

Building a stunning waterfront home requires months of planning and negotiating permits.



Matt and Steve Pryce, Owners of Prycon

• CUSTOM HOME DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION •

DEVELOPING A DREAM

A key phase of custom home building is too important to rush

Homeowners tend to think there are two main steps to building a custom home: First you design it, and then you build it.

There may have been a time when that was essentially true, but those days are long gone. “You can’t just walk in and say, ‘here are my

blueprints, here’s my land, let’s start building,” says Matt Pryce. “It doesn’t work that way.”

The missing element is known as the development phase, and it can be one of the most challenging parts of construction.

Matt and his brother Steve own Prycon Custom Building and Renovations, and they have spent 28 years navigating the challenges of developing home owner’s properties.

“Doing the development phase right can take six to eight months or more,” says Matt. “It’s lengthy, but it’s essential. Anyone who wants to build a house has to do it.”

The development process is so distinct, in fact, that

Prycon treats it as a separate part of the process from construction and design, with a separate agreement. “Clients will hire us to do the development. And it’s only once that’s completed that we’ll draw up a separate contract for the construction phase,” says Steve.

One of the advantages of breaking the process into several distinct phases is that it allows the Prycon team to build a trusting relationship and understanding of what the client is looking for. “By the time development is completed, there shouldn’t be any unknowns about the construction phase,” Matt explains. “The permits are

in place, the property is fully understood and explored, and there’s no need to build contingency plans, to say ‘it might cost more if this or that happens.’ It allows the homeowner tremendous peace-of-mind and also lets them get their financing fully secured.”

Much more than permits
On the surface, development is all about getting permits. But it’s much more complex than that, and doing it right involves a mix of technical skills along with developed and respected relationships with consultants.

Waterfront developments are typically the most difficult to work on. These properties are governed by local conservation authorities and also require extensive studies

on shoreline stability and rehabilitation.

Experience counts
Having a long history of good work makes a difference when speaking to the various planning authorities. “Matt’s extremely good at this,” says Steve. “He’s been doing this for a long time.”

Whether it’s a municipal building department, a conservation authority, or another regulatory agency, there’s a very good chance that Prycon has worked with them before. There’s a level of trust which is particularly beneficial when working on complex scenarios for clients.

“They know our work, and they know that we aren’t going to take shortcuts and

try to find a quick and dirty solution,” says Matt. “With logical collaborations with all authorities involved we always come to a reasonable solution to satisfy our clients’ designs.”

It takes a team
Like many aspects of home construction, the development phase is often a collaborative affair. “We have a tremendous amount of expertise in-house, but we also know when and how to work with other professionals,” says Matt. Drafts people, architects, HVAC designers, urban planners, and a whole array of different engineers can all be called upon to bring expertise to the development process, depending on the nature of the project.

And with 28 years of local experience, the Prycon team has a vast network of contacts, allowing them to always work with the best.

In the end, the goal of the design phase is to set the stage for construction. It’s a time to ensure every last piece of the puzzle is in place – including beginning to navigate the supply chain challenges that have become so extreme in recent

months – so that there are no delays once construction begins.

“Being thorough in the development phase ensures that we reduce frustrations in construction,” says Steve.

“In the end, it’s all about helping to turn the client’s dream home into reality.”

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