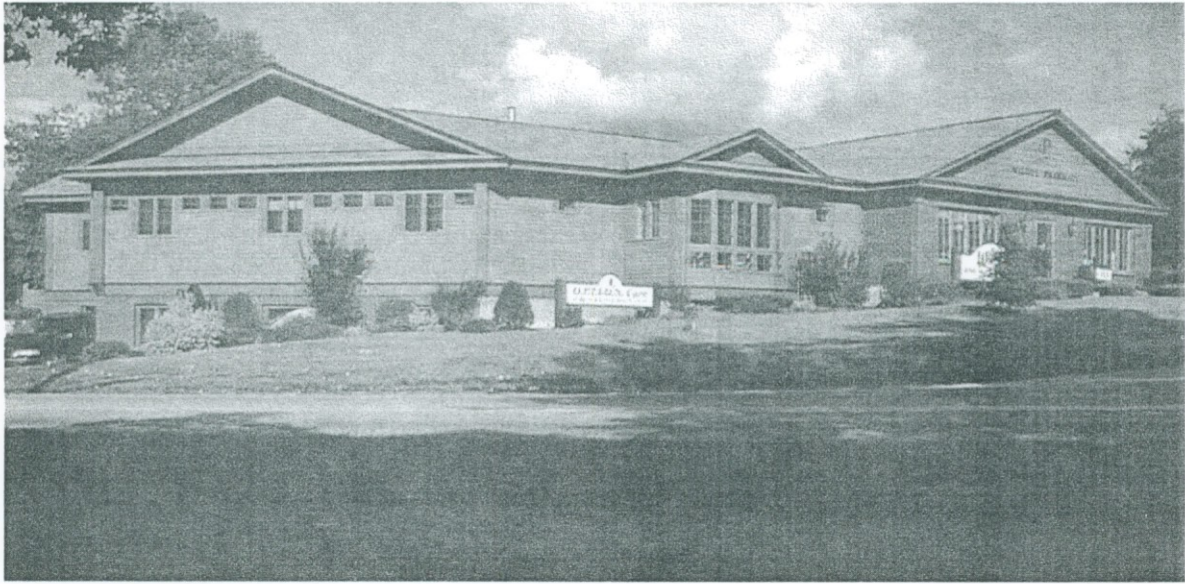


Architectural Details ♦

Robert Carl Williams Associates P.C. Pittsfield, Vermont
Principals: Daniel J. Pratt, A.I.A., president
Robert Carl Williams, founder

Autumn • Winter 1998



Built on a difficult corner lot, the architecture of this recent renovation and expansion to a commercial building in Central Vermont keeps its residential scale, a requirement of the program.

A Short Primer on Planning

by Daniel J. Pratt, A.I.A., president of Robert Carl Williams Associates

After more than 30 years as a designer and the last 14 as an architect, I can tell you that the most important step in getting the best home design or renovation plan is planning. And the earlier the better.

Let me explain what I mean.

Some of our clients are now in the planning stages for homes or business properties that will not be built for one to two years. It is not only smart to plan two to three years ahead, it's actually the best way to get value and to realize your dreams.



Do you know the location of this structure in Central Vermont that we were proud to design? It is the Shops At The Shack in Killington, VT.

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Three Types of Planning

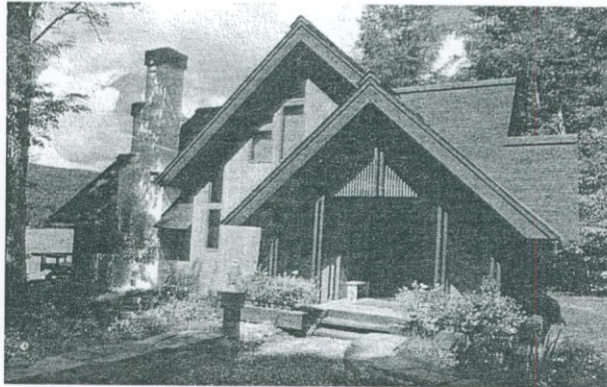
Here is a short primer on planning. First, there are basically three types of planning that you'll need to consider:

- financial/economic •
- land/site •
- architectural/building •

Let's look at each individually.

Financial/Economic Plan

Your financial/economic plan comes first. This is where you'll create a budget - you'll start with what you want and end with what you want to spend. The financial planning stage is very important since it will set the stage for the entire project. At this point, you should have a "wish list."



The entrance to a lake house in Central Vermont.

The Importance of a "Wish List"

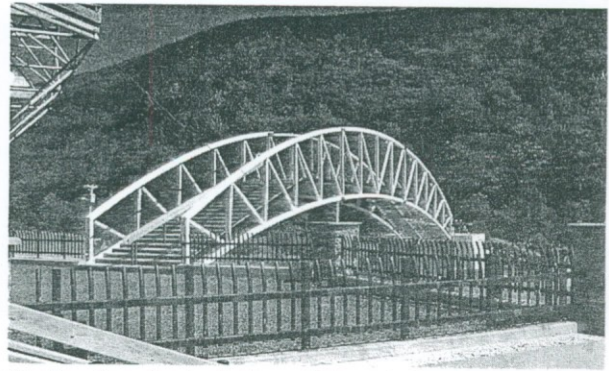
While a wish list is not necessary, it certainly is helpful. The more detailed and "spelled-out" your needs and wants, the easier it is for the architect to begin design work. Your wish list should be broken down into the site and the building.

For the land/site wish list, take into account:

1. outside living spaces -
 - ponds • pool • riding area/trails • croquet court • tennis court
 - lawn game area
 - gardens • accessory buildings - barn, garden and lawn equipment storage
 - pet areas
2. how you'll approach the house
3. a garage - attached, semi-attached or free-standing?
4. site designed for maximum light or maximum privacy?

For the architectural/building wish list, you might consider:

- a traditional plan or an open concept plan for your living/dining/kitchen/family room areas • number of bedrooms • home office
- entrance style - grand, functional, informal, formal, etc.
- how much family space you need • how many bathrooms
- deck or patio areas • indoor spa, pool or sauna
- sunroom • media room • den or library
- are your views important?



The Skyship pedestrian bridge at Killington's Skyship Base Station spans Routes 4 and 100.

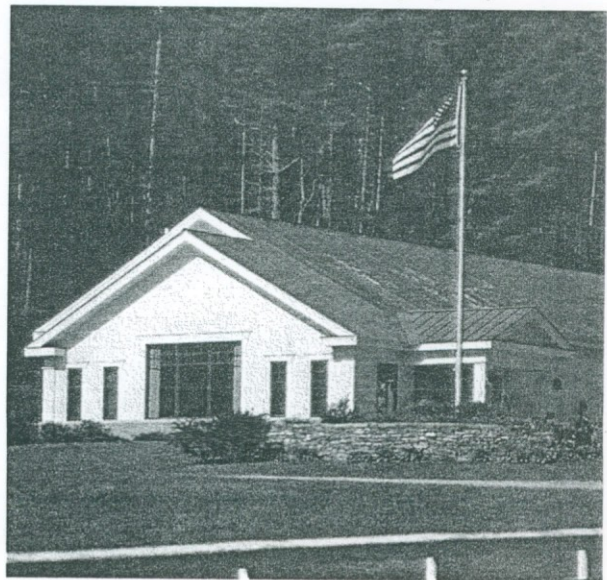
Land/Site Plan

Throughout my career, the single most common mistake I have seen in home building is the siting of the home. In a rural setting, the building must fit the landscape; in an urban or suburban area, it should accommodate itself with the surrounding buildings. And since not every space in the house cannot have primary positioning, priority choices usually have to be made at this time.

Architectural/Building Plan

Once the wish list is established, your architect will begin the architectural plan. It will take into account, among other things, your wish list, the building site, and your budget. Soon after, the architect will present the preliminary plans. These plans will be the first set you will see of your project. There may be minor adjustments at this point, but as soon as the design has been approved, the architect will proceed with the construction drawings and documents for bidding purposes. And once the project has been awarded, the architect will help you administer the construction contract.

These are just ideas to get started. Once you've established your own wish list, the architect can assist you in fine tuning it and coordinating it with the budget plan you've set.



The new front offices for Advanced Animations in Stockbridge, VT.

The Rewards of Good Planning

Good planning will not only save money; it will also ensure that the money gets spent where you want it. In other words, with good planning, your money will be spent on areas of importance to you. Here's a negative example of the failure of planning. Years ago, I was working on the huge South Mall state offices project in Albany, New York. After the State Representatives building's plans had been set, it was decided that each representative's office had to be precisely the same square footage. It was my job to go back to the plan, calculate the square footage and make the necessary (and usually relatively small) changes. This delay wound up costing the State of New York at least several hundred thousand dollars.

Once you've considered all your options and set your priorities, the work begins. Take the time to ask questions and participate in the process. Review your project on a regular basis and make adjustments as needed. If you do, your job will be much easier and the end result more rewarding.



A time to reflect - this is just one of the rewards of good planning.

Staff News



Steve Fenn, Licensed Architect

We are pleased to announce that Steve Fenn, an RCWA veteran of five years, has been licensed as an Architect by the Office of Professional Regulation and the Vermont Board of Architects. Fenn, who successfully passed the Architect Registration Examination, holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Architecture from the University of Virginia.

The Architects Registration Examination consists of nine different tests, each six hours in length. Fenn's last tests, Building Planning and Building Technology, were completed on the new computer format, which have now completely replaced the pencil-and-paper test version.



David Martin Joins Our Staff

David J. Martin has recently joined the design team at the Pittsfield office of RCWA. A graduate of Syracuse University with a B.A. in Architecture, Martin is a Rutland native. After graduation, he worked for the Harmony Design Group in Syracuse and, most recently, for Browning and Associates. An experienced renovations and remodeling contractor, he brings this knowledge to the design process.

"After being gone for 17 years, I'm delighted to be back in Vermont," says Martin, who has recently built a home in Mendon.

He will specialize in preliminary design and concept rendering.



Melanie Paskevich Returns to RCWA

Chittenden resident Melanie Paskevich has rejoined RCWA as a drafts person while studying for her Bachelor's degree in architecture.

Melanie was part of the RCWA staff in the early 1990s after obtaining her associate degree in architectural engineering/building technology from Vermont Technical College. She has worked in a number of area architecture firms, which she views as an advantage in her field.

"I learned a lot from working in different firms," she said, "every one has its own niche."

Melanie is attending Norwich University full-time and expects to complete her degree in about two years.