



Symphonic Transformation

TALENTED TEAM KNOWS THE SCORE FOR HARMONY IN HOME RENOVATION

TEXT BY MARY MARSHALL PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERIN CHOINIÈRE

With a picturesque setting on a large lot in Piper Glen, J.D. and Deborah Williams' home, built in 1991, was true to the style of the '90s and ready for some changes. "We love our neighborhood and especially enjoy our large lot, which is heavily wooded with privacy on three sides," says Deborah Williams, President of Professional Consultant Group. "Our house is warm and inviting. The overall flow was good, but the space was not maximized in some

areas. We felt it was very dated and in need of major changes as well as cosmetic improvements that would not only make the available space more useable but also accentuate the charm of the home." Williams' renovation project, however, did not come about without a period of frustration. For three months, she worked with a contractor who didn't seem to share her goals and desires. "I felt we weren't on the same page," she commented. "My goal was to

connect with a contractor who had the resources to do what I wanted and could deliver in a timely manner. I had seen projects done by many interior designers over the years—some of which I admired—but not enough to ever want to involve them in my home. When I worked with interior designer Scott Carpenter on a television project through my company, I knew I found the right person for me. We clicked instantly."

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As the plan came together, Carpenter contacted general contractors Ian Moncrieff and Mike Peters, who assessed the situation. They sought the expertise of residential designer JJ. Barja, who worked diligently to reuse existing space, eliminating the need to add square footage to the house. "I spent a lot of time studying the existing home, taking a hands-on approach to get the project right," says Barja. "I find it very fulfilling to see what can be built from something I have drawn on a piece of paper."

"The value of a knowledgeable, experienced team was evident," adds Williams. "Each is an artist in his own way; all are very imaginative and creative. Due to their thorough skills in planning, our project was more cost effective and incorporated eco-friendly green systems. They were also extremely considerate of our needs since we lived upstairs in the home during the entire process."

"There are fewer surprises when a team approach is implemented," says Carpenter. "Moncrieff, Peters,

Barja and I have worked together on many projects, including several charity homes in Charlotte. We have a meeting of the minds."

Contractor Mike Peters compares their team to a group of musicians. "In our case, we're a jazz group. The framework is our starting point, the house plan our score. We read the score, listening to and playing in kind as the work evolves. The more harmony created, the better the performance. We're able to turn on a dime with each new inspiration, creating more than the original score. That's jazz!"

"In today's economy, renovating can be a better use of funds and less risky," says Barja. "We're seeing more nesting in this down economy. Many people have great locations and neighbors. By renovating, they don't have to give this up but can incorporate better use of space and add cosmetic improvements to create a new look. In some instances, people are getting their homes ready to sell when the economy

improves but are doing it now so they can enjoy these changes. Kitchens, master suites and outdoor living spaces top the list for renovating."

The Williams' project began with the kitchen and keeping room, which were originally separated by a wall. "We removed the wall and replaced it with a bar service area," says Moncrieff. "The column theme in the living and dining room was carried out in this area with detailed woodworking continuing into the banquette area, adding depth and dimension."

"We updated the vaulted ceiling in the keeping room by creating a one-by-six grid pattern on the sheet rock," says Carpenter. "We continued that trim on the fireplace wall, keeping the original mantle. The end result is a charming, warm, new classical feature. Elegant textured draperies decorated with buttons cascade two stories with rods mounted into the sides of the fireplace, thereby giving the fireplace a vertical rather than a horizontal look."

The wainscoting millwork in the kitchen matches

the beaded inset paneling under the bar and in the banquette area, uniting the entire area and making the kitchen area seem larger. Custom cabinets, hardwood floors and elegant chandeliers give the kitchen and banquette area a calming, earthy feeling as does the choice of paint color, Relaxed Khaki by Sherman Williams, and the rejuvenation of the café curtain.

Some of Williams' favorite heirlooms, like the pitcher her grandmother used to make iced tea, are tastefully displayed on shelves designed within the cabinetry. The Dacor gas cooktop, state-of-the-art oven, microwave and warming oven are accented by warm, soothing quartz countertops. An eclectic arrangement of plates, handmade by Martina Lantin from Blue Spiral 1, a gallery in Asheville, adds a tasteful splash of white, red and yellow to the banquette area.

"We deconstructed rather than demolished," said Peters, "reusing kitchen cabinets and refrigerator, along with a second oven, microwave and icemaker for a catering kitchen in the garage. We pulled nails

from existing framing materials and reused the wood in the new walls. Materials and items that wouldn't work within the framework of the project were donated to Jackson Park Ministries and Habitat for Humanity ReStore. The ecological impact was minimized through the installation of two Navien tankless water heaters which are small, 96 percent efficient and eligible for a tax credit. In addition, the energy efficiency of the house was updated with the addition of Icynene® insulation."

New furnishings upholstered in natural colors and a wonderful variety of textures are tastefully arranged throughout the home as are lovely accent pieces, all accentuating the peaceful, relaxed theme that flows from room-to-room.

Along with new dining room furniture and accessories, the dining room was painted in an updated faux finish, which adds texture and warmth, creating a more subtle inviting image. "The room comes to you instead of you coming to the room," says Williams.

Over 900 Swarovski crystals were glued to a three inch border on the top and bottom of the walls creating an enchanting visual focal point. The crystal theme continues with crystal buttons bordering the top of the window treatment, which are a shade of the paint, Gray Silhouette.

Williams was frustrated with the original design of their master closet, which had two separate closets connected to a hallway and linen closet. "The square footage was there but it was all chopped up," she said. "We were able to create a dressing closet by removing walls, eliminating the linen closet and combining all the space to create one large area. We reclaimed space from the attic, opening up the area to three levels, capitalizing on this space for storage. The center of the dressing closet is a built-in armoire with plenty of concealed storage space and a bench to sit on while putting on your shoes." Behind the bench is a full length mirror. The dressing closet also includes a dressing table with sink and refrigerator.



The master bath was also renovated, adding heated marble floors, steam shower, marble wainscoting, floor-to-ceiling marble in the water closet, heated towel bars, separate sink areas and a large soaking tub with crystal faucets, custom cabinets and elegant chandeliers. The original sauna was kept.

Macadamia Nut is the color of paint that was chosen for the bedroom. The window treatment, featuring buttons as accents, follows this color scheme as does the comforter and bed skirt. Plush earth tone carpet, elegant artwork from Shain Gallery and intricate framed mirrors complete the theme.

Originally, the guest suite bathroom was also used as the downstairs powder room. By borrowing space from the garage, Barja created a separate powder room. "I try to make each project as cost effective as possible, to use and embrace what exists," says Barja.

The laundry area, an appendix of the garage entranceway, was dressed up with a new tile floor, new appliances and a functional leather granite counter top that spans the tops of the appliances, providing additional work space.

Cosmetic upgrades to the exterior of the home include a new garage door with Spanish cedar stained panels and a new roof. The Williams will continue the exterior renovations replacing the brick on the front porch with stone, a new front door, different trim color and stucco accents, plus new verandas in the back with an outdoor kitchen and fireplace.

"Today's trend is for a more classical look combined with a contemporary twist," says Carpenter. "Elegant window treatments, a clean palate of soft colors and silver accents combined with a touch of chocolate are all very stylish. Wallpapering is back, yet it has a more traditional look, favoring subtle, organic colors. The choices are elegant, many with gold accents, which is what we chose for the Williams' master bath."

"A team of professionals is the key to a well executed project," says Williams. "This has been a wonderful experience. I couldn't have asked for a more skilled group of talented professionals, and they worked hand-in-hand. Many variables challenged their skills, expertise and experience, with all contributing to the outcome of the project. We wanted the finished renovations to look like the home was originally built that way. Through the quality of our team's workmanship, we were able to accomplish this. I'm looking forward to my next project with them." *



Behind the Scenes



Mike Peters, Scott Carpenter, Ian Moncrieff and JJ Barja



Resource Guide

General Contractors

Ian Moncrieff and Mike Peters
Renovation Excel
704.363.6857

Residential Designer

JJ Barja
Elite Design Group
704.545.2928
www.elitedesigngroup.com

Engineer

Kevin Munson
Residential Structures, Inc.
704.332.5460

Interior Design

Scott Carpenter
Interiors
704.373.2966

Custom Cabinets

The Hogan Company
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Faux Painting

Janet Marsh
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704.821.7888
www.dacserviceshvac.com

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www.jacksonpark.org

The Harvest Center

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www.theharvestcenter.org

Habitat for Humanity ReStore

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www.charlotterestore.org

The Salvation Army

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www.uss.salvationarmy.org

Goodwill

www.goodwillsp.org/donate.html

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