

# WHAT TO ASK BEFORE YOU BUILD - ADVICE FROM GREEN BUILDING PROS

## Programming (let's get to know you):

- My house was \_\_\_\_ sq ft, \_\_ bedrooms, \_\_ baths and felt (*just right*), (*too small*), (*too large*), (*our family is growing & we need more space*), (*we are at a point where we can downsize*).
- I think I want/need \_\_\_\_ sq ft, \_\_ bedrooms, \_\_ baths (*or I'm unsure and need an architect/designer/builder/team that can help me figure this out*).
- My priorities are affordability and \_\_\_\_ (*Amenities*), (*Aesthetics*), (*Comfort*), (*Performance*), (*Maintenance*), (*Completion Date*), (*Environmental Sensitivity*), (*Healthy Indoor Air Quality*), (*Net Zero Energy*), (*Passive House Design*)
- I plan to live in this home for \_\_ years. I need it to accommodate or be adaptable to (*aging in place via universal design*), (*a growing family*), (*elderly family coming to live with me full time*), (*a high resale value*).

## Conversation Starters (let's get to know the builder):

- I want a well designed and well built home that (*is airtight and properly ventilated*), (*maximizes passive solar design*), (*is properly insulated*), (*is right sized for my needs*), (*lends itself to integrating new systems or technologies*), (*easy to care for*), (*has a reduced carbon footprint over a typical home*), (*utilizes high performance windows*). Can you share about your recent experience related to these things?
- I've heard that the project TEAM is very important. Do you have recent design-build experience? Is there a team of architects, engineers, consultants, etc., that you have worked with successfully previously? Have you previously worked directly with a HERS rater?
- I'm interested in Passive House Design. Have you designed/built a Passive House previously? Can you tell me about that project and your experience?
- I want to explore using passive techniques to minimize the demand on mechanical systems. I want to determine how to maximize my lot in terms of (*solar*), (*shade*), (*views*). Can you tell me about your experience in design to best utilize a site and make the most out of these existing features?
- Do you have experience with designing simple, more cost effective forms but making them beautiful?
- I'm interested in geothermal. As my builder, would you be open to my lot being part of the dig of several geothermal wells in my neighborhood so we can split/reduce costs by coming together?
- Do you have experience building for ignition resistance - sealing soffits, attics, and crawl spaces? Have you previously built air tight homes that can protect from smoke and pollution infiltration?
- What is your approach to a healthy home? I want to prioritize (*an airtight home with continuous filtered fresh air*), (*passively heating my home as much as possible*), (*avoiding thermal bridging*), (*going all electric to get the benefits of a gas free home*), (*low VOC materials*), (*prioritizing local/regional and natural materials*).
- What new building methods/techniques have you recently learned or are interested in implementing?
- Do you have a list of references from recent projects that I can contact?
- Where can I find your portfolio of work?



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