

## 5 things to consider when selecting your builder:

- 1** The Builder's Team & Support Program
- 2** Construction Drawings
- 3** The Building Contract
- 4** Energy Efficiency
- 5** The Builder's Qualifications

Building or remodeling a home is a major investment and selecting your builder is one of the most important decisions you will make. **So, how do you identify the right builder?**

To assist you, we've developed this guide. While it won't cover everything, it will better ensure that you don't experience the dreaded "nightmare build" so many homeowners fear. We suggest you take the time to go through each of the steps and then give us the opportunity to win your business as you compare us to the competition.

### **1 - THE BUILDER'S TEAM & SUPPORT PROGRAM**

It takes an entire team of people working together to build a custom dream home! The Builder is the team leader and the team is comprised of sub-contractors, craftsmen, suppliers and staff. It's important to remember that the team is the group that will do the majority of the work on your home and will have a major impact on how enjoyable your journey will be and the final outcome.

If you select your Builder based on a sample of the Builder's work but different craftsmen build your home, you may not get the expected outcome. For that reason, team consistency is very important.

Moline Builders has assembled a group of premier sub-contractors and craftsmen hand-picked by Jim Moline. They work as a team to ensure a consistent and highly acceptable outcome. Most importantly, Jim has worked with most for many years so they understand his expectations and stringent quality standards in our homes.



**Matt Mason is the framing foreman & has worked for Moline Builders for 30+ years!**

## (#1 continued)

The early stages of the project are very important and the framing process sets the stage for everything that follows. If the framing crew doesn't build it strong, straight and square then the craftsmen that follow will have to try to make up for earlier shortcomings.

Some builders use **framing crews** supplied by the lumber yard and won't know which crew will be available until your project is ready to start. That means you're rolling the dice at the outset of the project. Moline Builders has their own framing crew and uses select back-up crews when demand dictates. Plus, did you know that Jim Moline started his career as a framing carpenter? So, he understands the importance of getting a good start.

An often overlooked segment of the Builder's team is their **preferred suppliers**. This is the group that will provide materials and services along with important recommendations as you consider various products. Inferior suppliers can result in major disappointments, added frustration, time delays, and even additional cost. Ask about a Builder's preferred suppliers and why they were chosen along with asking for a list of the key suppliers. If Builder candidates can't or won't provide a list of the suppliers they recommend, it may be a warning sign to proceed with caution.

Moline Builders has hand-picked their preferred suppliers along with sales representatives that know their product lines and treat our clients with respect. They have been chosen because they provide quality product, not just convenience to the builder.

We are one of the few builders in the area that has a full time **Design & Project Manager** to assist you. Our Designer is available to help you as much or as little as you desire and will help identify your preferred decorating theme while guiding you through the decision and selection process.

In addition, the exclusive **"Moline Builders Construction Design Guide"** is provided at the beginning of your project so you know what to expect and you'll know what decisions need be made. Our Design Guide is built from over 30 years of home construction experience and better ensures your project moves along smoothly and with minimal surprises.

Another fear consumers have is the potential for significant cost over runs. If you don't know where your expenses stand along the journey, it's going to be challenging to stay within budget. Our staff designer will help you identify materials that fit within your budget allowance. If you choose items outside your budget allowance, you'll know it right away.

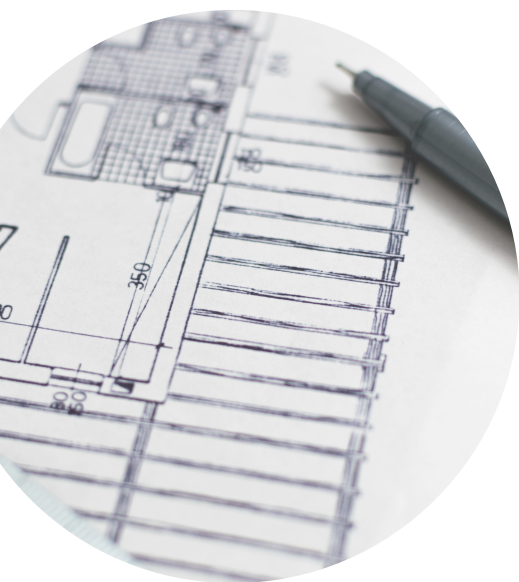
**We provide a cost summary sheet on a regular basis so our clients know exactly where they stand.** Some Builders don't provide budgetary information until the end of the project, which means you could have unexpected costs and surprises.

## 2 - CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS

Building a home is a complex process that takes place over months and involves numerous craftsmen and suppliers along with materials that once in place aren't easily moved or rearranged a detailed set of construction drawings are a must.

**Caution:** If you don't have a detailed set of drawings, how do you know what you're building and if mistakes are made how will you hold your Builder accountable?

Moline Builders begins by creating a floor plan schematic of your home which shows room sizes and the homes layout. Once adjustments have been made to meet your needs, lifestyle and lot requirements we move on to the important construction drawings. This begins with a  $\frac{1}{4}" = 1'$  dimensioned floor plan. The next step after the floor plan is to add details necessary to build your home; including complete dimensions, window and door locations and the exterior design. Once the construction drawings are finalized, and approved by you, we know what to build and you know what you're buying.



**Our homes are designed by professional designers and architects with input from you and oversight by Jim Moline. This accomplishes three important things:**

- 1.** Your home is properly designed with the detail necessary to define what you are buying.
- 2.** You benefit from Jim's extensive construction experience and design ideas.
- 3.** Jim is free to oversee and supervise your construction project, instead of being tied up making drawings.

**It's important to remember:** The drawings need to have sufficient detail, including room sizes, complete dimensioning, window locations / sizes, support beam specifications, footer / foundation detail, roof slope detail, all exterior views and etc. The drawings must accurately depict what you will buy, not an approximation. Therefore, a computer generated rendering of the home is not the information needed to build your home.

Once the floor plan schematic is complete, a **plot plan** can be created to show the exact location proposed for the home. A professional designer and your Builder will help you with decisions such as where to place the home, confirming all local codes and lot deed restrictions have been met. **We strongly recommend that you require and approve a plot plan along with construction drawings.**

### 3 - THE BUILDING CONTRACT

Once signed, this document becomes legally binding, making it important to understand the contents. The combined building contract, construction drawings and plot plan define what you are buying and at what price.

**As you review your proposed building contract, confirm it includes all of the costs that are expected to be incurred.** For instance, does it include site preparation, fill dirt, permits, septic systems (if required), water and sewer taps and the cost to get the lines from the service source to the home? If the building contract is not inclusive of all the work that will be needed, you could encounter unexpected costs.

**Caution:** We've seen cases where a proposed building contract did not include all of the costs that could be expected to be incurred. For instance, a building contract might seem to cover the cost to run the water line to the home. However, the building contract might only cover a specified length and the location of the home requires significantly more.

Your building contract will probably include allowances for specific areas, such as: brick or stone, appliances, light fixtures, etc. Those allowances can have a significant influence on whether you stay within budget for the project. For instance, let's assume the light fixture allowance is \$2,500. If you spend less than \$2,500 on light fixtures then you should get a credit, but if you spend more than \$2,500 on light fixtures you may have to pay the difference.

Some Builders will disperse the allowances throughout the building contract, making it difficult to find things and easy to miss possible problems. This can be remedied by having the Builder attach a complete summary list of all allowances as an addendum to the building contract. It's important that allowances be defined within the building contract and it's just as important that each allowance be as realistic as possible.

Since allowances are based on an estimate of what you will spend in designated areas, be sure you understand how those allowances were decided. For instance, if your appliance allowance is based on builder-grade appliances and you plan to select mid-range appliances, you'll most likely be over budget.

#### Reminders:

- 1 - Understand contracts can differ significantly between Builders.
- 2 - Your building contract should be clear, concise and easy to understand without being an expert.
- 3 - Ask builder candidates for a list of extra costs not included in the "Contract Price."
- 4 - View allowances as an estimate, knowing you may add things or change your mind in some areas.
- 5 - Review the Building Contract carefully before signing.

## 4 - ENERGY EFFICIENCY

One of the challenges for today's consumers is identifying homes that are built with technological advances and construction methods that make them more energy efficient.

How do you tell if work behind the drywall has been done right? How do you tell if Home A is going to cost more than Home B to operate and maintain? Or which one will be more comfortable? How do you tell if a Builder is using the best methods and technologies to build their homes?

You can best ensure your home is built with energy efficiency in mind by building a home to Energy Star standards! These standards help all systems and features work together to deliver better performance.



"A new home that has earned the ENERGY STAR label has undergone a process of inspections, testing, and verification to meet strict requirements set by the US EPA. ENERGY STAR certified homes use significantly less energy than typical new homes while delivering better comfort, quality, and durability."  
*(source:EnergyStar.gov)*

**Moline Builders has been an Energy Star partner since 2002 and is the only 100% "Certified" Energy Star Builder in NW Ohio and SE Michigan. Upon completion, each of our homes is tested by an independent third party and given a HERS score. With this information, you will know just how energy efficient your home is expected to be.**

ENERGY STAR CERTIFIED HOMES ARE AT LEAST  
**10% MORE** ENERGY EFFICIENT THAN  
HOMES BUILT TO CODE AND ACHIEVE A

**20%**

IMPROVEMENT ON AVERAGE.

compared to typical  
new homes





## 5 - THE BUILDER'S QUALIFICATIONS



Jim accepting an HBA  
Toledo Choice Award  
for BEST VILLA.

Jim Moline began his career as a carpentry framer where he learned the business from the ground up. From there he went on to establish a framing company which in 1987 led to the establishment of Moline Builders, Inc. **Now, over 30 years later, he is highly regarded and owns a thriving construction business that strives to set the standard for the new construction industry in NW Ohio and SE Michigan.** Plus, he is a developer, past president of the Home Builders Association of Greater Toledo, and believes in giving back to the community.

Through use of his extensive framing and carpentry experience, your project receives the personal attention and professional experience you deserve whereas some Builders have field supervisors managing their projects and they are not personally involved with day to day site operations.

### Final Considerations:

1. Ask builder candidates if you can speak directly to recent clients who completed projects in a comparable price range to your project.
2. Review prior client testimonials or feedback if not already available online. When reviewing the quotes, look for a wide range of topics with specific reasons why the consumer felt the way they did. Proceed cautiously if the quantity of positive testimonials are minimal and the content is superficial.
3. Explore awards or recognition recently received from peers and industry associations. This will often tell you if a builder's product stands out among the crowd.

Finally, it's time to ask: Do you like the Builder? Do you trust the Builder? Do they have unquestionable integrity? If so and you're confident they meet your requirements, you likely have found the right person for the job of building your dream home!

**When you're ready, we'd love to continue the conversation with you.**

