

# SpencerDouglas

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## **The Design Process - From Conception to Construction**

You have decided that you're ready for your dream cottage or you have decided that you would like to make those changes to your home.

What next?

Many homeowners find the process of making changes to their home a daunting experience with many considerations and hidden fees that may not be fully explained or understood.

Our team of professionals is here to help make your dream into a reality in a way that will speak to you, your family and all the needs that you have.

We will be present to support you and we can help you understand what would be involved in your construction or renovation project.

**The purpose of this overview is to provide you with a general step-by-step guideline of what to expect out of this process.**

### **Step 1: Start Dreaming**

*Renovations:* the first step is for you to walk around your home, inside and out, and start making a wish list of all the things you would love to see changed or improved.

Prioritize the items you would like, and rank them in order.

*New construction:* go shopping! Take a look at our website, our instagram account, and our sister company, PattyMac Inc. to see what we have already designed and constructed.

<http://spencerdouglas.ca>

<https://www.pattymac.ca/portfolio/>

@pattymacbuilt

### **Step 2: Gather Information & Required Documentation**

Locate paperwork that you may have received at the time of your purchase of the property. In particular, a survey, interior layouts of your home and anything that pertains to the legal description of your home will be of assistance to us.

### **Step 3: Make it a Reality**

Call us to arrange a site inspection and consultation.

*Renovations:* The site inspection will include comprehensive site measurements of the entire property. Our team will require access to all areas of the structure in order to be able to complete these measurements.

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*New Construction:* The site inspection will include a walkthrough of your property, so that we can gather a better sense of how we can orient the building and obtain any site specific details. Our team will work closely with you to formulate a plan of the size, shape and volume of the building.

In either case (new construction or renovation), a consultation meeting will be held with yourself in order to discuss the general requirements of your dream cottage. We will get to know you through this process, and help you develop a plan for smooth execution of your dream build.

*Questions you may want to consider asking yourself in preparation of our meeting:*

What would the ideal square footage of your dream cottage be?

Would you like a contemporary or a traditional Muskoka cottage?

Or, perhaps, a fusion of the two styles which would provide a contemporary cottage, with traditional Muskoka elements.

How many bedrooms would you need to suit your current needs, and your future needs?

How many bathrooms would you need to suit your current needs, and your future needs?

What unique utilizations of the property will you have?

Do you have any special requirements in terms limited mobility or any other special accommodations that you would like to include in your home?

Our team will conduct a preliminary zoning review to determine the allowable footprints that your local municipality has for the specific location of your property. Typically, zoning reviews are required in order to determine whether the size, area and volume of proposed construction or an addition is in compliance with applicable laws and bylaws.

*Please note: Having an up-to-date survey that reflects your current property condition is critical in the zoning calculations required. Without a legal survey, we can come across challenges with precise lot coverage calculations and other zoning limitations to the property.*

If the building plans are in excess of the regulation as set out by the local building department, we may proceed to taking your project to the Committee of Adjustment (see further below). The building will then be modelled in 3D by our in-house professionals. The consultation, 3D rendering and zoning review will generally be completed within two to four weeks from the date of site attendance. For the purposes of concept drawing preparation, a total of up to 4 minor revisions and 2 major revisions are included with services to be rendered by our design team.

*Major Changes include modifications such as:* changes to the building footprint, building heights, changes to the floor heights, changes to the roof line, locations of stair cases, locations of fireplaces, boat slip locations ,dock sizes.

*Minor Changes include modifications such as:* Changes to the locations of windows, doors, interior layout changes for the space utilization, kitchen layouts and furniture layouts (for illustrative purposes only), materials, lighting adjustments and other similar changes.

## **Step 4: Revisions, revisions, revisions!**

Following the initial concept prepared by our team, we strongly recommend a meeting to be held either in-house or virtually, whichever suits you best. This meeting will allow us to understand your needs better, and together we can custom design your proposed changes.

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During this meeting, any zoning restrictions that we may have discovered limiting the size/height of your proposed changes will be brought to your attention.

We recommend that you allot one to two hours for this meeting. At this stage, we will review the overall floor plans for flow and utilization, and we will proceed to review each room independently, thus ensuring you have visualized the space, the access to that space, and ensuring that you can envision yourself in your dream home.

In preparation for this meeting, please try and review the concept drawing which was sent to you for your review. We recommend that you allow yourself several days from receipt of the drawing to our meeting, giving you an opportunity to really let the space sink in. We suggest that you do some online “window shopping” to find images that may assist you in relaying your plans or changes to us. You can email these images to us at [info@spencerdouglas.ca](mailto:info@spencerdouglas.ca).

Please note: The concept and planning stages are the most important stages of designing a custom home or renovation. This process is iterative, and we will revise the drawings until you are completely satisfied with the drawings.

## **Step 5: Leave it to us.**

Once we have an approved concept from yourself, we will proceed with the design of the building. Subject to your approval, we will complete structural drawings, mechanical designs (HVAC), plumbing drawings, lighting diagrams, and all your building service needs.

We recommend that you have selected a contractor for the project by this time. You may then provide your contractor(s) with our preliminary drawing and obtain a quote. Our sister company, PattyMac Services Inc. would gladly be able to assist with the following.

Should your contractor bring any changes to the table, please notify us as soon as possible. We will gladly work with your contractor in order to achieve a smooth and seamless process.

## **Step 6: Building Permit Application**

Once our permit drawings are finalized, the building permit application package will have to be submitted to the local municipal authority. Spencer Douglas Planning & Design will gladly apply for a building permit on your behalf, and correspond with the local municipal department to obtain all necessary documents to make your dream build a reality.

***On behalf of our entire team, we thank you for considering Spencer Douglas Planning & Design to help you make your dream cottage a reality.***

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## **NON-STANDARD TRANSACTIONS AND ADDITIONAL COSTS**

Every proposal is unique and as a result there may be a need for additional work. Common additional fees that may arise are set out below to help you in your decision-making. Transparency in fees is of paramount importance to us, and we will not charge you any additional fees without first obtaining your agreement.

### **Out of office meetings/Site inspections:**

Other than those outlined above in Steps 3 and 4, meetings that require travel from our office will involve additional costs that are directly associated with the meeting length of time, as well as travel time and mileage associated with the trip. Instances that require a site inspection may occur as a result of a requirement from the municipal building department, or a change to your building plans.

### **Building permit fees:**

There are always building permit fees that have to be paid. We can advise you on the amount of these costs, however these are your responsibility to pay.

In some cases, the local municipal building permit fee is a fixed cost. There are instances when the building permit fees associated with the proposed interior layout changes, addition or new construction are directly proportional to the square footage of the area of work, depending on your local municipality.

### **Committee of Adjustment:**

Should a proposal not meet the zoning requirements of the municipality (or other local authority), it still may be possible to go forward with the project.

A Committee of Adjustment, similar to a Zoning Board of Adjustment, is a body in each Ontario municipality that adjudicates matters related to minor variances to zoning by-laws and consents to severances of land. This allows for a property owner to present their proposal to the committee and attempt to acquire approval. Each Committee of Adjustment typically has its own independent criteria for the drawing package and the application process. This process can incur additional costs on the part of the design firm in order to re-format the drawings and re-issue the set to comply with the particular committee's requirements.

The Committee of Adjustment also has their own permit fees as well as deadlines for application submissions.

While it is not possible for us to provide a firm quote for our work to help you get your plans considered by a Committee of Adjustment, we will do our best to provide you with a price range. Please note that we cannot guarantee that your proposal will be approved by the committee.

### **Conservation Authority Permitting**

Provincial Conservation Authorities are mandated to ensure the conservation, restoration, and responsible management of Ontario's water, land and natural habitats through programs that

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balance human, environmental and economic needs. Ultimately, certain restrictions will apply to construction projects should your property fall within a Conservation Authority's jurisdiction.

While it is not possible to provide a firm quote for our work to help you get your plans approved by a Conservation Authority, we will do our best to provide you with a price range. Please note that we cannot guarantee that your proposal will be approved by the authority.

## **Department of Fisheries & Oceans & Ministry of Natural Resources**

Federal Conservation Authorities are mandated to ensure the safe and sustainable development of the country's natural resources (specifically waters for the Department of Fisheries).

When proposing to construct boathouses, specifically, single storey boathouses with living accommodations, two-storey boathouses, and non-boat storage related construction such as saunas, bathrooms, bars, etc., will require occupational authority from the MNRF for which there is a fee.