feedback on the design's impact on the construction and associated costs. As contractors are in the field every day, they have a good sense of construction values and realistic expenses. This helps save time and expense by avoiding the lengthy bid process. However, if you choose to go with a bid Proctor Architects, LLC will assemble, distribute and evaluate the bid package and address any questions from the bidders. Due to the uncertainty of the number of bidders and the quality of the bids, this could extend the time of Pre-Construction Phase.

Construction Administration

During this phase we will makes periodic site visits to meet with the contactor and review the work. These meetings allow us to quickly resolve unexpected issues and unforeseen conditions so construction progress is not delayed. The Architect's involvement in this phase helps to facilitate changes which naturally occur as the projects begins to take shape. We monitor the impact of these changes on the cost and schedule of the project. During Construction Administration we will review the contractor's payments as well as all shop drawings and product submittals. It is good practice for the Architect to be involved in the construction of every project for the benefit of all parties.

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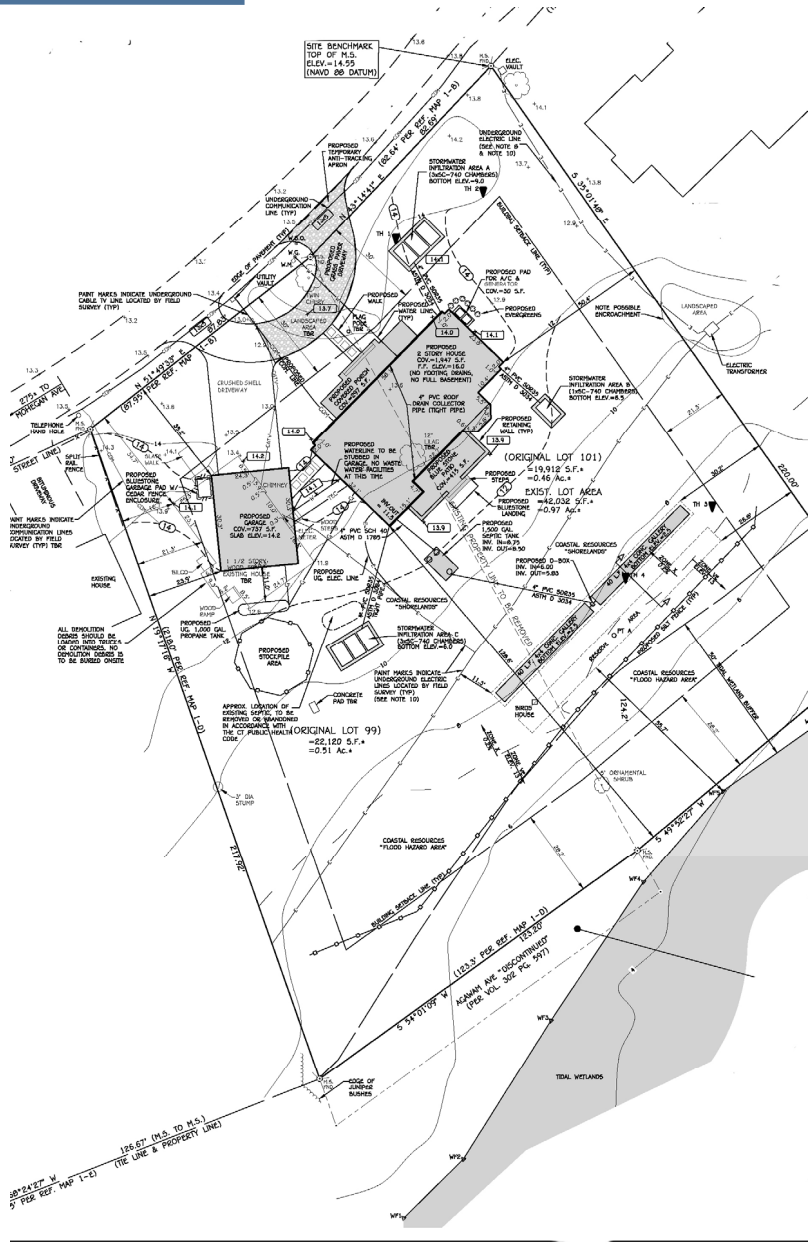
Understand Your Property's Opportunities and Constraints

Be Prepared - Understand the Municipal Requirements

Municipalities have rules and regulations to follow before they will issue a permit to build. Depending on the town these rules could be very lenient or very strict. These may involve meeting in front of a commission or review board. These meetings could cause the project to be delayed for weeks, months or even longer. These are just a few issues you may need to consider even before the design begins:

- Is the site near a Wetlands or in a Flood Zone?
- Do I have a survey of my property?
- Do I need an elevation certificate for my house?
- Are you building on the coast or in a view range?
- Is the property in an Historic Design Review area?
- Will I need to take my design in front of a commission or board for approval?



Did You Know?

If any part of your existing house is in a flood zone you are limited to how much you can spend on renovations or the entire house must meet current Flood Zone requirements.

Budget Guide

The number one question we get is “how much is this going to cost?” It’s like asking “how much is a car?” It all depends on what you are looking for. There are many variables that will affect the overall cost. Location, size, shape, quality of materials, and the contractor are just a few.

The following is a guide to help give you a rough idea of what to expect for costs. The square foot costs can vary depending on the region, site conditions, etc. These are an approximation based on our experiences in construction in recent years. This guide is for planning purposes only and covers general construction costs only. They do not include land cost, consultant fees, taxes and other soft costs.

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Style	Basic	Standard	Medium	Luxury		Area	Cost
Cost Per SF	$200/sf	$250/sf	$300/sf	$350/sf			
1000 sf	$200,000	$250,000	$300,000	$350,000			
2000 sf	$400,000	$500,000	$600,000	$700,000			
3000 sf	$600,000	$750,000	$900,000	$1,050,000			
4000 sf	$800,000	$1,000,000	$1,200,000	$1,400,000			

Did You Know?

Construction loans are structured differently than regular home loans. If you are looking at getting a home construction loan make sure you have a detailed plan in place. Since construction home loans rely on an estimate of the assumed value of the completed house, your lender will want to have a set of plans along with an estimated construction cost breakdown.

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For a more detailed and specific project cost estimate contact me at hope@proctorarchitects.com

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