

2006 WBA Remodeling Awards

Project Category:
Whole House Remodel

"The Potential Was Made A Fact"



DEGNAN
DESIGN BUILDERS
INC.



While the clients yet had another home for sale out of state, they were ready to embark upon the design and remodeling process for their recently purchased home in Wisconsin. As music enthusiasts and performers, they considered a large addition to the house as well as remodeling existing spaces. They bought the house for its location, recognizing its potential, but established a list of problems to solve: The kitchen was dark and outdated. A decrepit screened porch was a favorite place of their cats, but was not so endearing to the clients as it was on an unsupported slab and was sinking away from the house. Bathrooms were unappealing, and the plumbing made noise. The upstairs hallway was dark. A mud room was too cold to function, three steps down from the house, and functioning as a makeshift pantry. (However, it made a great home for the mice.) The central stairway railing was rickety and lacked style. Additional needs included additional workshop or garage space for three cars, five motorcycles, and lawn equipment. After interviewing our company and another remodeler, they chose to proceed with us.



Above: An early concept plan (by the homeowners) included a large shed-roofed addition that was not suited to the house, would have darkened existing rooms, and would have been beyond a feasible budget. Instead, working within the existing footprint of the house the remodeling addressed their needs without the expense or energy use of an addition. Home Performance with ENERGY STAR was consulted and recommendations implemented to repair existing energy deficiencies.



After: The detached garage and workshop provides the additional storage space needed. The location of the existing well required a detached rather than attached structure. The driveway was replaced, and water from the roof and additional water coming onto this sloped lot was directed to a catch basin. Areas were re-graded and retaining walls were installed with only minimal disruption of quality trees. The water drains through a pipe under the driveway to the culvert, avoiding previously persistent ice problems. Brick was carefully selected for the garage to integrate with the existing brick on the house. The windows on the two garage doors further integrate the design.

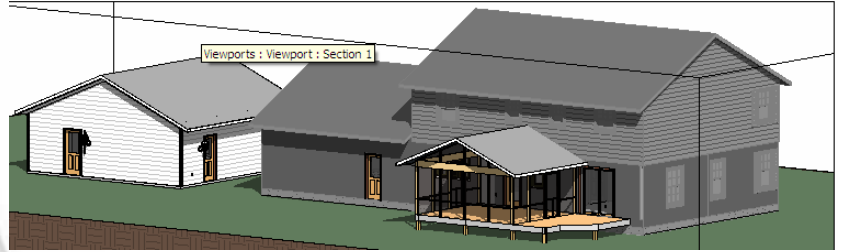


Before: The house is a spacious, two story home on a large wooded lot in a township neighborhood. However, it lacked adequate garage space for three vehicles, lawn equipment, and five motorcycles.

Top: The Remodelor™'s first concept for this project was significantly larger and more expensive including a 400 square foot Music Room addition and a master bathroom remodeling.



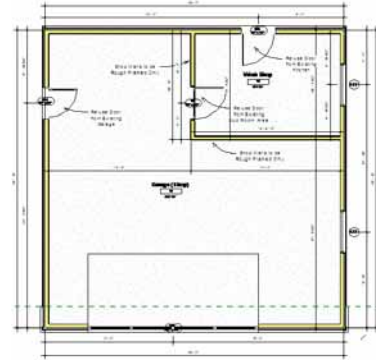
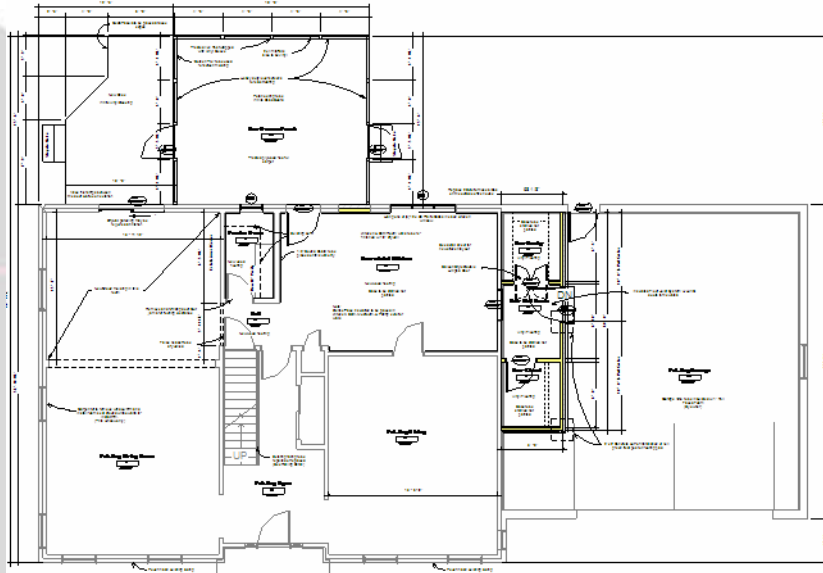
Bottom: While the music room was permanently eliminated, the garage, screened porch, kitchen, deck, bathroom, powder room, and mudroom/pantry areas were completed.



The new screened porch is larger and relocated for better function. A deck was built in the location of the old screened porch, and the patio door replaced with a new Andersen door to allow access between the living room and deck/screened porch. A new hinged door provides access from the kitchen to the porch, in the location of a former window. A large six foot wide window was installed in front of the kitchen sink. Brick masons successfully cut and removed, salvaged and patched the brick from the base of the old screened porch and window areas to fill in a door that was removed and to enlarge the kitchen window opening.



Before: The screened porch was built on a slab with no footings and was literally falling off of the house. A small kitchen window brought little north light into the kitchen from this wooded neighborhood.



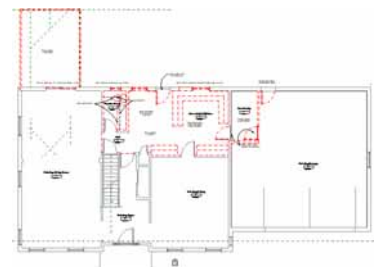
This page: Construction and demolition plans for the final project.

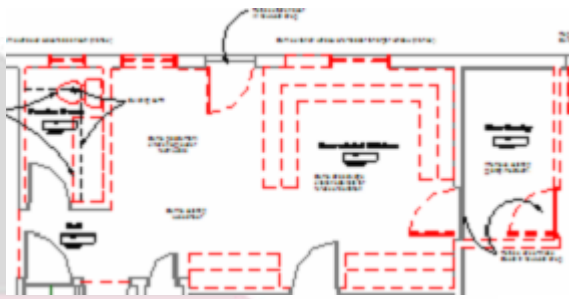


The new screened porch has been relocated for a functional traffic pattern through the kitchen, while the deck continues to allow access from the living room. The screened porch was completed with low-maintenance, white materials to maximize the brightness of the space despite its location on the wooded north side of the house. A skylight on the east roof face brings in additional diffused light, through the full-view glass door into the kitchen peninsula area.

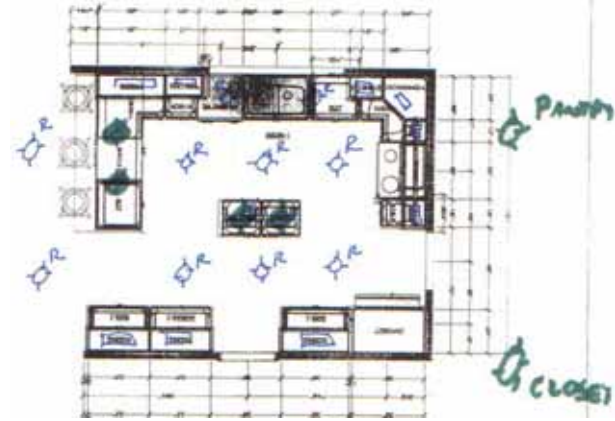


The former screened porch was built on a slab with no footings, and was sinking away from the house. It had low eaves and the interior was simply painted over the structural rafters and sheathing. Low brick side walls were crumbling along with the slab.





10-CAUS
 4-PENDANTS
 2-LIGHTS IN PANTRY/CLOSET
 3-(9?) UNDER CABINET



The kitchen space was not adequately functional for the clients and was simply too dark. An earlier remodeling had taken a portion of the garage to create an entry area but it was dark, small, and cold—the clients wanted a functioning mudroom and pantry that felt integrated with the house. By demolishing and re-building a larger version, a walk-in pantry and walk-in closet were created in addition to a entry space to serve the clients' needs.



The kitchen window was enlarged to take in the wooded back yard and maximize the natural lighting. Windows were carefully selected to allow hanging space for the clients treasured art glass collection. The peninsula was moved to enlarge the functional kitchen area, and provides seating so that the dinette table was eliminated. The door to the back yard was moved to the former location of a window (trim of door barely visible and bottom left corner of photo), and now leads to the screened porch. The natural maple cabinets and cheery yellow paint brighten the kitchen, while an island and trim in darker Paprika stain provide definition at the cabinet top and bottom edges and a focal point for the island.



Before: Dark oak cabinets and a small window made a dark kitchen space. The low-hanging peninsula cabinets were visually disruptive and further darkened the area. The peninsula created a small kitchen space with a miniscule dinette table which blocked access to a door out to the back yard.



Before: The old mud room had been built two steps down from the house level. It was unheated and barely insulated. It was used as a cramped and disorganized pantry, with no actual storage for coats and jackets. In fact, the owners refused to use the room to store any coats or shoes because they were physically too cold to put on after hanging in the room. But, the owners reported, it was a great home lost for the mice.

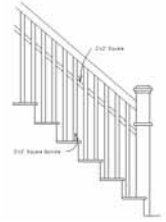
The new mudroom space is built inside of the garage, on floor joists and post footings, and is fully insulated on all sides. Adequate HVAC has been installed. A spacious pantry is unseen to the left, while a coat closet is unseen to the right. A Solatube with a built-in light provides warm, inviting light at any time of day.



Before: The old entry door remained in place to keep the cold out of the kitchen. Note also that there was no cabinet space to the right side of the range which prevented the kitchen from functioning well.



Before: the stairway railing was plain but extremely rickety.



Final Assessment & Results:

Two specific indications of the clients' satisfaction include a reference letter and that the Remodelor™ is currently designing a front portico and the master bathroom remodeling, only a year after completing the main project.

The clients write,

We wanted to tell you how excited we are with the finished product. We spent a long time looking for this house in Wisconsin and bought it because of the location and the potential. You have made the potential a fact. Even though living through 3 months of remodeling isn't a whole lot of fun, you made it as painless as it could be. You and your subcontractors were extremely conscientious about property and the neighbors, making sure the site was clean and even the road was cleared of mud. You became a member of the family. We really appreciated that you took the time to clean up every day which made it easier for us to live in the rest of the house. We are in awe of the workmanship. At the beginning we only knew what we didn't want; you and your designers were patient and helped us to achieve what we DID want.

We always look forward to working with such wonderful clients again.



Painstaking craftsmanship was necessary to create a straight line in the extra angled detail.



Note the second handrail mounted to the wall. One of the clients utilizes both handrails when traversing the stairs due to knee and back pain. The new system meets building code, functions for the client, and is a beautiful upgrade to the main entry of the home.



The powder room remains substantially similar to its original layout, but with a large vanity, cabinetry that matches the kitchen, and a new lavatory faucet and lighting to suit the owners style. The upstairs bathroom received a matching vanity and lavatory as well. Sound board and sound batting were installed to minimize the noise from

Specifications of Note:

Kitchen Cabinetry:	Dura Supreme Crestwood, Oxford Panel door with slab drawer. Natural Maple with Ginger Stain accent on island and mouldings, partial-overlay.
Kitchen Tops:	Staron, color: Aspen Brown
Kitchen Sink:	Integral sink
Kitchen Faucet:	Delta Riviera 6115088 in brushed nickel.
Bathroom Faucet:	Moen Castleby T4965 widespread in chrome with porcelain accents
Wood Flooring:	Oak 2 1/4" x 3/4" select & better.
Mudroom Vinyl:	Stainmaster XtraLife S2021
Screened Porch Carpet:	Indoor-outdoor carpet, Key West, Moonstone 557.
Screened Porch Finish:	Vinyl beaded soffit ceiling panels, and vinyl sleeve materials with Screen Tight and Azek.
Windows & patio doors:	Andersen 400-series and Narrow Line patio doors in house; Hayfield vinyl in garage. Solatubes installed in mud room and second floor hallway.