

Rear elevation optimizes house for growing family

■ **How Master Designer/ Remodeler Sonny Nazemian finds useful square footage in places others overlook**

BY JOHN BYRD
SPECIAL TO THE FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

Robert Brooks and Julie Griffith had occupied their 2,800-square-foot Colonial in McLean for over 20 years. In time, the house had proved an ideal place to raise a family, but as the two children grew, it had gradually come to seem inadequate. Recognizing that the good local schools and easy commute to work would be hard to replace, the couple had decided against shopping for a larger residence further out. Enlarging the existing house was a consideration, but what plan would work?

There was much about the existing house that called for improvement. The kitchen was small, dark and dated. The original U-shaped kitchen counter, which incorporated the range oven and the sink, made it difficult for the cook to move freely into other rooms when entertaining. Storage

was limited. Circulation between the kitchen and other first-level rooms often caused traffic jams.

Upstairs, the master bathroom was too small; floor space in their teen daughter's bedroom was hardly large enough to accommodate a work station.

A first-floor laundry room behind the garage was vexingly inconvenient for two time-pressed working parents. A powder room just outside the family room was, likewise, in the wrong place.

All of these factors taken into account, an addition on the rear elevation seemed to offer a practical space expansion plan.

But the bigger question was: what scope of changes would the family budget allow, and how could such a long list of desired modifications best be integrated into a whole greater than the sum of the parts?

As the unanswered questions were accumulating, Sonny Nazemian, chairman and founder of Michael Nash Kitchens and Homes, entered the scene.

"Several design strategies appeared applicable from the start," Nazemian reflects. "A solution that integrates newly-built square footage with a thoughtful reconfiguration of interior space can offer a significant lifestyle enhancement. As remodelers, we look for an architectural context that will allow us to re-deploy out-of-date floor plan features while introducing an



PHOTOS BY GREG HADLEY

To meet requirements of a family that had decided to improve their existing home in McLean home rather than move out, Michael Nash implemented a sweeping whole house makeover, increasing the living space in a 2,800-square-foot Colonial by nearly 30 percent. A 12'-by-24' two-level addition in the middle of the rear elevation provided square footage needed for a spacious family kitchen. To integrate the new addition, 22 feet of rear bearing wall was removed. A structural beam mounted on vertical I-beams was installed to support the second floor. The solution invites an open, transitional-style interior that works well for the whole family.

alternative that better accommodates individual requirements and the family's social needs. We have found there is very broad interest in this approach to remodeling - especially in the close-in neighborhoods."

Taken as a whole, the Brooks-Griffith program called for two separate additions on the rear of the house. The new construction would be integrated into a whole house remodel that would include a new front facade and new siding on the entire exterior.

A 12'-by-24' two-level addition in the middle of the rear el-

evation would house a first-floor kitchen/family room suite integrated with the existing kitchen's footprint as well as a second level master bedroom suite with spa bath and walk-in closets.

Meanwhile, a smaller (8'-by-24') one-level hyphen linking the garage and kitchen was designed to accommodate a mudroom and added storage as well as a new powder room.

A small grilling deck accessible from the kitchen segues to a screened-in porch built on a side elevation. The porch is also

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BEFORE: The original galley kitchen was small, dark and dated. The U-shaped counter made it difficult for the cook to move freely when entertaining. Surfaces and storage were limited. First-level circulation from the kitchen frequently caused bottle-necks.



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White marble tile and an Italianate cook top hood visually integrate the cook's work station with other formal finish-work detailing throughout the new interior.

HOMES

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linked to the formal dining room via a side door.

In short, it is a perfect platform for fair weather entertaining.

To better integrate the two-level addition into the existing house, a 22-foot section of bearing wall was removed on the rear elevation. A structural beam flush with the existing perimeter and mounted on vertical I-beams now supports the second floor. The solution offers a seamless interface between the home's new and old sections.

"The structural solution invites an open, transitional-style interior design," Nazemian observes. "Sight lines are extended and the square footage is enlarged dramatically, yet formal design elements define activity zones that are functionally self-contained."

The first-level plan, moreover, allocates square footage needed for both an expansive L-shaped gourmet kitchen and a butler's pantry between kitchen and new formal dining room.

The food prep island is visually linked to the hearth in the front-facing family room. Large kitchen

windows and double French doors, likewise, invite abundant natural light in all directions. French doors open into the spacious back yard, offering a comfortable indoor/outdoor component.

To augment first-level visual continuum, the wall between family room and kitchen was replaced with a large food preparation island and dining counter.

Equipped with a sink, dishwasher and glass-facing display cabinets, the marble-surfaced island dominates the open space. Overhead, two glass and chrome chandeliers balance the composition.

A small refrigerator built into the island faces into the breakfast room; from the family room side, the built-in affords easy access to TV and media equipment. The island also offers stool seating for four, and buffet-style counter space.

Despite its many amenities and functional work triangles, the kitchen/great room abounds in interactive gathering zones well-suited for entertaining.

White cabinetry and soft marble surfaces present a bright lively finish. Soft subway tiles and bluetint glass tile recede softly into a French country ambiance.

Naturally-stained wood floors installed throughout the entire

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The first-level 'open' plan allocates square footage for an expansive, L-shaped gourmet kitchen. From the food prep island sightlines reach the hearth in front-facing family room. The island also offers stool seating for four and buffet-style counter space.

first floor reinforce an uplifting interior style.

Upstairs, extensive modifications provide sweeping lifestyle benefits.

There's a larger master bedroom suite with a 130-square-foot walk-in closet.

The new 230-square-foot master bathroom boasts a whirlpool tub with a view of the backyard, a large marble shower stall, a double vanity, marble floors and lots of storage capacity.

Linen cabinets and a walk-in closet with small windows located just outside new bathroom provide ample wardrobe space.

For added convenience: the second-floor bathroom has been converted into the new laundry room - an easy reach from bedrooms, bathroom and closets.

The teenage daughter's room has been enhanced by an 8'-by-8' sleeping alcove built over the screened-in porch, a modification that provides the square footage needed for a larger work station



A small grilling deck accessible from the kitchen segregates to a screened-in porch built on a side elevation.



New exterior windows in varied shapes and sizes combined with angular corners in selected roof lines enhance visual interest and curb appeal. Old siding has been replaced with Hardie plank, trim, and fascia board; windows, gutters, roof and downspouts are also new.

and new carpeting on the rest of the second floor are among the many upgrades.

Outside, old siding has been replaced with Hardie plank, trim, and fascia board; the windows, gutters, roof and downspouts are also new.

New exterior windows in varied shapes and sizes combined with angular corners in selected roof lines enhance curb appeal.

The front door is now framed by an arched portico with square columns; a new flagstone walkway links the front door to the driveway.

"As remodelers, we are particularly pleased when we can find budget-sensitive ways to help owners stay in a neighbor-

hood where they've established their roots as a family," Nazemian says. "In this case, we've enhanced the charm of the original house - but it is much more functional and presentable. That's the outcome we seek."

For information call (703) 641-9800 or visit MichaelNash-Kitchens.com

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A one-level hyphen linking the kitchen to the back of the garage accommodates a mudroom and a convenient powder room.

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