



# FUN, FUNCTIONAL, FAMILY- FRIENDLY:

Transforming a  
Tired Home into a  
Tarrytown Treasure

By MAURI ELBEL | Photography by COLES HAIRSTON



*When it comes to renovating an existing home, people often think bigger is better. But as Royce Flournoy, President of Texas Construction Company, will tell you: it's not always a matter of increasing the square footage of a home to make it more livable. Sometimes, the key to a more functional and inviting space lies in the ability to redesign a home in a way that creates more sensible flow and greater efficiency within its existing parameters.*



**T**oo often people think the only way to realize the value of the renovation is to add square footage, and in reality, the value comes from organizing the space you have well,” says Flournoy.

Case in point: a 1,313-square-foot 1940’s Tarrytown bungalow occupied by a young family with two active boys. After years of live-in wear and tear, the cozy three-bedroom, two-bathroom cottage was in sore need of a refreshing touch. But when the owners decided to embark on a remodel, they knew they wanted a design that gave them more efficient storage solutions and functionality without taking away from the home’s original style.

“It was really important to the clients that the home kept the same feel as before and still blended in with the other homes in the neighborhood,” says Flournoy. “The main objective was to organize the original spaces to become more functional.”

With FAB Architecture commissioned for the top-to-bottom home renovation, which included everything from creating continuity and flow in the home to selecting new interior furnishings, and Texas Construction Company contracted to transform the new designs into reality, the end result is a refreshed and happy home that’s maintained its original charm.

“The home had been a rental house so it was really tired,” says Pam Chandler, Designer/Architect at FAB Architecture. “It needed a whole new life breathed back into it. We wanted to help the family still have a great style, but in a real, livable, family-friendly way.”

Before, the home’s in-between areas were riddled with clutter. But because of space limitations, the designers knew basic functions such as utilities, storage and closets needed to remain in the same place. By simply cleaning up corridors and opening up the flow between the rooms, even heavy-function areas such as the washer/dryer utility area between the master and front bedroom now have a more concealed and clean feel.

“This is one of the things FAB Architecture did very well – they organized the spaces and used built-ins to streamline, which allowed everything to flow a little better,” Flournoy says. “Built-in cabinets were used a lot in this project to get as much use out of the space as possible. With closets, you are often very limited, but cabinets give you the ability to think through the design of the shelving units to maximize flexibility and storage.”

Not unusual for houses built during this time period, this bungalow had a closed-off kitchen with an L-shaped countertop that isolated the room from the rest of the house. To solve the dated design flaw that had become a source of frustration for its modern-day homeowners, Chandler wanted to create flow and functionality without changing the layout of the home.

“The renovation plans for this house were a bit of a no-brainer,” Chandler says. “The clients weren’t looking for any heroic changes to the original home – they just needed it to function better and wanted to bring it up to a more current way of living.”

Removing the wall previously separating the kitchen and dining areas was the biggest revision to the original floor plan, a move that created openness and fluidity in the home without changing its layout. A central island was added to further define the space and serve as an essential transition into the dining area, but it also remains a functional element of the kitchen. A wall of built-in kirfed doors, drawers and cabinets painted in



the same gray (Gunmetal by Benjamin Moore) as the home's exterior are an appealing and super-efficient reach-in storage solution to the previously dated kitchen.

"For a small kitchen, it now functions really well," Chandler says. "The island serves as a place for the kids to sit and eat breakfast, but it is also cooking central for the chef. Before, the base and upper cabinets left a lot of life living on the counter. There was nowhere for anything to go."

The new design included an extension of the home's living space with a new back deck and covered roof. Before, the rear of

the house was defined by a poorly integrated bedroom addition with a single sloped shed roof, but the new design integrated the original architecture by adding a covered porch to create a more cohesive gabled end.

"Before, it was an expanse of deck that didn't create a very nice place to be," Chandler says. "Footprint wise, we actually made the deck smaller, but it brought it to an appropriate scale for the house. Now, it feels natural, and the new design allowed us to tie the deck into the existing roof to feel like it had always been there."



Similarly, the expressed shed ceiling in the master bedroom was modified to a gable referencing the more traditional style of the original house. The master's built-in shelves and desk in front of white-paned windows provide the ideal vantage point to the inviting and cozy backyard porch just beyond.

Without deviating from the home's original lines, FAB Architecture was able to modernize an old home into a much more livable space fitting for a young family. But it was the finishing touches – the muted color palette of grays balanced with crisp white trim used throughout its interior and exterior,

updated fixtures, and a risky yet brilliant decision to paint the original wood floors a bright chartreuse – which breathed an element of happiness back into the home.

"The home straddles the line between being relaxed and having a sophistication that ties the entire house all together," Chandler says. "The exterior walls are the same Gunmetal gray we used on the kitchen cabinets so there is a consistent hand."

Using the same color palette for both the interior and exterior of the house provides a continuity of flavor throughout the home that leaves room for boldness. Chandler capitalized



on color punch when it came to the floors – a daring move she says creates a whimsical touch that plays against the home’s neutral gray palette and remains a central conversation piece for everyone who enters the home. Chandler chose relaxed furnishings that would withstand wear-and-tear from children such as low-maintenance furniture, custom-made vinyl rugs in the master and living areas, and low-brow materials like white burlap drapes – all which exude elegance and style while remaining easy-going and family-friendly. From the bungalow’s redesigned, streamlined spaces to its casual and stylish interior touches, there is a newly-revived spirit in the home that speaks the same language of the family and the neighborhood.

“It was very gratifying to take a tired house which had had lots of living-in and abuse, and get to bring a new life to it,” Chandler says. “The remodel did a lot for this family and a lot for this neighborhood – it allows this home to have so much more longevity for years to come.” ❖

**ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN** FAB Architecture | 512.469.0775  
Fabarchitecture.com

**BUILDER** Texas Construction Company | 512.451.8050  
Txconstruct.com