



Photos courtesy of Home Fronts News

A flagstone path from house to pool was removed in favor of a breezeway which linked the main house and the renovated pool house.

more to the assignment than meets the eye, noted Steve Kirstein, a principal with design/build firm BOWA Builders, Inc.

"The grade was uneven, yet we were required to put in new lines for gas, electric and water as well as an independent sewer system."

Reworking the entire rear landscaping plan was also on the agenda. A flagstone path direct from house to pool was removed in favor of a new route incorporating the proposed outbuilding and linking breezeway.

The project's most ambitious requirement was designing a seamless architectural complement to the 70-year-old main house.

Since none of the original blueprints existed, extracting specifications for essential details meant recreating elevations from scratch.

Dormers, columns, cornice treatments, pilasters and beaded siding were all painstakingly measured in order to create usable

Estate's Pool House Converts for Space

At a glance, a spacious 1930s Colonial revival-styled manor house on 3 acres in Potomac would seem to have everything a family with 3 small children could want. Six spacious bedrooms, a den, family room, a sunroom — plus a pool with a small, functional pool house.

But after occupying for a few years, Mimi Harris began to see how the home failed to meet evolving needs.

"I suppose it all started when we

realized we didn't have room for indoor entertainment and exercise areas," Harris recalls. "The basement was windowless and tiny — and frankly the rest of the house didn't retrofit very easily."

"Plus, we wanted rooms where my parents could enjoy privacy when visiting. That was when we began to think about converting the old pool house into a kind of all-purpose outbuilding with private guest quarters."

Not surprisingly, there was

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schematics and working drawings.

And, despite such controls, the challenging terrain meant that some elements of the breezeway had to wait until the new structure was almost completed.

Sited for seclusion, the new structure provides all the features of a private home. Exiting from the rear parking area, one walks under the breezeway to a front door and enters a spacious foyer.

A right turn from the foyer takes visitors to an expansive great room replete with vaulted ceiling, stone hearth and double sets of French doors.

Three sets of French doors along the rear elevation provide functional poolside entrance to, respectively, the great room, a dining room and a pool-specific suite fitted out with "his" and "her" changing areas, a full bath, a kitchenette and a laundry.

Two well-appointed upstairs bedrooms, each with private bath, offer views of the pool and grounds. A home theater, exercise room and third guest room with windowed egress are among the lower level features.

To assure a harmonious roof line, the main house was stripped of its original shingles and re-done in a cedar shake specified for the breezeway and the new outbuilding.

A search through a variety of resources produced brick perfectly matched to materials used in the main house.

A Texas outfit was found to forge the great room fireplace, a custom designed, cast stone product. A slightly bumped out

floor-to-ceiling chimney flanked by two sets of divided light mirrored doors gives vertical accents to a multi-level vaulted ceiling. This, in turn, is balanced by a wrought iron chandelier.

Faux painting — in the great room, master bedroom and even the pine paneled den — pick-up

subtle textures in well-chosen fabrics.

Outside, the breezeway links old to new, featuring a bead-board, tongue-and-groove ceiling and hand-routed columns.

Copper-roofed bump-outs intimate this architectural style's early American antecedents.

The new great room in this updated Potomac estate features a vaulted ceiling, faux painting, stone hearth and double sets of French doors.

