

# experts / ON THE HOUSE

PROS WEIGH IN ON REDO  
TRENDS AND TIPS



## SCOTT HOBBS

HOBBS, INCORPORATED  
hobbinc.com

### Top tip for a smooth project

While this may sound self-serving, don't competitively bid it. Regardless of how well a renovation is drawn, there are always surprises, and the competitive bid process normally ensures that all contingency money has been wrung from the project before it starts. This means that each new discovery becomes antagonistic. It's better to find someone trustworthy to work with to develop a realistic budget, then deal with inevitable issues in a collaborative way. This will result in far more value for the money.

### Most popular materials

The color and texture of walls is a focus these days. Making certain walls really pop with metal accent panels (either stainless or oil rubbed), wallcoverings (from exotic papers to straws to leather) or amazing faux treatments can really add character to a home.

### You can't go wrong...

Spending money on good advice. Hiring experienced architects or designers to help you figure out how to maximize the value from a project is the best money you can spend!



## GEORGE PUSSER

CORNERSTONE  
CONTRACTING  
cornerstone-builders.com

### Current trends

The climate of the market is presently gravitating toward anything and everything tech-related. Smart home technology, inclusive of energy efficiency and wireless technology, along with all things green are trending right now.

### Most popular materials

Some things never change, and materials such as glass, metals and stone are still popular choices today because they hold up to the test of time. What has changed are the colors and textures of the materials.

### Top tip for a smooth project

We recommend hiring an architect, and having an understanding of the design concept helps. Then hire a builder (Cornerstone!) that is transparent and has a good reputation. Having a contractor who understands quality, schedule and budget will make the experience more enjoyable and will produce the best results.



## AMANDA MARTOCCHIO

AMANDA MARTOCCHIO  
ARCHITECTURE  
amandamartocchio.com

### You can't go wrong...

Having an architect design a comprehensive master plan, even if you want to limit construction to a specific partial renovation. A master plan can thoughtfully outline a phased approach so that imminent work is accomplished with foresight into long-term goals, avoiding duplicate work.

### Current trends

The most popular trend is fluid, but not oversized, interior spaces that support informal lifestyles. Homeowners want light-filled family areas that connect to both outdoor living spaces and kitchens. Our clients come to us appreciative of architectural design that is pared down yet characterized by warm-finish materials.

### Most popular materials

While we stay abreast of innovative materials and technologies, we prioritize timeless design. However, recently we have used cement fiber board as an exterior cladding material that offers moisture resistance, low maintenance and aesthetic flexibility.



## MATTHEW DOUGHERTY

MATTHEW R. DOUGHERTY  
ARCHITECT  
mrdarchitect.com

### Top tip for a smooth project

When remodeling an existing space, it's important to understand from the beginning that there will be unknowns lurking behind walls. Renovation projects are inherently complicated, and having a skilled team, where everyone works together toward the best solution, ensures the process and results are successful.

### Current trends

Most clients are leaning toward more modern, transitional elements and features in finishes and style. They're also eliminating rooms that aren't used as frequently, such as formal living and dining rooms, and instead want multifunctional spaces better suited for today's style of living.

### You can't go wrong...

Renovating or updating kitchens and baths, but sometimes just fixing the flow of a house can have a dramatic and rewarding outcome that shouldn't be overlooked.



## ASHLEY SCHAPIRO

MILTON  
miltondevelopment.com

### Most popular materials

Stain-grade white oak is popular, whether used as trim in key areas like the foyer and family room, or introduced by built-ins, beams or barn doors. Bleached white oak floors can give a fresh look and help offset the feeling of low-ceiling heights. Quartz surface counters like Caesarstone are being used for durability and a clean look, and large-format porcelain tile for bath and mudroom floors is popular.

### Current trends

I'm seeing a trend toward increasing light in the home, achieved by upgrading window design with larger and more strategic window placement, utilizing picture windows to maximize views, and changing a traditional window configuration to a more transitional and contemporary design.

### Top tip for a smooth project

Do your homework! Hire experts, including engineers, architects and site surveyors, to inspect the structure before embarking on a renovation to avoid surprises later. Due diligence in the selection of an experienced builder is paramount.