



The Process of Building your Custom Home:

Selecting and Purchasing Land

Where would you like to build your house? Should the property be in a suburb or rural area? How about an in-town location of one of New England's small towns or villages? Having us visit the property you have selected to determine how well it meets your needs and goals. A study of the site, involves looking for any potential problems that might make construction more difficult or expensive.



Once the land is purchased, the owners obtain a site survey showing contours, boundaries, setbacks, trees and rocks. The owners also order a soil test outlining foundation and septic requirements if necessary. The names of qualified surveyors and soil engineers are available upon request. Also important are copies of design covenants and any other restrictions applying to the land. These are available through the realtor or subdivision.

Defining the Architectural Requirements

We will develop a written description, called a program, which lists the requirements for the project. This is a detailed list of rooms and room sizes, how the spaces will relate to one another, which will have the best views, which will have the morning sun. How will the rooms be used and by who? How often do you entertain and what type entertaining is it? Which room (s) will be used for entertainment?

From this program, we can estimate the size of the proposed home. Based on square foot unit costs, taken from similar, recent jobs, we will prepare an estimated cost for the project. If the proposed cost is not within the budget, the program can then be revised, with reductions in size or interior finish or an increase in budget before the project proceeds into the design phase.

Architectural Features and Finish have an enormous effect on the price of an Early New England Home. It is here that considerable construction expenses can be eliminated. Instead of a room being completely raised panels it can be reduced to just one wall. Standard trim can replace custom trim.

Preliminary Design

The design process begins with a visit to the site. A site analysis is prepared, studying the terrain, driveway access, solar orientation, views, locations of neighboring homes and any special site features. Based on the site analysis and house program, work begins on a house design



- Sketches of the site showing house location and driveway access
- House plans showing room layouts and sizes
- Elevations showing a rough concept for the exterior of the house
- Preliminary land use can also be defined at this time.

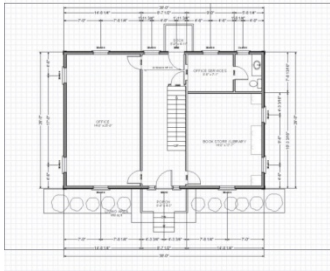
If a Plot Plan is available this phase of the process can be carried out more efficiently. The completion of this phase will provide enough information to obtain bids from a General Contractor and the various specialists. The General Contractor can be selected and a meeting of all involved scheduled.

This is the point where the size of the design of team increases to include the contractor and if required, plumbing, HVAC and electrical specialists.



The Development of the Design

CAD makes this phase much easier for all concerned. Changes can be implemented as the owners review the design concept. Small details are noted and will be added to the model at a later time. CAD can perform many tasks easily and rapidly. The area when CAD has problems is with intricate details, these are the last features to be applied to a model. The Design is revised and refined based on the owner's feedback.



Where CAD shines! We have a model of your house, it contains appliances, room finishes, cabinets, rugs, tile. It can be viewed and rotated in a number of ways with many items having the ability to be changed with just a click or two. Some other items are not impossible to change; but the amount of work involved in their change is difficult and time consuming.

The Final Plan Set:

The Final design drawings are now begun, placed on Architectural 'D' Size Format (24" x 36") and incorporating structural and mechanical considerations. A Standard Plan Package will include:

- Cover Sheet with Isometric Views of the house and general notes
- Plot Plan to be prepared by a Surveying and Engineering Firm
- Elevations
- Foundation Plan with Notes and Schedules
- First Floor Plan with Notes and Schedules
- Second Floor Plan with Notes and Schedules
- Floor Framing and Notes
- Roof Framing and Notes
- Major Construction Cross Sections with call outs
- Details as required for Architectural Features including Stairs
- Basic Electrical
- Plumbing and Heating

The number of sheets will vary with the number of details. The extra details requiring additional sheets would be paneled walls, trim, mantels etc. Added sheets may also include information for grey water treatment and distribution, wind turbine mounting, solar panel attachment and soundproofing. Mass can be added to store heat collected from the winter sun that helps stabilize temperature and save on heating and cooling bills.