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INTEGRITY BUILDINGS

PLANNING GUIDE

FOR POST FRAME BUILDINGS

I. PLANNING PROCESS

Defining Your Goals

Start by thinking of "The Big Picture," then determine the needs of your building and what you want out of it. Be sure to think about the following questions:

- What is the primary purpose of the building? What will the building be used for? (Agricultural, Equestrian, Commercial, Residential)
- Are there secondary or other uses for the building to consider? Are you planning to add more things in the future?
- Will the placement of the building impact the overall property? If so, how?
- Will there be a finished interior or will the building be used for cold storage?
- What areas are needed inside the building? Is a ceiling load required now or in the future?
- Are there factors to consider in regards to traffic flow such as people, animals, machines, within the building?
- Are there environmental conditions or stresses that should be acknowledged? (snow loads, wind loads, drainage, general weather and soil conditions) This will determine the materials needed for the project.
- What type of doors/openings are best suited for your needs? Where will the placement of them be?

II. ZONING AND PERMIT CONSIDERATIONS

Know the rules and requirements in your area

Before any construction can start, a building permit is required. It is also critical that you know the zoning laws and building codes of your municipality and province. Do the work ahead of time to avoid potential setbacks and additional costs. Some key things to look into are:

1. **Contact your local governing authority to determine the zoning ordinances of your property.**
   - What is the current zoning
   - What (if any) land use limitations
   - Does the intended use of the building meet the zoning requirements
2. **What are the limitations and specifications for:**
   - Property line setbacks
   - Maximum height allowance
   - Maximum square footage allowance
   - Is a variance needed? If so, what is the process and time on average that this can take?
3. **Research and establish the requirements for obtaining a building permit. Do you need:**
   - A site plan
   - Zoning and building applications — Process and length of time on average to approve?
   - Legal description of property
   - Driveway permit
   - Septic release
   - Detailed construction prints
   - Are there provincial requirements that must be complied with?
   - Do you need a drainage plan and drainage approval?
   - Is their highway department approval needed?
   - Health department approval requirements that must be met?

Remember that for any processes with local and provincial government, to clearly identify the approval procedures and time frame that each step takes on average.

III. LAND SITE PREPARATION

Ensure a safe, and stable foundation for your structure

Land site preparation is very important when it comes to constructing your building. Consult with your builder to figure out the following:

- Proper placement of building based on its uses and the property boundaries
- Is there organic material that will need to be cleared and removed?
- Plan for building pad costs (granular, drainable fill-type material extending approx. 4' beyond the building footprint)
- Ensure that the area allows for proper drainage away from the new building pad
- Where will the staging area be for the building material during construction
- Create a plan to get construction equipment in and out of the construction site
- Identify and locate all owner installed utilities as well as public utilities. Consider potential impact on things buried (gas, electrical, septic, existing tree roots)
- Plan for utilities to be placed in and around new site area

IV. MATERIALS

Quality buildings start with quality materials

Your building is an investment and the types of materials used matter. They are vital to the building's durability and longevity. Less expensive buildings may have materials that are less costly, however, repairs or update costs will come sooner, and possibly at a greater expense. Be sure to ask builders the following questions:

- What materials will be used? Are you able to provide a list?
- Are there materials that are essential to the building's needs or designed to extend the building's longevity?
- Where are the building materials from and who makes them? Do they offer warranty?
- What type of posts will be used? (Standard wood verses concrete) Keep in mind that even treated wood will eventually rot over time
- How will the materials be delivered to the job site?
- If your building requires insulation, what type of insulation will be used? What areas of the building will be insulated?

V. KEYS TO SELECTING A BUILDER

A few things to consider before selecting a builder

This is one of the most important considerations in your planning process. This will impact how the process goes and your ultimate satisfaction with your building. Here are key questions to consider:

1. **How long have they been in business? Have they been established for many years?**
   Will they be able to provide follow up service years down the road

2. **Are they a company with their own employed crews and equipment?**
   Who is accountable for the project?

3. **Does the builder carry Adequate Liability, Builder's Risk and Worker's Compensation Insurance? Do they have a managed safety program in place that meet established standards such as COR?**
   Inadequate coverage could leave you liable for property damage, material theft, wind damage and personal injury which could lead to potential lawsuits and delays to your project.

4. **Does the builder specialize in Post Frame Construction?**
   Are they a member of the NFBA (National Frame Building Association) Members have pledged to take on a high level of professionalism.

5. **Have you reviewed past projects that the builder has completed?**
   A building's value, durability and longevity speaks volumes on the quality of workmanship and materials. How has the building held up over the years?

6. **Ask about differences in the quality and methods of application that will affect the building's structural integrity**
   Will the building be able to withstand heavy loading conditions? How long will it maintain its structural integrity and aesthetic luster?

7. **Do they have a their own licensed Engineer on the team? Is every building engineered?**
   Most post-frame buildings are pre-engineered, however there are substantial advantages to a fully engineered building. Engineering each building streamlines the structural permit process and ensures that the building adheres to the provincial and national building code of Canada. An engineered building can properly account for the conditions of your site, including soil quality, lumber grade, wind loads, snow loads, and more, resulting in a more structurally sound building.

V. KEYS TO SELECTING A BUILDER

Continued...

8. **Not all post frame buildings are of equal quality and durability.**
   Your building is only as good as what it's made of (and the crew who puts it up, of course). It could be enticing to go with the lowest bid, but often times this could cost you more in the long run. Was the bid realistic for the project? The low cost could come at a price, whether it be the quality of materials or the workmanship itself. Be proactive and understand the process, ask about the materials being used and how it will be assembled.

9. **The highest quality materials, knowledge and experience will prove to provide the best long term return on your investment.**
   Often a bit more money invested for quality and expertise will provide a substantial return in long term value and overall satisfaction

VI. BUILDING PROCESS GUIDE

Your post frame building design checklist

A final step in the selection of a contractor is to discuss and be sure there is a clear building process guide. This should include a clear and written outline of the following:

- Who is accountable for the project time line?
- Who constructs the building? Are they company employed crews or contracted workers?
- What work in the building is subcontracted and by who?
- Is the company contracted to erect your building insured, licensed and bonded?
- Does the company carry workman's comp insurance?
- What training and safety procedures does the company have in place?
- How often and in what ways will the building progress be outlined to you?
- Is the crew able to construct in the winter if necessary?

VII. FINAL TIPS

Ultimately, your end product and the process to get there are critical factors to your satisfaction. Materials are very important, the process is important, and so is having a good rapport and relationship with your contractor. You should feel comfortable with all aspects of the process and the answers your builder offers to you before signing a contract.

If something isn't clear or outlined, don't expect it to be included. A few final keys to consider:

Design Flexibility:

- Is there flexibility and is it economical to add attractive design features such as overhangs, porches, shed enclosures, and varying roof slopes?
- Wood frame construction allows for ease of finish and more design flexibility. Alterations and renovations can be done easily and much more cost effectively than steel and masonry type construction methods.
- Does the builder offer exterior options of pre-cast stone, cultural stone, brick veneers, architectural panels, and foam panels into building designs?

Completion Speed:

- What is the expected time to complete the building from the point the framing is started? Be sure to identify this ahead of time and request written details.

VII. CONCLUSION

Hopefully this guide is a value that you can use to plan for your post frame building.

Of course, we'd value the opportunity to show you the Integrity Building's advantages! We are ready to answer your questions and provide a clear outline of what we can do to help you accomplish your goals.

Let us know if you have any additional questions!

Sincerely,

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