

Serene Scene

January 2023

Questions to Consider

Three questions you should ask yourself before planning your next renovation project

Employee Spotlight

Desiree Frees upholds the values of PSW by leading all operations and ensuring that our employees provide exceptional service.



Questions to Consider when Thinking about a Renovation

The Unsung Heroes of Construction

Project Update: Raising the Bar in Mt. Lebanon

Just Sold: Sliding into Comfort in Allison Park

Questions to Consider

When Thinking about a 2023 Renovation

Your "why" will serve as the guiding light when there are decisions to be made, schedules to keep, or disruptions to your life.



Your "Why" will guide you through the process

When potential clients call PSW, they are often very excited about the journey they are about to begin. They have looked up pictures of projects they like, they have spoken to friends and family about the new space and have gotten ideas from them, and they may have even put together a vision board with all the pieces of the puzzle.

Typically, they have an idea of what features they want and potentially a partial idea of what they want it to look like. But most inadvertently skip the most important question of all; Why do I want this? Thinking about your personal "why" will lead to a much clearer vision of the space and provide the answers to two additional questions that need to be answered as well.

The three questions you need to ask yourself before planning an indoor or outdoor renovation project are:

Why am I embarking on this journey?

When embarking on this journey, you should always start with "why." Your

"why" will serve as the guiding light when there are decisions to be made, schedules to keep, or disruptions to your life. For example, your why may be to "spend more time with the kids before they go off to college." There will be times when you look downstairs and see bare concrete, studs on the wall, and a hole in the floor. That's when you need to think about you and your daughter shooting pool in the new game room or watching the latest movie in your home theater. It's those memories they will remember most.

What is your true vision?

This may seem like an easy question on the surface. "I want a rectangle

pool with a patio and outdoor kitchen." But really close your eyes and think about it. What color is the pool? Are you sitting in front of a fireplace with a TV mounted above it or are you sitting around the fire pit chatting with friends. Do you hear the sounds of falling water or is the sound of nature in the background? Is it just your family there, or are you hosting a large gathering for family and friends? The more detail you provide, the more accurate your vision will be.

What is the value of my vision?

The typical focus when considering the size and scope of a large project, is to try and determine what it will



cost. Cost is a quantifiable number that can be determined based on the size, design, scope, and nature of the project. On the other hand, the value of the project goes well beyond dollars. The value is the smile on your son's face as he speeds down the waterslide, the warm embrace of your spouse as you watch your favorite show in front of the fire, or the calmness you feel soaking in that warm bath at the end of a hard day.

Once you have the answers to these questions, contact PSW to begin your journey. If you haven't yet thought about them, don't worry, our team of project directors and designers will help you answer each of these questions before moving forward in the process.

Project Update

Raising the bar in Mt. Lebanon

This client in Mt. Lebanon really raised the bar on the vision for their living space. With their unique pool design, Dolphin enclosed tube slide, and pavilion, it has become one of the most anticipated projects for completion in 2023.

As seen in these update photos, the project is nearing completion. Mulch has been added around the boulder walls and some of the greenery has been planted. In their design, our team utilized a nice black mulch to create a beautiful contrast to the lighter pavers and boulders. Once the weather warms up, the team will finish up the last few remaining details for the clients.

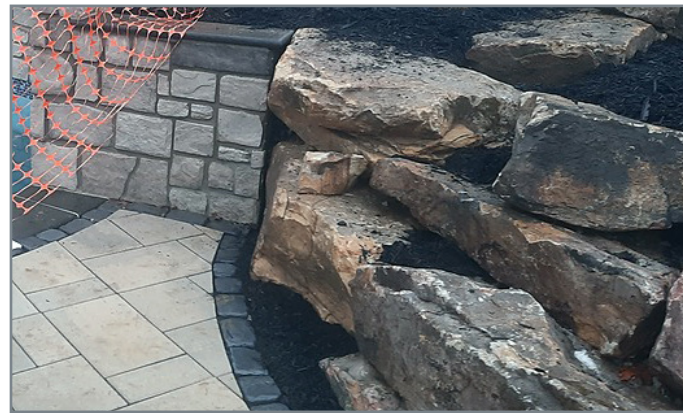
We can't wait to show you the final product.



ABOVE:
Large natural boulders



ABOVE:
Freshly added mulch



ABOVE:
Boulders next to veneer and paver patio

Just Sold

Coming in 2023! Sliding into Comfort in Allison Park, PA

The first thing that stands out about this project is how perfectly it fits into the hillside. This will be accomplished through a significant amount of site preparation and excavation. Only once the land is prepped, secured, and tested, can the project construction begin.

This project has everything for the family. The middle section includes a custom Family Fun style pool with PebbleTec finish. An automatic pool cover was added for both the protection of the pool as well as the safety of the children. Next to the pool includes a large sunning area for relaxing on a beautiful summer day.

The top section of this project leads to the fun! A Dolphin open flume slide will take the kids and their friends (and many adults) sliding into the cool water below.

At the end of the day, there is a fire pit area for gathering, chatting, and even making smores. After the kids go to bed, it is the perfect spot for the adults to relax after a long and hectic day.

During the evening, the lights from the LED lighting package come on and beautifully illuminate the space so that the fun can continue well into the night.



ABOVE:
3D rendering of the entire project



ABOVE:
nighttime rendering of the custom pool and surroundings

The Unsung Heroes of Construction

Specialists such as plumbers, electricians, and HVAC professionals work behind the scenes to *improve the lives of our clients*

When clients are first shown the beautiful 3D renderings of a PSW design, they see, right in front of their eyes, the work to be done by the teams of pool builders, carpenters, hardscapers, and landscapers. What they don't see is all the amazing work that may forever go unseen. The wires, pipes, and ducts that get covered by drywall, concrete, and soils.



We all love sitting in front of those massage jets in the hot tub, we get lost in the warm glow of the gas fire features, and, at least in Pittsburgh, we gather below the electric heaters running efficiently under the patio roof. What we don't think about is how that water comes out at such a high rate, where the fuel for the fire is coming from, or how those heaters keep us warm.

While the work for most of the contractors in these fields is not often seen, they don't mind. "We may never meet the client" says Paul Briggs of Briggs Electric, "but we treat their

home like our own. We take pride in what we do; top grade materials, clean installs, and a superior end product."

While their work may not be seen by the client, it is essential to the project, and the team at PSW knows how essential they are. "What's a Lamborghini without an engine?" states PSW designer and former project manager, Rob Healy. "While you might not see a majority of their work, our utility contractors are essential to the success of the project. They really bring it to life."

If you look at these images from a recent project, you will see how much precision and organization it takes to get all of the utilities to where they need to go. In a typical large outdoor project, there can be over 500' of buried pipes. When you consider that these pipes cannot go through any of the elements of a project, it takes a lot of coordination to get them to their final destination.

The next time you look at beautiful photos of a completed project, take some time and appreciate the countless hours that these unsung heroes put into each one of our projects.



Meet Desiree



President of Operations
DESIREE FREES

PSW was founded in 1982 as a small family-owned company. In the over 40-years of existence, the company has transformed and grown significantly. In November of 2022, PSW took another giant leap forward by hiring Desiree Frees as their first president of operations.

As president of operations, Frees is responsible for upholding the values of the organization by leading all business operations. She will ensure every employee has the resources they need to provide exceptional service to both clients and partners.

While she is stepping into a new industry, she credits the processes that are already in place to help her with the transition. "I recently moved to Pittsburgh from Northern

California after spending a decade in workers compensation and staffing. PSW is structured unlike any other company in the construction industry. I joined PSW because I see a company who wants to educate and better the lives of the people of Pittsburgh."

Stepping into an established company can be a challenge for any new employee, but Frees was not brought in to simply fit in, she was hired to bring significant improvements to an already successful company. But even a professional like Frees knows that patience is a virtue when implementing change. "I didn't come to PSW to make change right away; my philosophy is to listen and truly understand where we are as a team. Especially in a small company, employee feedback is valuable. I want to make sure everyone involved knows I am here to implement the change that is needed to continue to build upon the foundations established."

To bring significant growth, changes will always be required. As John F. Kennedy stated, "Change is the law

of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." But change is not easy and sometimes it is uncomfortable. Frees states that the key to moving forward is "open and honest communication."

Over the past few months, Frees has been working with each department, including the CEO, to streamline all processes even more than they already are. But how does someone come into a new organization and industry and keep their priorities straight? "I practice and preach the top 4 method. I look at the tasks that need to be completed that week and create a daily top 4 list. Number one is always the one that I know will take the longest but be most beneficial for the company. I will not move to the remainder of the list until I fully complete the first task. This is something I have always encouraged my team to do as well."

Outside of work, Frees loves traveling with her family and showing her kids new experiences. For those worried about how she is adapting to Pittsburgh, she simply smiles and states, "I have fallen in love with the passion and pride in this city." Spoken like a true yinzer!

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educate and better the lives
of the people of Pittsburgh.



PSW

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