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The Process: Planning and Building your Oak Log Home.

Planning and building a new home, camp or retreat should be an exciting time - an opportunity to create something that will hold intrinsic value for your family. Understanding how the process works can go a long way toward making this a positive and enjoyable experience. Below is an outline of steps that will lead, one by one, to the realization of your beautiful new home:

- 1. Define your goals.** What are the primary goals that this home must fulfill? In other words, Why are you building this home; what must this home accomplish to be of value to you and your family?
- 2. Visualize your lifestyle.** What activities should this home be built around? Don't just look at pictures of what you want the house to look like, get a clear mental picture of yourself engaged in the activities that you want this home to accommodate. Let's design the home around your lifestyle, not the other way around.
- 3. Plan your investment.** Your Pennsylvania Oak Log Home is certain to appreciate in value over time, doubtless more rapidly than conventional homes. Still, as with any project, you must be comfortable with the amount you invest in your home. Establishing a budget early on that we can work with is important. Your Design/Build Consultant will help you complete a brief, one-page feasibility study that we'll use to establish size, style, amenities and a completed target cost.
- 4. Land.** If you don't already have a building site, this is the time to obtain land. It's never too early to start gathering ideas, but you should obtain land before you finalize a set of plans, as the home must fit the building site. A site survey and percolation test and/or soil evaluation test may be required to obtain septic and building permits.
- 5. Assemble your ideas.** Based on what you want to do in the house - how you defined your lifestyle above, we now start putting form to the function. What have you seen that you liked - photos, plans, design ideas, etc? We'll start a scrap book of ideas that we'll use to get a clearer picture of what this home should include to complement your personality. Looking at the many plans available from Gastineau Log Homes can be a big help here, as they offer many innovative ideas.



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6. Preliminary Design. We'll use your ideas and direction to develop a personalized floor plan that matches your lifestyle and activities. As that develops, our designers will start adding the architectural details you want. Be prepared: This is that stage where unlimited imagination meets finite budget, so compromises generally need to be made. But, don't panic; we'll help make sure that everything you truly want in your home is included... without breaking the budget! A design deposit, depending upon the size and scope of your project, will be required get this phase started.

7. Preliminary construction pricing. Once we have a set of preliminary plans that define the major elements of the home, we're ready to begin assembling bids and pricing for materials and construction. Based on interviews, experience and prices, you'll choose the final building team that will make your new home a reality.

8. Final design and pricing. Now is the time for any tweaking or last minute changes. Once the plans are finalized, firm construction bids and pricing are obtained and construction agreements are ready to be signed.

9. Financing. If the home will be financed, we'll submit the plans and bids to one or more lenders. The bank or mortgage company will hire an appraisal, which will give them an idea of what the home, finished and including property, will be worth on the retail market. That figure will be used to determine your mortgage loan amount. A construction loan will then be issued which will convert to the permanent mortgage when the home is completed.

10. Order your Gastineau Log Home package. Logs and structural elements, windows and doors, and other major components are included in this package. A deposit will be which will be covered by a draw from the construction loan. A flow chart is created for work to be performed and subcontractors and materials deliveries are scheduled.

11. Permits. Final plans and engineering details, along with required soil tests, will be submitted by the builder to obtain all necessary permits. Once building permits are issued, applications will be sent to the utility companies, and you're ready to begin site preparation.

12. Site work begins. Clearing the lot, putting in the driveway, installing temporary electric hook-up, staking out the exact location for the home, and digging the footings or basement are completed. The well and septic system, if applicable, are installed.

13. Structural Framing. The foundation (slab, crawl space or basement) is installed, and the structural materials for the home – floors, walls, roof, windows and doors – are installed. Porches, decks, garages and carports may be installed at this time.

14. Mechanicals. Electrical wiring, plumbing, heating and air conditioning, and structured wiring (cable, telephone, computers, etc.) are installed. The fireplace and chimney, patios, and any exterior concrete work are constructed or installed.

15. Wall covering, exterior trim. Here's where your home really begins to take shape inside. Wall covering (dry wall and/or wood paneling, depending upon your choices) is installed and readied for paint and stain. Outside, porches, decks, fascias and trim are completed. Finish grading is performed at this time, either seed or sod for the lawn is put down, and landscaping is installed. Exterior stains and coatings are installed, and the outside of your home is finished.

16. Interior trim. Back inside, the trim and interior doors are installed and painting and staining is completed. Cabinets are measured for final fitting and counter tops are ordered. Finished flooring and tile are installed, as are cabinets and vanities and stairways.

17. Fixtures. Plumbing and lighting fixtures are installed at this phase, and water and HVAC are on and operable. The home is almost finished.

18. Final details. The final driveway materials are installed and the landscaping is finished outside. Inside, window and door hardware, closet shelving and appliances are installed and working. The cleaning crew comes in to make sure your home is pristine and ready to move into, and you and your builder do one final walk-through to make sure there are no items left undone.

19. Occupancy permit. The final step is your occupancy permit which allows you to take possession of the home. You're now officially ready to move into your beautiful new home.

20. You're all moved in, sitting in the great room in front of a crackling fire in the stone fireplace amazed that you've finally arrived – you're enjoying the warm sensation of the realization of a what for some is a lifelong dream, secure in the knowledge that this is only the beginning – you've got plenty more memories to make!

Every worthwhile journey begins by taking the first small step. Contact us today to speak with a Design/Build Consultant. The sooner you start, the sooner your Pennsylvania Oak Log dream will be ready to welcome you home.