

1980

EC80-2054 Remodeling - A Planning Checklist

Kathleen Parrott

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, homes@vt.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist>

Parrott, Kathleen, "EC80-2054 Remodeling - A Planning Checklist" (1980). *Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension*. 4332.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist/4332>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Extension at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

AGRI
S
85
E7
#80-2054
C.1

Remodeling - A Planning Checklist

Kathleen Parrott
Extension Specialist (Housing & Interior Design)

Is your home not meeting your needs? Not enough bedrooms, or living space. Are the rooms too small, or too large? If so, you might be considering a remodeling project.

Remodeling is popular today. Rising housing prices and high interest rates prevent many people from moving to another house when their housing needs change. These people then consider remodeling. In addition, new housing starts are down, and many home builders are getting into the remodeling business.

Before starting any remodeling project, plan carefully. Remodeling is an investment of time and money, and will affect the value of your home as well as the cost to own and operate it.

Is your home worth the investment?

Can you afford the increased cost of operation and maintenance?

Will the remodeling project be worth the investment of your time and effort?

There are many factors to consider. The following checklist will help you review these factors. If you circle quite a few No's, then you should reconsider your remodeling project.

Personal Considerations

The first step in a remodeling project is to evaluate your reasons for doing the project, and to consider its impact on your lifestyle.

Answer
(Circle)

Yes No

Consideration
• Have you lived in your house a year or more so that you understand the ways it does not meet your needs?

Yes No

• Do you expect to live in the house long enough to enjoy the improvements and to justify the disruption caused by remodeling?

Yes No

• Have you considered future changes in family structure and housing needs, such as children leaving home, when planning your remodeling?

Yes No

• Have you considered the temporary inconvenience and disruption of the project and planned how you will handle this?

Financial Considerations

Remodeling costs money. Before remodeling you need to consider the source of the money, the value of the investment, and the affect on your budget.

Answer
(Circle)

Yes No

Consideration
• Will the cost of remodeling be no more than 60 percent of the cost to buy a house of equal quality to yours after remodeling?

Yes No

• Will the value of the house after remodeling be no more than 20 percent greater than the average home in the neighborhood?

Yes No

• Have you evaluated the different sources of

Yes No

financing for remodeling, to find the best source to fit your needs?

Yes No

• Have you included the cost of financing as part of the remodeling cost?

Yes No

• Have you considered any increases in property taxes, insurance, house maintenance and utility costs that will occur from the remodeling project?

Yes No

• Will your monthly housing costs after remodeling, including any loan repayments, be no more than 25 to 35 percent of your income?

Yes No

• Have you considered the affect on the resale value of your home? Will you be able to get a return on your investment from the remodeling project?

Location Considerations

You should evaluate the location of your home to see if it is satisfactory. A remodeling project increases your investment in the house and tends to limit your options in relocation. (If you live on a farm, location may not be a factor you will need to evaluate).

Answer
(Circle)

Yes No

Consideration
• Is the house location convenient to the places you go—such as schools, parks, shopping, church, or your place of work?

Yes No

• Is the neighborhood attractive, well-

Yes No

maintained, and developing in a positive direction?

Yes No

• Is the neighborhood free from heavy traffic, dust, dirt, noise, odor, and other forms of pollution?

Yes No

• Is public transportation available in the neighborhood?

Yes No

• Is the neighborhood free from threat of flooding?

Yes No

• Do you know if the neighborhood is zoned for residential use only?

Yes No

• Are there any plans for new business, industry, or highways in your area?



Extension work in "Agriculture, Home Economics and subjects relating thereto," The Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Cooperating with the Counties and the U.S. Department of Agriculture
Leo E. Lucas, Director

The Cooperative Extension Service provides information and educational programs to all people without regard to race, color or national origin.

Design Considerations

It is crucial to spend time in careful planning and designing before you begin your remodeling project. Mistakes are much easier, and far less costly, to correct on paper. The services of a professional designer can be a wise investment if you are planning a major project.

Answer
(Circle)

Consideration

- | | | |
|-----|----|---|
| Yes | No | • Have you evaluated how the remodeling will affect the division of your home into noisy and |
| Yes | No | • If the remodeling will alter the exterior of your home, have you planned for continuity in architectural style and materials? |
| Yes | No | • Have you considered how the choice of color and materials used in remodeling will blend with the rest of the home? |

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

- quiet zones; or work, living and sleep zones?
- Have you evaluated how the remodeling will affect the traffic patterns and circulation within the home?
 - Have you considered how your furnishings and possessions will be arranged, after remodeling?
 - If you are adding space as part of the remodeling, have you included storage associated with the activities that will take place in the new space?
 - Do your remodeling plans satisfy all applicable building codes, zoning ordinances or restrictive covenants in your deed?
 - Are your remodeling plans feasible with respect to load bearing walls and other aspects of your house's construction?

Lot Considerations

Evaluating the lot is important because it is a major factor in the overall value of the house.

Answer
(Circle)

Consideration

- | | | |
|-----|----|---|
| Yes | No | • Is the lot properly graded, so moisture will drain away from the house? |
|-----|----|---|

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

- Is the house oriented so maximum benefit and protection is provided from sunlight, wind, rain, and snow?
- Is the view from the house pleasant and interesting, and can you expect it to remain that way?
- Is pedestrian and automobile access direct, simple and easy?
- Is the lot landscaped for attractiveness, energy efficiency and easy maintenance?

Foundation Considerations

The foundation holds the house, therefore it must be in good repair before any remodeling project is started.

Answer
(Circle)

Consideration

- | | | |
|-----|----|---|
| Yes | No | • Does alignment of the foundation appear to be |
|-----|----|---|

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

- straight and true, without leaning or bulging?
- Is the foundation free from large cracks and signs of deterioration?
 - Is the siding at least 8" above the outside soil and free from decay?
 - If the house has a basement, is it free from water streaks or marks on floors and walls, or other signs of moisture problems?

Structure Considerations

The structure of the house needs to be in good repair, whether your remodeling project involves adding new space or rearranging space. If your house is in need of major structural repairs, these should be done before, or as part of, your remodeling project.

Answer
(Circle)

Consideration

- | | | |
|-----|----|---|
| Yes | No | • Are floors sturdy and even, and do not shake if you jump on them? |
| Yes | No | • Are walls and ceilings free from cracks, bulges, and damp spots? |

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

- Are doors and windows tightly fitted and snug, but easy to open and close?
- Are the exterior walls free from excessive paint blistering and cracking, which is a possible sign of a moisture problem in the wall?
- Does the house have adequate attic and eave ventilation?
- Is the roof free from sagging, bowed surface, or missing shingles?
- Is the flashing around the chimneys and dormers, and the gutter downspouts in good repair and free of rust and holes?
- Is the house free of termites, dry rot and other decay or damage?

Energy Considerations

An excellent time to increase the energy efficiency of a house is during a remodeling project. In fact, home weatherization should be a priority item in any home improvement plan.

Answer
(Circle)

Consideration

- | | | |
|-----|----|--|
| Yes | No | • Is your house insulated to meet the recommended R-values for Nebraska?
- ceilings-R25-35
- walls-R16-22
- floors-R13-19
*R-value measures the resistance to heat flow. |
|-----|----|--|

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

Yes No

- Common types of insulation have an R-value of 3 to 4 per inch.
- Is there caulking around all window and door frames and wherever two different kinds of materials meet on the house exterior?
 - Are all doors and windows weatherstripped?
 - Are all of the windows double or triple glazed, or do you have storm windows?
 - Are exterior doors either solid-core wood or insulated metal?
 - Do you have storm doors?
 - Do you have insulated coverings for your windows, especially those on the north side?
 - Are your windows shaded from the summer sun by overhangs, awnings or trees and shrubs?

Utility Service Considerations

Utilities in your home may be adequate for present needs, but may not be satisfactory after remodeling. If you are adding space to the home, the utility service may need to be expanded. You may want to have an electrician or plumber evaluate your utility service, especially if you are planning a major project.

Answer (Circle)		Consideration
Yes	No	• Does your electrical wiring meet the following minimum recommendations: 100 amp service or more; 8 or more 100-volt circuits; at least one 110-volt outlet on each wall and enough 220-volt outlets for major appliances?
Yes	No	• Can you add additional circuits, if needed?

Yes	No	• Does the water pressure remain adequate if a toilet is flushed and a faucet is turned on at the same time?
Yes	No	• Will the water pressure be adequate if new plumbing facilities are added in remodeling?
Yes	No	• Will the source of water be adequate after remodeling, especially if it is from a well?
Yes	No	• Will the water heater be satisfactory after remodeling, especially if facilities for laundry will be added?
Yes	No	• Will the existing method of sewage disposal be adequate, especially if a garbage disposal or washing machine is to be added in remodeling?
Yes	No	• Are the plumbing fixtures and piping in good condition, free from corrosion or hardwater scale?
Yes	No	• Will the present method of heating be adequate and efficient after improvements, or will supplementary heat be needed?

"Do-it-yourself" Considerations

If you are planning to do your own work, either part of it or the whole project, you should carefully evaluate your skills and chance of success.

Answer (Circle)		Consideration
Yes	No	• Do you fully understand the extent of the job, and all of the steps involved?

Yes	No	• Do you know what skills are involved, and do you have either those skills now, or the opportunity to learn them?
Yes	No	• Do you have the necessary tools, or access to them?
Yes	No	• Do you have someplace to go for advice if you encounter problems in the middle of the remodeling project?
Yes	No	• Do you know what materials are needed, and if you can obtain them at a reasonable cost?
Yes	No	• Do you have time to complete the project?

Contractor Considerations

If you plan to hire all or part of the work done, when remodeling, you will need good business sense in selecting and dealing with the contractor.

Answer (Circle)		Consideration
Yes	No	• Did you get at least three bids from reliable contractors, before making a choice?
Yes	No	• Have you selected a contractor with a solid reputation in the community and who provided you with references from previous jobs?
Yes	No	• Do you have a written agreement with the contractor that includes:

Yes	No	1. Full description of the work to be completed.
Yes	No	2. Description of type and quality of materials.
Yes	No	3. Acceptance of liability and agreement to obtain needed permits and meet codes, on the part of the contractor.
Yes	No	4. Time frame of project.
Yes	No	5. Payment schedule.
Yes	No	6. Agreement to free homeowners from liens against the contractor.
Yes	No	7. Warranty of work.
Yes	No	• Have you agreed that the final payment to the contractor will not be made until the work is satisfactorily completed?
Yes	No	• Have you and the contractor agreed on what parts of the remodeling project you will do yourself?

Conclusion

Review your answers. If you have more than a few No's, then you need to reconsider your remodeling project. Do you need to do more advance planning? Or modify your design? Or do some repair work first? Remodeling is an investment of both time and money, and you want to assure the success of your project.

The Cooperative Extension Service has many other useful publications available to help you plan the specifics of your remodeling projects. Contact your County Agent for information.

Notes:

Things to Check Before Remodeling.