

INJ Home

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 2 APRIL/MAY 2025 \$7.99

FAMILY AFFAIR
IN LIVINGSTON

RINGWOOD COLONIAL
GETS MODERN

OUTDOOR OASIS
IN MANTOLOKING

**BOLD AND
BEAUTIFUL**

VERONA REVIVAL, REVEALED



THE COURAGE TO DO LESS

A Haddonfield home didn't need a big new addition after all, said the designers who got the reno job. But that doesn't mean they were thinking small.

DESIGN by **NEXT LEVEL REMODELING** PHOTOGRAPHY by **KRISTINA KROOT PHOTOGRAPHY** TEXT by **DONNA ROLANDO**

BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER. A HADDONFIELD FAMILY discovered they could preserve the charm of their Cape Cod-style home and still meet the demands of modern life—without a sizable addition.

“We have an old-style, charming Cape Cod, and we love how it looks,” says the homeowner. Yet a slew of designers seemed to threaten all that with plans for a substantial addition. As she recalls, they even proposed “blowing out the whole top of the house” for a colonial effect.

True, the three-bedroom house that had seemed so spacious when purchased in 2016 no longer functioned comfortably now that children had arrived. But did it really need a large addition? Only Next Level had an alternative, which was the complete reconfiguration of the first floor. “We didn’t feel that



just blowing all the money on an addition was the right approach,” says company owner Kyle Baptiste.

Though they were initially hesitant, the couple now loves how the revamp tackled their extensive wish list—including a master bedroom suite, guest and master baths, a spacious kitchen and an open floor plan. Of the project completed in April 2024, the homeowner says: “There’s nothing we would change.”

For a family passionate about entertaining, much acclaim goes to the kitchen, formerly small and U-shaped, but now boasting its first island and a trio of windows to max the view. “The space went from being much darker to light, bright and airy,” says interior designer Brie McQuaide. The open floor plan links kitchen, family room and dining room, which share oak-plank flooring for perfect harmony.

Aesthetically, the kitchen is a land of pleasing contrasts—like gloss Silestone quartz over a red oak island base with woven chairs for a hint of modern. On the perimeter, matte black quartz, resembling natural soapstone, marries with a snow-white brick backsplash. Sharing the look of white cabinetry, the custom hood seems to float on air, adds McQuaide, while a linear island pendant (Visual Comfort) introduces

an antique gild finish. Flanked by two pantry cabinets, a marble-mosaic dry bar with charcoal soapstone counters is handy for entertaining, as is the dining area, which recycles a beloved table.

Elsewhere in the new floor plan, a guest room is born from a closet and designed to be “timeless and bold” and a “wow feature” for guests, says lead interior architect Phoebe DeFries. Here traditional elements like beadboard wainscoting combine with Morris & Co.’s graphic Pure Honeysuckle & Tulip wallpaper, and timeless brass fixtures, like the fluted glass sconces, join modern elements such as a floating ash-wood vanity. For the edgier space desired, Next Level also introduced what DeFries calls a “really cool geometric black tile,” Aliante picket from TileBar.

Next Level tackled that wish list both inside and outside—no sacrifices. “We wanted it to be charming, comfortable and welcoming but also more practical,” says the satisfied homeowner.

“It’s a brand-new home without their buying a brand-new home,” adds Baptiste, noting how this family invested in the project by moving out for the duration of the work. “It’s interesting how you can recreate and essentially reinvent the wheel in the same exact space just by having a vision and taking a couple chances and risks.” ♦



Top: With creative maneuvering, Next Level Remodeling revamped the first floor of this Haddonfield Cape Cod, including a spacious new kitchen. Left: An open floor plan sparks togetherness, keeping family-room activity always in sight. Right: This new powder room is designed to wow guests with its black picket flooring.

