is to build a team of supporting members who can ensure that the projects run smoothly, staying on schedule and on budget.

Buck Brothers has run a workshop about hiring remodeling contractors at a local home improvement fair for a number of years. They have found that there are two keys to developing a successful project. One is using a well-defined contractor selection process. The other is providing adequate time to create a design and to develop the project.

A given for Summit Hill residents is finding contractor candidates that have the history and expertise related to working on older housing stock. Initial source lists can come from researching ads in local publications (you're holding one now!) and keeping tabs on regularly appearing lawn signs. Web searches work well too, as long as parameters are set for companies with local experience.

Once contractors are lined up for visits, it's best to provide them all with the same project information. It ensures more accuracy for cost estimates. The local remodeling industry chapter, NARI-MN, has a website (narimn.org) with great information on how to conduct an interview. Lastly, homeowners should depend on their own comfort level with a remodeler.

Once a contractor is selected, the key to getting a quality project is in proper design and development. Allowing for ample time in these phases and concentrating on needed details means that the construction phase is better able to stay on budget and schedule.

Publisher's Note: For more information, please see www.buck-bros.com.