

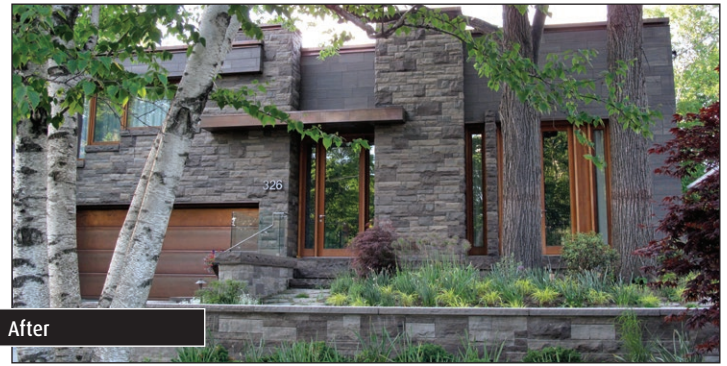
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Neighbours of

FOREST HILL



A Modern Family *in* Forest Hill



A major renovation completed by Lorne Rose Architect.

Should I Do A Major Renovation *or* A New Home Build?

By Lorne Rose

Let's say you already have a nice home, on a nice lot, in a great neighbourhood, but you're ready for a change. You're ready for something different in terms of the house itself. Is it better to undertake a major renovation or knock it down and start fresh? It's a big question, and as you can imagine there are pros and cons to each side.

Benefits of Major Renovation

It's possible you may benefit from a grandfather clause that grants your older home certain features that would not be permitted in a new build. Older homes may feature a nonconforming setback and, therefore, a larger footprint. When contemplating tearing down your old home, first check with a residential architect: "Does my home fall into the category of nonconforming uses, structures or lots? If so, what am I forfeiting in my new home build?"

Another consideration—a more aesthetic one—is that you can't fake character (without adding expense, at least). If your home has some great features that are a product of its period and age, ask yourself: "Would I be comfortable losing these features?" If you are in love with the exterior, work with your architect to decide how best to preserve its charm and architectural features. If you're fortunate enough to have a home with character, don't throw it away without adequate deliberation.

The environment and costs are considerations: A major renovation

will be better for the environment and often save you money when compared to a new build.

Benefits of New Home Build

A new home will allow and your architect to think outside of the box and be unbound by the constraints of prior work. If starting from scratch is your dream, then a new build is obviously the way to go. Similarly, if renovation ideas are wide-reaching and significant, the cost of renovation is actually *more* than just beginning anew.

New builds mean avoiding renovation compromises. Trying to transform space into an open-concept layout – knocking down and opening walls, also means dealing with whatever is behind those walls. In some cases, this may lead to significant structural implications that can complicate the project.

In addition, if high and lofty ceilings are something you'd like, you may have more luck with a new build. It is difficult, not impossible, to change ceiling heights in a renovation if the floors are already set. The cozy feeling of older houses may have more moderate ceiling heights compared to lofty new construction heights that are common today. If a high ceiling is a must-have for you, a new build may be the way to go.

Although you will be the ultimate judge of whether a major renovation or a new build is the best approach for you and your situation, a residential architect like Lorne Rose Architect can help guide you in reaching this ultimate decision.



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