

Exterior Details Not Forgotten

Outside appearance was as important as the interior space in this room addition

Room additions generally are planned with emphasis on expanding interior space, and this was certainly the case when a Washington, D.C., family added to their home in anticipation of a growing family. But exterior appearance and practicality were not ignored in the process.

The project, carried out by Oaken Hammer contractors of Silver Spring, Md., and designed by architect Robert Reinhardt of Washington, D.C., illustrates that interior and exterior concerns are not mutually exclusive.

Initial discussions centered on altering a garage behind the house into living space, but it was discovered that zoning restrictions prohibited such a plan. "The footprint was determined by zoning," Reinhardt said, "The only place we could go was to the side. And then we could only go out a little over nine feet."

Addition faces street

The result was that the new addition would face the street, and appearance became an even more important factor. Also, the owners, both busy attorneys, stressed their desire for a low-maintenance exterior.

Since the home's existing stucco finish was in serviceable condition, Reinhardt considered aluminum siding for the addition, because he had a hunch that he could find a color to match the stucco. His clients, he felt, would appreciate not having to repaint the original home to match the new siding.

A match was found, and it was so close that the paint needed for touch-up work on the stucco was mixed according to the formula used for the aluminum siding, said Oaken Hammer's Cynthia Milloy. Contributing to the overall appearance were corrosion-resistant aluminum nails with the heads colored to match the siding, she added.



Exterior appearance as well as interior space was carefully considered when this room addition to a Washington, D.C., home was planned. Aluminum siding that closely matched the existing stucco made it unnecessary to re-paint the original house. The siding was extended midway across the front porch to tie in the addition.

Another reason for the selection of aluminum siding was that it was available in a smooth texture, Reinhardt said. "I didn't want simulated woodgrain, and only one kind of vinyl I looked at had a smooth finish," he said.

Siding integrates addition

To tie in the addition, it was extended about four feet in front of the existing structure and the siding was extended midway across the front porch. That gave the homeowners a new foyer, with an added closet on one side and shelf storage on the other. The front door is now at the center of the house rather than at the side.

Although the front of the home looks more attractive as a result of the renovation, the side addition captures the most attention. As a means

of downplaying the mass at the side, it was divided near the top with a mock gable end. Double four-inch aluminum-siding panels were specified for the space between the mock gable end and the real gable end. The overall illusion is of one structure astride another. "It's a playful effect that works well," according to Reinhardt.

Windows clad in dark-brown aluminum were specified to match the existing windows. However, aluminum rainware blends with the siding color.

"I didn't want a tacked-on appearance," Reinhardt said. "I used a double return on the gutters to simulate cornice molding. Even the downspout clips are unobtrusive."

The unusual features of the exterior caused few problems during construction, according to Cynthia

As a means of downplaying the mass at the side of the addition, it was divided near the top with a mock gable. (below). Two half-round windows, centered beneath the peaks, contribute further to the definition. Adding space for a growing family was the initial goal of the owners of the home (shown before the addition, right). Low maintenance and appearance were just as important, however.



Milloy. "If you have a clear knowledge, there are always ways," she said. "Really, the job wasn't as complicated as it might seem."

It's always been there

Part of Reinhardt's goal was to "make everything look like it's always been there". Practicality counted, too. Insulated glass was used, and insulation was installed beneath the aluminum siding and over the crawl space. "The addition acts as a weather buffer," he said. "Their heating bills are actually lower."

Far more significant, however, is the gain in living space. By shifting an office to the second story of the addition, a nursery was created. Downstairs, the addition afforded the owners a dining area and a family room. They also seized the opportunity to enlarge closet space throughout the house.

Having completed substantial remodeling work on his own home, Reinhardt always kept in mind an unasked question he knew his clients contemplated: "Is it worth it?"

"I don't want to end up with the most expensive house in the neighborhood, and neither do they," he said. "Their house is still far from that, but it's a much better one than they started with." **QR**

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