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Aging in Place Renovation

Transitioning a 1960s bungalow into a home for the future **BY LINDA MAZUR**



When empty nesters Kate and David Williams purchased the quaint 1,000-square-foot bungalow in York Region, they chose it for the location, which is close to all amenities: the highway, the hospital where Kate works, and the schools for their then young children. Of equal importance was the beautifully large mature lot the house was situated on. Over the years, they raised their family in this home and filled it with many great treasured memories.

THE WAKEUP CALL

Three years ago, Kate's ailing father came to live with the family. As they cared for him, it quickly became

apparent that the small three-bedroom bungalow, with its narrow hallway and tiny bathroom, was simply not conducive to caring for the elderly. This started them thinking and planning for their own future.

"We love our house and want to remain here well after our retirement. And, should the need arise, we want to be able to care for David's parents as well," says Kate. So the decision was made to renovate the small bungalow to create a home that works for their needs, now and in the future.

Kate and David came to us with the desire to renovate their home to better facilitate the needs of the elderly and, if necessary, to accommodate a wheel chair. They

also wanted us to create a modern loft-like metropolitan feel to the house, while maintaining the charm and relaxed feel of the country.

We redesigned the three-bedroom, 1,000-square-foot bungalow, with its small L-shaped living room/dining room combination and tiny single bathroom, as a bright open-concept, large single-bedroom home with a large master ensuite and an abundance of well-utilized storage space.

PHASE ONE

Because we decided not to relocate the staircase with access to the lower level, the kitchen remained where it was originally. However, we did renovate the small, poorly laid out, dark space into a bright, modern galley kitchen. The original three-piece bathroom was converted to an entrance closet and powder room.

We designed the space with a hallway that is now over four feet wide, with 36-inch-wide doorways

and seamless floor transitions. These dimensions will easily accommodate a wheelchair should the need ever arise.

In the open and airy large master bedroom, we created abundant closet space and a luxurious yet understated master bathroom. The large seamless walk-in shower is barrier-free, without a curb. And, although the beautiful soaker tub is not necessarily handicap-accessible, it was on Kate and David's current wish list. The bathroom was designed for today, with the possible needs of the future in mind.

PHASE TWO

The lower level, with its lovely walk-out to the beautiful backyard, became phase two of the renovation. A large bedroom, three-piece bathroom, living room, and office space for David were added here, basically creating a secondary living space.

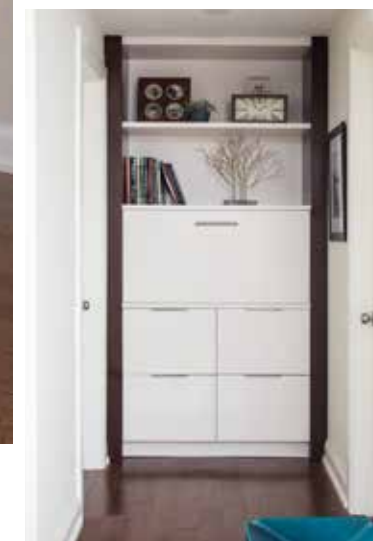
The thought behind this was to create another living area should

David's parents need to move in. If so, the parents would live upstairs and Kate and David would have the lower level for themselves.

Another option is if Kate and David require any assistance in their senior years, the lower level would provide living space for a caregiver, hopefully avoiding a transition to an assisted-living residence. For now, it's a beautiful family room, office and guest room, with a great view of Kate's stunning, well-loved gardens.

This quaint 1960s bungalow, full of history and memories, has become a new home for Kate and David to enjoy, designed for comfortable, contemporary living now and for many years to come. ■

Designer Linda Mazur is the Principal Designer of Linda Mazur Design Group. With over a decade of experience the multi-disciplinary interior design firm provides innovative interior renovations and full-scale build projects that reflect timeless style and optimal functionality. Servicing Toronto, the GTA, and surrounding areas. lindamazurdesign.com @LindaMazurGroup



Photography, Stephani Buchman Photography