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ARCHITECTURE | MANAGEMENT



FULL-SERVICE PACKAGE



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WELCOME

"Architecture should enrich and enhance the quality of life of the people and community of which it is a part. Understanding how to be sensitive to that community without compromising the requirements (and budgets!) of our clients is the key to elevating a successful project into one that is worthy of note.

Our style is one of clean lines, natural materials and open contemporary spaces suited to our modern way of life while keeping it all within a recognizably traditional Bermudian framework.

Whether you are looking to renovate an existing building, add on, or build from scratch, we have the experience, knowledge and ability to provide a design that meets your needs while maximizing the quality of both your environment and your investment."

Geoff Parker

Principal Architect

FULL-SERVICE PACKAGE

Building projects can be complex with coordination required between various other professional disciplines, statutory authorities such as Planning, Department of Health, Fire Prevention and Environmental Protection. The project must also be coordinated with potential contractors, subcontractors, specialist, and suppliers who perform the work. Our Full Services package has proven time and time again to be the most effective way to manage the progress of a building project from design through to construction and occupancy.

One of the most important things for clients to understand is that the design process is just that – a process. Decisions are made throughout the duration of the process and each design stage builds on the previous one. Early stages are where the more conceptual decisions are taken to ensure that the requirements of the owner are met in relationship to the site, budget, and timeframe. Later stages decide on the more detailed aspects of how the building is put together.

Generally, each design stage is sequential dealing with the most important 'big picture' decisions at the beginning (such as those related to user requirements and budget) and then fine tuning and growing more detailed as the process continues. Each stage also has a purpose and level of expectations to be achieved for the client. The client is expected to be able to agree and sign off at each stage before we move on to the next one.

Our process focuses attention on what is important at each stage. There are 6 stages to our design process and may involve some or all of the following services depending upon the particular project.



1 | Pre Design (...just the facts)

Objective: To establish all of the client's criteria and site restrictions that will affect the development of the design.

Pre-Design is simply the research and information gathering stage to ensure that we have all of the relevant and current information from which to make a start. The process at this stage is as follows:

- **Review of Planning Restrictions** – each site is unique and it is important to understand the 'rules of the game' before starting rather than make assumptions which can have significant implications the further into the process the design is.
- **Site Visit and Evaluation** – Being able to visualize the site is important as it may bring to light issues that may not be apparent by simply looking at zoning maps and survey plans.
- **Survey of Existing Conditions** – For sites with existing structures on them it is important to have an accurate understanding of what we are to work with. This usually means measuring and drawing up the existing structure ourselves. Old plans can be of assistance but are usually not built exactly as they were drawn. Making an assumption that something will fit within an existing space can compromise the validity of the design and other important decisions if it is found at a later stage not to be true.
- **Land Survey** – Similarly, having accurate levels and relative locations of buildings, structures and services is key to the decision making process in the conceptual stage where site layout and connection to the outside world can have a huge effect on the direction of the project and the budget. This service is usually performed by a consultant Land Surveyor.
- **Establishing the Program** – This consists of understanding and documenting the client's needs and wants in order to achieve the client's design goals. It is important to try and define these detailed requirements for the project as clearly and as early as possible. Changes in the client's requirements further into the design process may invalidate early design decisions resulting in compromises for the client or abortive work if part of the project has to be redesigned.
- **Establishing the Client's Budget** – The amount of money available is something that is often overlooked at the early design stage. Sometimes it is not even known if the client is relying on outside financing such a bank loan or mortgage. Having a realistic budget is one of the most important items to have prior to engaging an architect as it is one of the most important factors in the early-stage design. Too many clients have found that they have commissioned a great design but are unable to afford to build it. By establishing a budget at the beginning it ensures that we can tailor the design decisions to keep within the budget and advise the client if their ideas exceed it.

2 | Sketch Design (...the ideas)

Objective: To work through design ideas based on the client's criteria and the restrictions of the site to establish a preferred concept as a basis for the project's design.

Sketch Design is the initial exploration of concepts and ideas for the project. It is typically done in a very diagrammatic way, freehand sketch drawn as the name implies, to keep it as flexible as possible as different ways of configuring the spaces are reviewed. Ultimately, the sketches are narrowed down to one preferred option by the client. The process at this stage is as follows:

- **Preliminary Site Plan** showing location and orientation of development, access, and services requirements (A survey plan of the property from a registered Land Surveyor will be required for this work)
- **Preliminary Floor Plans** showing spatial relationships and room layouts
- **Preliminary Key Elevations/Sections** showing spatial relationships

3 | Planning Permission (...the what)

Objective: To establish the final spatial relationships, room layouts and exterior appearance of the project in order to obtain Planning Permission.

The goal at this stage is to confirm the spatial layout and massing of the project with the client for submitting the project to the Planning Department. This means finalizing the floor plans, sections, and exterior design in hardline, CAD, digital drawings. For projects where additional clarity is needed for what may be allowed some pre-consultation meetings with the Department of Planning may be required.

Just prior to finalizing the Planning Permission drawings the client will sign off on the design to date in what we term a 'Design Freeze'. While minor adjustments to the project are expected during the next phase major changes to the direction of the design will incur additional charges.

We also recommend a cost check at this stage with a registered Quantity Surveyor (QS) to ensure that the project is still on budget. The process at this stage is as follows:

- **Site Plan** with location of new and existing structures and key site features such as roads, walls, cesspits
- **Floor Plans** of all levels
- **Elevations** or exterior views of all sides of the project
- **Key Sections** through the project to demonstrate the relationship with the land
- **Optional construction cost check**

4 | Building Permit (...the how)

Objective: To establish the technical 'health and safety' requirements of the project to meet the Building Code.

Once Planning Permission has been granted, before construction work can begin a Building Permit needs to be obtained. This stage upgrades the level of information on the drawings to show the technical detail of how the project is to be constructed and made habitable. The goal is to show that the project meets all the requirements of the Building Code. This includes information about the structural, electrical, and plumbing infrastructure and details for actually how a builder is to assemble the project.

For larger projects additional professional consultants may be required such as structural engineers, electrical engineers, and mechanical engineers. The process at this stage is as follows:

- All required documents as outlined in Stage 3 updated to show compliance with the Building Code
- Electrical and Lighting Plans
- Plumbing Layout Plans
- General Structural Notes and Details

(The number of drawings and schedules required for this stage can vary greatly depending on the size and complexity of the project and can be quite extensive. It is important to remember that the more information that there is, the easier it is for a contractor to price. The more assumptions a contractor must make due to incomplete drawings, the more likely they will compensate with additional costs or completely miss pricing some element of the design.)

5 | Contract Drawings and Tender (...the details)

Objective: To establish all the information needed for a contractor to submit an accurate price and assist in the choosing of the contractor to perform the work.

While most of the technical information to meet the health and safety aspects of the Building Code has been produced at the Building Permit stage there is often additional information required before the design can be put out to tender for contractors to submit a price. These are primarily related to non-structural aspects such as details of the window and door, the interior finishes and technical information not related to the Building Code such as air conditioning, telephone, television, and internet access connections. Also, documentation outline the Tender expectations for the contractor is also generated.

Typically, the client will supply items such as doors, windows, air conditioning, etc. directly from suppliers to save money. If so, this needs to be accurately documented so that the contractor knows to exclude those items from their price.

The contractor will typically only price what is shown on the tender drawings and schedules. Drawings with incomplete or missing information will usually mean that the contractor will assume that someone else will be supplying those items. If that is not the case, then the contractor will expect to be paid extra for performing work that is not shown on the drawings.

A comprehensive package of drawings, schedules and specifications is the best defence against high or inconsistent contractor pricing and unexpected additional costs after the project has started. Cost not spent on producing a thorough tender package is greater cost spent on construction extras.

A contractor is chosen in either one of two ways;

1. competitive tendering of typically three (no more than five) contractors
2. negotiation with a single contractor that the client would like to use based on qualification, previous experience, or referrals.

Projects that are subject to Bank financing will almost always require a competitive tender.

The architect reviews any tenders to ensure that the comparisons are 'apples to apples' and advise the client as to the best value. The client then selects the contractor that they are most comfortable with which may not necessarily be the one with the lowest price.

We always recommend a proper contract is established between the owner and contractor to best protect both parties. The process at this stage is as follows:

- Final drawings, schedules and specifications describing the full extent of the project's construction.
- Tender documents outlining Instructions to Contractors bidding and other formal written Tender directives
- Facilitate the negotiation or tender process in order to choose the successful contractor.
- Preparation of the contract documents for signing by the owner and contractor

6 | Contract Administration (...the money)

Objective: To facilitate the technical aspects of the construction contract.

Once a contract is agreed between the owner and the contractor there are several procedures which must be followed. At this stage we act as the line of communication between the owner and the contractor to ensure the contractual procedures are correctly followed.

We act on the owner's behalf as their eyes and ears on site to ensure the project is being constructed in conformance with the contract drawings and other documents and provide clarification to queries by the contractor.

We also review the contractor's applications for payment each month against the actual work completed. This provides a level of security to the owner that they are paying for completed work only and not being overcharged or paying too far in advance. A proper construction contract normally requires the owner to pay only what the architect has approved, which is not necessarily everything the contractor has asked for.

Some money (called retention) is usually held back from the payments every month until the end of the project in case work is defective or does not meet the requirements set out in the drawings. If the contractor cannot or will not correct any deficiencies part of the retention money can be used to pay others to correct the work. The process at this stage is as follows:

- Observe the construction process to ensure conformance with the contract drawings.
- Evaluate the contractor's payment requests.
- Process queries from the contractor and provide clarification as required.
- Administer requests for changes by the owner or contractor.
- Act as initial mediator in any disputes or claims that arise out of the contract.

We look forward to working with you.

