Want to remodel your home and make it more livable for today and the long term? Five architects will take your questions at a panel discussion Wednesday. We asked them to weigh in on the latest trends, how to cut costs and what an architect brings to the table.

REINVENTING YOUR HOME

Rosemary McMonigal used European modern design influences in this remodeled family room and kitchen, which were part of an existing dated addition.

AN EVENING OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN
What: "Reinventing Your Home," a panel discussion by local architects on remodeling and building, moderated by architect writer Linda Mack. The event, which features architects Dan Nepp, Christian Dean, Rosemary McMonigal, Wade Weisemann and Rich Lappin, is sponsored by AIA Minnesota and the Star Tribune. The Home of the Month contest winners also will be announced.
When: 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., March 21.
Where: International Market Square, Lyndale and Glenwood Avenues, Mpls.
Tickets: $16 includes appetizers, $20 at the door. To register, call 612-338-5763 or go to www.aia-mn.org.

By LYNN UNDERWOOD
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ROSEMARY McMONIGAL
McMonigal Architects, Minneapolis

Q What are some smart ways to spend your remodeling dollars?
A Kitchens and bathrooms are always expensive, but they're a good return on the investment and bring great enjoyment. Kitchens are the room where everyone gathers. While a kitchen doesn't have to be gigantic to be successful, careful attention to the space and details will result in a creative and functional solution.

Q What's another popular remodeling project?
A Mudrooms are up there with kitchens. It's for the boots, shoes, backpacks, all the things that hit the entry when you first come in. Instead of an addition, we can change door swings, and borrow space from another room or closet.

Q What green features and products do you encourage a client to include?
A Good insulation, new energy-efficient windows or added windows for cross ventilation to reduce the need for A/C in the summer. Use products from renewable materials or buy products with a long life that can be repaired. Buy local such as Marvin and Andersen windows. People are asking for linoleum because it's made of natural materials — Inseed oil and cork — and outperforms petroleum or vinyl products. We often use it in bathroom floors, mudrooms and entryways. I like dual-flush toilets because they save water and make people aware of their water use.

Q Where should you never cut corners in your remodeling budget?
A Anything related to the exterior skin of the house — windows, insulation, waterproofing. Make sure they are good quality and properly installed to avoid costly problems in the future. None of these things should be compromised to gain a higher-priced amenity on the inside.

Remodel continues on H6 »