



## It's time to remodel or build a new home: Where do I start? Who do I call first?

***Donatelli Builders takes an integrative approach to renovations, remodels and new construction***

by Chris Donatelli



**Try to imagine that you have boarded a plane with intentions of flying from Chicago to Phoenix.** After three hours, during which time the pilot does not communicate with the control tower or even check his instruments, he learns that the plane is over Georgia headed to Florida. To arrive at its original destination Phoenix, the plane must turn

around and go in a completely different direction. The flight takes three hours longer because of being off course and, to top it off, you will be charged for the extra gas!

**Unfortunately, many people who set out to remodel or build a home** encounter a very similar experience – here's why. Most people are led to believe that the first step is to hire an independent architect to complete the plans. Only after the plans are completed do they take the second step – selecting a contractor to build it.

**Doing so though is like the pilot example above.** You may have a destination and budget in mind but the design process usually takes place and building plans completed without consistent budget feedback. After the plans are completed, contractors are asked for their pricing and that is when you discover that the project is substantially over your budget.

To then attempt to bring the project back within your budget, the architect usually makes large revisions or, sometimes, must do a complete re-design to make the project buildable. If the building or remodel has started, making alterations (known in the industry as “change orders”) is usually very costly (frequently ranging in the thousands of dollars). Change orders also contribute to delays in the completion of the project, sometimes as long as several months. Added to the additional cost of the changes are the architect's fees for revised designs.

For example, let's say that you decide you'd really like to have an extra six inches added to the size of a room to accommodate that antique cabinet you love. Or that you'd like to add a ceiling fan and wall switch. Those may seem like small changes but after the project has started, it could entail moving plumbing, electrical or ventilation systems. Even for small changes, usually the architect is required to redraw the plans and the tradesmen have to put in the time to make the changes. These are all added costs.

**After 20 years in business, I have seen this scenario too many times** so I decided to create a system that would solve that problem. The solution is called the *Collaborative Building System*. The system clearly communicates the responsibility of each team member (architect, general contractor and other key professionals involved in the design process) and makes each team member accountable for the project design and the costs to build. The system greatly improves efficiency and, more importantly, creates accountability where none existed previously.

In the medical profession, we expect our family physicians and specialists to meet with patients in advance of any procedure and fully communicate all treatment options together. Why? To make the right decisions resulting in the best outcome for the patient.

The *Collaborative Building System* accomplishes the same thing for the building or remodel process. Consumers should never be “surprised” at any phase of the process. People want predictability of project costs and accountability between all professionals involved. They want the assurance that a project can be built within a specified budget, and they want the ability to make educated deci-



sions early in the design phase, which ultimately shortens the design-to-construction timeline.

An additional benefit is that when there is a fork in the road and a decision must be made effecting design, owners are presented with not only design solutions, but the associated costs as well.

The *Collaborative Building System* practiced by Donatelli Builders has been proven to be more effective by offering

clients advance preparation and partnerships that are key to the success of any project, no matter the size and scale.

**If you are considering remodeling or building a new home, call Donatelli Builders at 630-878-9166 for a complimentary consultation. Whether or not you already have an architect, we can begin working with you to help you build the home of your dreams.**

*Chris Donatelli is the president of Donatelli Builders, Inc. Chris is an award-winning builder and has more than 20 years of experience in remodeling and building homes in DuPage County and surrounding areas.*



*Celebrating 20 years of home building, renovations and remodeling*

**630-878-9166**

[chris@DonatelliBuilders.com](mailto:chris@DonatelliBuilders.com)

[www.DonatelliBuilders.com](http://www.DonatelliBuilders.com)