



Better, NOT Bigger

A targeted remodel made this vintage Lyon Village home more functional without adding square footage.

BY NIGEL F. MAYNARD | PHOTOS BY NOVA SOUL IMAGERY



Arlington residents Kristen and Anthony Kandah always loved the character and charm of older homes. So when the time came for them to renovate their 1920s Craftsman bungalow in Lyon Village, a major expansion was out of the question. Instead, they decided on a targeted, multiphase makeover to keep the parts that worked while improving the home's shortcomings.

The idea of renovating wasn't even on the couple's radar when they bought the 2,155-square-foot house in 2016. "We were very grateful to just be able to get into Lyon Village," Kristen says. "[The house] had been redone a little bit by another builder before we bought it. It felt like a very good starter home."

Three years later, they moved to Columbus, Ohio, for work (both are in technology sales for Cisco Systems), renting out the Arlington house in their absence. The place they bought in Ohio opened their eyes to a different way of

living and a different kind of space.

"[It] was a beautifully restored 19th-century Victorian home," Kristen says. "We got accustomed to what a very high-end renovation felt like. So when we came back to Lyon Village two years later, we felt like our home needed some sprucing up. We wanted to keep the historical aspect of it, but we also wanted to make it the best fit for our family."

Situated on a 7,500-square-foot property with mature landscaping, the house was nicely proportioned to its lot, but the interior had drawbacks. "It had a lot of dead space and was kind of boxy, and the rooms were cut off from each other," Kristen says. "We also had kind of a useless front sitting room that we didn't really know what to do with."

"We also addressed the crawl space and finished what was a really scary little dungeon in their basement," Winn says.

The Phase 1 updates were unsexy, but sorely needed. In addition to shortening up the home's essential systems, other changes involved spatial improvements to the first floor and the exterior.

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The former front parlor (left) is now a dining room that adjoins the kitchen.

says CEO and founder Michael Winn. This included what he calls "foundational things," such as replacing most of the electrical work, installing all-new plumbing systems and making behind-the-wall improvements, such as insulation and air sealing.

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"We took down some walls to open up the floor plan," Winn explains. "There was an awkward entry room

[just inside the front door] that wasn't functional at all. With the locations of the doors and the stairs, it wasn't really a usable space."

Shifting the front door over to one side allowed the design team to carve out a small foyer and convert that awkward parlor into a proper dining room. They removed a wall that had previously closed off the kitchen to create an open plan with a large island and a natural flow between the kitchen and dining areas.

Recognizing the practical needs of a family with young boys (now ages 4 and 9) and a dog, they also added a mud room and a side entry to the house.

On the exterior, Winn's team re-

placed the trim, introduced new fiber cement siding (changing the facade from tan to slate blue) and fixed the rotting and sagging front porch. In the process, they traded the round Doric columns that had previously held up the porch for square, tapered columns, which are more in keeping with the home's architectural style. Phase 1 was completed in August of 2021.

Phase 2, which began in the summer of 2024, "was really about doing the upstairs and trying to get more functional bedrooms," Kristen says. The existing second level had a primary bedroom with an en-suite bath, a second bedroom shared by the their two sons, a guest room and a tiny hall bathroom.

"I felt bad every time guests came over," she says. "They had to share a bathroom with my two young boys."

Winn reorganized the bathrooms to create a more efficient layout, and even managed to add a third bathroom to the guest suite by repurposing a tiny closet. "We shoehorned the bathroom into this front bedroom where I think most people would say there's no way you're gonna get a bathroom in here," he says.

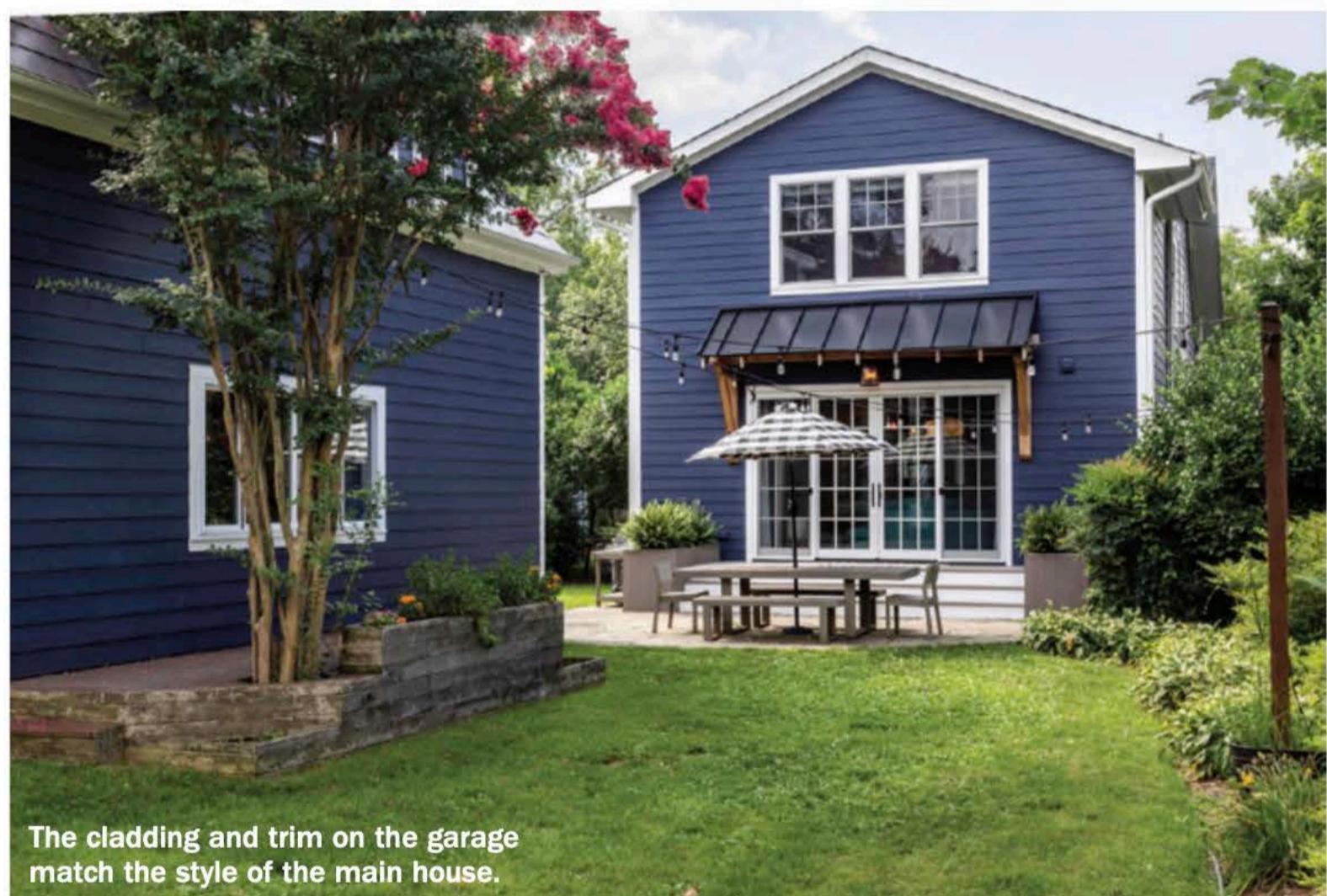
Other improvements included sprucing up the Kandahs' detached garage with new siding and architectural detailing to match the main house. A light-filled accessory dwelling unit (ADU) above the garage contains a

better, not bigger



An efficiency unit above the garage serves as a guest cottage.

An updated second floor bathroom with a skylight



The cladding and trim on the garage match the style of the main house.

small bathroom, sleeping quarters and a kitchenette, serving as a guest cottage for visitors.

Post glow-up, the residence reads as a prettier and more functional version of its former self. But it's not any bigger.

The Kandahs say they're happy with their decision to maintain the proportions and character of their vintage bungalow instead of tearing it down or tacking on a massive addition, which would have resulted in less yard space.

"We have a pretty good size lot," Kristen says, "and our house is not on the whole lot, so we've got a nice size backyard for the kids to play. The inside of it is just as serene as it can be

for a family with two little boys. I love all the light, and I love the openness. No matter where I am downstairs, I can see where the kids are playing, inside or out." ■

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