



Rehab preserves era's stylistic character

By the time the homeowners bought the property from an investment group, Dan McKeithen, owner of Provenance Properties in Dallas was already 20 percent into the custom reconstruction of the historical property.

Built in 1925 by two prominent Dallas architects, Marion Fooshee and James Cheek, the home's historical value and beauty made the job a prime candidate for McKeithen. Years of wear and tear and additions put on took its toll on the home.

"The home has an eclectic, Spanish-revival style with a unique courtyard in the front of the home," McKeithen says. "The clients wanted a completely renovated space that would preserve the original architectural character while meeting the space planning and functional requirements of today's families," McKeithen says.

The project's scope of work included a restoration of the exterior and a 3,500-square-foot addition to the back of the home to open the kitchen and living room areas, expand the master suite and secondary bathrooms and create an outdoor living area.

"The first challenge was we had to restore the front exterior from the work the previous owners did," McKeithen says. "They added on to the home, but they obscured the original detail in the process, and it was our job to bring that back."

Unlike the traditional wood frame that most homes are built, this home was built with solid masonry walls covered in plaster and stucco. "This was especially hard to work

with in terms of replacing electrical, mechanical, plumbing and insulation components," McKeithen says.

For the addition off the back of the house, McKeithen had to apply new foundation for the extra space and second-floor framing. As they did this, they discovered that over time, settlement of the original structure caused a three-quarter-inch variation from the east and west sides of the home.

McKeithen estimates that 90 percent of the materials used in the project were customized to fit the home. "We used stock materials that were similar to the original materials and then customized them to fit the aesthetic of the home," he explains.

This included the doors and windows, which were customized to fit the bull-nosed corners of the original design, and custom milled rounded base boards. He converted an old fountain into a sink and added custom tile detailing on the stairs.

The adventure of working with historical homes and the excitement that comes with every new project is what manifests McKeithen's love for his work. "When I preserve historical homes, I feel as if I am preserving the character that the community was built on," he says.

The greatest reward for the homeowners was that now they own a piece of history that fits their modern-day lifestyles. McKeithen's reward is to have restored one of Dallas' finest. "My hope is that home will be there for the next century." —Morgan Zenner

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