LaRocque Residence

Fort Francis, Ontario, Canada

Retirement dream home

For Len and Betty Ann LaRocque, retirement was missing only one thing: the perfect home. The couple spent nearly two years planning their retirement dream home on the shores of Rainy Lake in northwest Ontario.

"We set out to build a house that had all the features we wanted," said Len LaRocque.

LaRocque contacted David Nelson, the Principle of **Nelson Architecture**, a design firm based in Kenora, Ontario.

"The owners didn't want a house that looked like another house," said Nelson. "They had no preconceived notions, which allowed us to look at a lot of different options."

Nelson proposed a more contemporary design with a low-sloped, curved roof that opened up to the spectacular views of Rainy Lake. Another option that Nelson recommended was using the **Insulspan Structural Insulating Panel (SIP) system** for the walls and roof of the home to create an energy-efficient building envelope.

"There are some very simple things one can do…to make the building more sustainable from a cost, materials, and energy use perspective," said Nelson. "High insulation levels are a really good way to address energy use."

Insulspan SIPs use a continuous layer of closed-cell rigid EPS insulation to cut down on thermal bridging and air infiltration. The LaRocque home uses Insulspan SIP walls with an effective R-Value of R-22 and an Insulspan SIP roof rated at R-29, giving them much needed additional insulation and cutting their heating cost during cold Ontario winters.

"The owners were very receptive to using SIPs," said Nelson. "The concept that they could reduce the cost to operate their home through high insulation levels was very attractive to them."

In addition to the energy-efficient SIPs that enclose their home, the LaRoques added high performance windows, low flow fixtures to reduce their water use, and a geothermal heat pump.

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