

# 5

## Tips for Renovating Mountain Homes & the Big 3



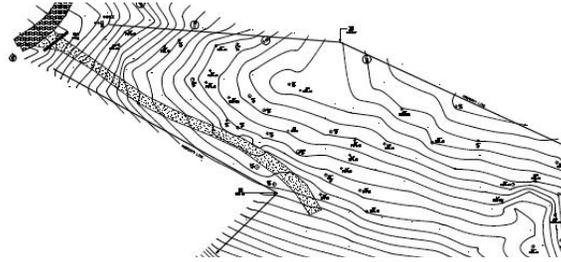
Contact Architect: click logo

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

[Rand@HomeArchitects.com](mailto:Rand@HomeArchitects.com)

828 . 269 . 9046

© Copyright 2017, Home Architect, PLLC, All Rights Reserved Worldwide.



### 1 SURVEY & SETBACKS

It's tempting to look at your land and say: "I can building any addition I want! There's lots of room!"

The reality is: there is an invisible cobweb of legal constraints crisscrossing your property that controls how large a building, paving, or other features can be built there (& where).

**IMPLICATIONS:** If you were to rashly proceed to just build away, you could find yourself having to come back & bulldoze your improvements and/or pay legal fees, or be forced to buy land from your neighbors whose toes you may have stepped on unknowingly. Don't do this.

**SUGGESTION:** have an Architect coordinate with your Surveyor to document, on a Survey, where your existing house, boundary lines, easements, building setbacks & other items are located on your land. Then and only then, can your Architect analyze, understand, then explain to you the size & locations of possible improvements on your land.

### 2 STAIRWAYS

Unless you are a Licensed Architect or Contractor, it is hard to scale stairways to properly function and look good. Whenever Clients try to sketch on a drawing, they always show stairs (and furniture) about half the size they really are. Dealing with proper scale is something Architects do like breathing. With stairs, they need to be wider and longer to function better.

**IMPLICATIONS:** installing a Code minimum stair looks cheap, is harder to climb & damages your resale.

**SUGGESTION:** Allow your Architect to create stairs that might be up to 4' wide, if you have space. That's a comfortable width that looks rich. And if you have the distance, lower risers than the Code maximums, to ease the task of climbing.



One of HOME ARCHITECTS® stairs.

### 3 KITCHENS

Kitchens are the #1 space to renovate in a mountain house, per Real Estate Broker Merry Soellner, RSPS. This adds more value than anything else & provides daily enjoyment. It takes skill to design properly. Wider aisles are necessary to an effective kitchen renovation. 3 counter types are favored: granite, marble, or thick butcher block. Islands are essential to achieving at least 2 ways in/out of a kitchen, which is crucial. Painted Island cabinets are becoming popular. **IMPLICATIONS:** If you ignore the kitchen in a renovation, you are doing yourself & any other owner a disservice and it will cost you. **SUGGESTION:** Have an Architect design a functional, spacious & beautiful new kitchen.



A HOME ARCHITECTS® kitchen

### 4 BEDROOMS & OTHER SPACES

Avoid over-personalizing secondary spaces just because you think it would be nice. Chances are no one else will see the value. Flowered wallpaper. A new window in a third bedroom. Shelving. Fancier laundry room. When in doubt, ask your Real Estate Broker; they have to sell it. **IMPLICATIONS:** You are wasting your money investing in spaces not identified in this booklet as prime renovation areas. However, you may have a special functional need, like wheelchair access. **SUGGESTION:** unless you have unlimited funds, or special needs, before renovating spaces like these, focus on the main "Big 3".



A HOME ARCHITECTS® Outdoor Living Room

### 5 MASTER BATHROOM

#2 or #3 space for renovation (in the Big 3). This is a personal space, but people tend to like it rather palatial. Larger. Bigger shower. Special tub (if at all). Toilet room. Larger window(s) to private view. Lots of counter. 2 sinks. Nice cabinetry. Nice floor tile. **IMPLICATIONS:** People don't like small, plastic master bathrooms or toilets in the open. **SUGGESTION:** renovate this space to be larger and more luxurious.



A HOME ARCHITECTS®  
Master Bathroom

### BONUS TIP: OUTDOOR SPACES

People enjoy being outside, but having a roof & an optional fireplace. #3 or #2 (Big 3). Note: outdoor fireplaces can be costly.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Not having outdoor spaces is a big mistake, both in terms of resale & personal enjoyment.

**SUGGESTION:** Have your Architect design screened view porches overlooking mountain scenery. Provide outdoor fireplaces/firepits when budget allows.