



# THE JOURNEY OF DESIGN

## Why Hiring an Architect is Important

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**Cathy Purple Cherry** and her husband of 37 years are returning home to the Shenandoah and Blue Ridge mountains. Born and raised in Virginia, Cathy ultimately landed in Annapolis where she grew a large architectural firm specializing in high-end custom homes and estates. With three children transitioning to independence, she has come back to the mountains of her childhood and is excited to be building her final home on top of Ennis Mountain in Afton. Cathy is passionate about extending her 25-year old practice through DC and down the range to Charlottesville. Cathy's intense love for the mountains has always been deeply rooted in her, as has her strong commitment to community—this mountain girl is excited and proud to call Charlottesville her home.

For most people, buying a home requiring major renovations or buying land and building a new home can be an overwhelming experience. Initially, there is tremendous excitement for the perceived “fun part” of material and product selection. In reality, there are so many moving parts to

the process that it can ultimately take away the joy of the journey of design. This alone is a reason to bring on an architect if this option is a possibility that you can afford.

The skills of an architect can be all-encompassing or very specific. The profession attracts individuals that are wired to think three-dimensionally, love the process of assemblage, thrive on proper proportion and design, and/or are masters at orchestrating multiple pieces and players. As such, we are the consiglieres for our clients. When the journey is truly successful, architects are the creators of places and spaces that evoke joy, inspiration and contentment. We are truly motivated to have incredibly successful outcomes—for our clients, for our designs, and for the contractors that make what we draw on paper become real.

So, as you can imagine from the words written above, should you decide to hire an architect, the starting point is to find someone you connect with, someone you feel hears you while still guiding you, and someone who respects you as the owner and the client. No doubt, there is an emotional connection made while designing your home. The intimate details of your likes

and dislikes are shared. The interaction between two partnered clients is witnessed by the architectural professional. Confidential information is expressed and respect must rule the day.

Once you select the right professional for you, the journey begins. An architect can walk you through any part of the design and building process. From helping find the right property, guiding the building orientation, providing plan options through sketches, displaying design views through computer technology, assisting in contractor award, overseeing construction, and selecting final colors, fixtures and furnishings, an architect can bring the “fun part” of the design journey to the forefront. They allow you to imagine opportunity and help you to see potential conflict in old living patterns. They are fundamentally problem solvers while painting beautiful canvases.

So, if you decide to head down such a journey, time will fly and before you know it, you will be standing on your lawn feeling like you did as a child the first time you opened that beautiful pop-up book... sheer amazement. That is the journey of successful design!