



This overall view of the remodeling project at the Middletown home of the McTague family reveals a modern open plan with good flow on the first floor. Facing page: The vintage, reclaimed mantel inspired designers to place a beam in the new opening of the renovation.



# House Rejuvenation

## New Life Emerges In Outdated Spaces



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**WHEN THE McTAGUES FOUND THEIR NEW HOME IN THE MIDDLETOWN VALLEY THEY WERE IMMEDIATELY ATTRACTED TO THE LOCATION—A QUIET NEIGHBORHOOD WITH GENEROUS VIEWS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.** What the McTagues didn't love, however, was the outdated 1990s interior. To her, the first floor spaces "felt confining, dark, and just didn't flow well."

She saw that the existing interior didn't maximize the best architectural features of the house—a light-filled sunroom and an amazing stone fireplace. The McTagues had trouble seeing the potential of their new home and needed a bit of vision to help them uncover it.

We first met with the McTagues to review their options for a first floor remodel just before they purchased their home. We walked through the rooms, discussing how to use the spaces. For a busy family of four, livability was a key element in the design. Emma said she wanted to banish

the layout and transform the kitchen/sunroom into a modern open plan with good flow to serve as the first floor hub. She envisioned the new space to be family-friendly but also a spot for entertaining. We all agreed that removing the wall (or a portion of the wall) between the sunroom



The new kitchen contains two islands, one for prepping and one for stool seating, with abundant storage beneath. Right: A look at the outdated space before renovation.

and kitchen provided great potential for an open space. The McTagues listed their wishes for the kitchen; we reviewed the budget (a must-have to

a portion of the sunroom wall created a circular flow with easy access to all areas on the main floor. Taking it one step further, we altered the cased



## ALL THE FINISHES ARE FAMILY-FRIENDLY WITH EASY-TO-CLEAN QUARTZ COUNTER TOPS, REFINISHED WOOD FLOORS AND DURABLE PAINTED CABINETS.

start a remodel project) and began the design process.

The first step is always the layout. We took the footprint of the kitchen/sunroom and by sketching layouts quickly realized that removing

opening from the kitchen to the dining room, making the opening a bit wider and taller to the ceiling. Later, during construction, we realized this slight alteration in a doorway instantly created a visual and physical

connection between the dining room and kitchen. It was a small change with a big impact.

With the McTagues' wish list in hand, we started the kitchen design. Fortunately, two islands—one for prepping and one for stool seating—fit perfectly in the long space. Kitchen islands are all about function with counters for cooking prep space and abundant storage underneath. We tucked appliances along the perimeter walls and even found space for a large cabinet-style pantry.





**You can never have enough seating, especially when entertaining. This island with its stools is perfect for sitting down to breakfast or accommodating an overflow of guests who always seem to gather in the kitchen.**

Aesthetically we all agreed the new kitchen had to visually connect to the surrounding first floor rooms. Emma loved the idea of using multiple mediums—wood, marble and metal. We took cues from the stone fireplace for a color palette of warm gray, gray-blue and white linen. The vintage, reclaimed mantel inspired us to place a beam in the new opening between the sunroom and kitchen. Emma wanted the kitchen to feel timeless, not one style or another. Once we settled on the overall look, the design details and finish selections fell into place. All the finishes are family-friendly with easy-to-clean quartz counter tops,

refinished wood floors and durable painted cabinets. Industrial pendant lights were paired with traditional cabinetry details, a stunning stainless-steel hood and chrome fixtures to give the space an eclectic mix of elements.

### FORMING A TEAM

This renovation came at the busiest time of the McTagues' lives—a relocation, a new job and children transitioning to new schools. They were looking for a team to seamlessly move them through the design and construction phases. As interior designers in the remodeling field, we cultivate relationships with trusted

## Tips to Surviving Construction



It's easy to get excited about a home remodeling project. But after a few weeks (and maybe months) of people in your house, dust everywhere, noise, etc., reality can set in. Here are a few tips to stay sane while you are waiting for your dream space to finish:

- Take before photos—something to look at as you go through the process to see the progress being made.
- Have your contractor set up a temporary kitchen in the garage, basement or spare room.
- Use your outdoor space—if the weather is nice, your outdoor space is a quiet retreat. We recommend kitchen remodels during the summer months, so you can always use the grill to cook meals.
- Have a room in the house as a refuge. Often this is the bedroom or maybe a basement space. You need a relaxing spot to recharge.
- Hopefully your contractor or interior designer will tell you it's not going to be a simple process, so be patient. It will all pay off in the end with a lovely new space.



A bank of windows in the dining area lets in plenty of sunlight as well as providing a spectacular view of the Middletown Valley.

carpenters, contractors and builders. We know that a positive general contractor/client partnership is one of the most important elements for a successful remodeling project. Thus we were able to recommend Pete Ring of Lighthouse Craftsman, a perfect match for the project.

Here is a snapshot of how he worked with the McTagues.

- Before construction started, he met with the owners a number of times just to review the construction process itself.
- All of us met for planning meetings to discuss the design. He was aware when to call us and discuss the construction design details.
- A detailed project map was provided so the McTagues could plan their schedules and knew what to expect each day.
- His team was not intrusive. Workers arrived and left at the same time every day so the McTagues could plan for family time.

“The design-to-construction process was remarkably easy for a complex project,” Emma says. “We all just co-habited in our work zone. And when your contractor gives you a gift of eggs from his flock you know it’s a good partnership.”

With a clear vision and smart design plan you can discover new possibilities for your outdated spaces. After an extensive three months-plus

remodeling project, the McTagues are thrilled with their new home.

“The kitchen/sunroom remodel has completely transformed our home,” Emma adds. “We love the functionality of the layout with two islands, two sinks, the appliance garage and even the pot filler. The custom cabinetry is elegant and we appreciate all the cabinet details. This light filled space is better than we ever imagined and was worth all the effort. **FM**”

***Tuscan Blue Design***

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