RIGHT REHAB

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR OWNERS OF OLDER HOMES
Old houses require work - and lots of it! The projects before you may seem overwhelming. Where do you begin? Here are 10 TIPS to help organize & prioritize your projects to make them manageable and successful.
1. Where to begin? Ask yourself:
   Why am I doing this project? Is this my forever house? Do I intend to move?

   - Repair or Maintenance?
   - Renovation?
   - Full Restoration?

   - Systems Upgrade?

   - Lifestyle Needs or Changes?
   - New Paint Color?
   - Kitchen upgrade?
   - Accessibility?
2. Understand the “wants” versus the “needs”

You might want a new kitchen or master suite …

…but a porch or foundation or window repairs may be a more immediate need. Start with the building envelope: Work from top – down, outside – in.
The bottom line is...

Anything that affects your health, safety & welfare moves to the top of your project list!
3. Give your house an overview.

Look @ the Big Picture. Make a list of all potential projects before undertaking anything. Ask yourself:

- Will a project impact another building system or area?
- What project(s) will have the most impact on occupant health and safety and building stability?
- Is the project dependent on the weather?
- Can my current budget afford this project right now?
- Will the project cost less if combined with another project on site?
4. Learn the architectural style of your house. Respect it and let it guide your approach to your renovation.

Before

New porch, windows and paint scheme all complement the original character of this American Foursquare

After

Replacement windows should always fit the original window openings.
5. Costs – do your homework!

- Can my current budget afford this project right now?
- Will the project cost less if combined with another project on site?
- Get more than one cost estimate
- Always put aside a 5% - 10% contingency for any work, no matter how small.
6. Not every job is “DIY”

DIY Considerations:
• How much time do you have to complete the whole project?
• What are you family and work commitments?
• Will you need permit drawings?
• Can you prepare your own plans?
• Do you have the proper tools? Do you know how to use them?
• Do you have the skills, or are you learning on the job?
• Who can you contact if you run into a problem?

What the Pros provide:

Architect – programming, design, construction documents, construction management, owner’s representative/advocate

Engineer – structural, plumbing, mechanical, electrical design, construction documents, construction management

Design/Build Firm – architect & contractor together offer full range of design & contracting services

Interior Designer – interior finishes, space planning, design, furniture, fixtures and equipment selection

General Contractor – securing & providing materials, labor, equipment; managing subcontractors; obtaining permits.

Subcontractors – specialized trades or services contracted individually: carpentry, plastering, masonry, plumbing…
7. **Contracts** – the best way to describe the scope of work, costs & payment procedures.

Put it in writing!

If it’s not in the contract or on the drawings, it won’t get done!

Document also what is *not* included in the scope of work.

Be sure of what you are signing
8. Take the time to prepare well up front.

- Protect & seal off cabinets
- Tape off all vents
- Protect flooring
- Simple walk-off mats
- Seal off work area

Keep informed during the project.

Don’t be afraid to ask questions.

Unexpected things can happen. Expect it!

Changes in the project are better addressed early.

Understand the process for making changes in the field.

**A WELL-SUPERVISED JOB = LASTING QUALITY!**
10. Before the final sign off, make sure:

• All work is done to your satisfaction and the terms of the contract.

• All inspections are completed and signed off.

• Certificate of Occupancy is granted for any permit work.
Enjoy the fruits of all your hard labor!

(Compare these ‘after’ photos to the ‘before’ photos on the 1st slide!)

Questions? Contact the Columbus Landmarks Home Preservation Program
Phone: 614-221-4508   Email: skeeny@columbuslandmarks.org