



NARI RotY Awards 2026

Category: Residential Historical

Renovation/Restoration \$250,000 and Over

Project: Restoring the Spirit, Reimagining the Future

Project Introduction

This 1939 Colonial had been neglected over the years, both inside and out, with a compartmentalized layout that no longer supported the accessibility, connection, or flexibility envisioned for the homeowners' forever home.

The comprehensive renovation and 1,036-square-foot addition reimagined the home for modern living while restoring the character that made the original house special. Rather than simply replicating the past, the design drew inspiration from the warmth and nostalgia of a grandmother's home—layering traditional details with unexpected color, pattern, and whimsy to reflect the homeowners' personalities.

New openings, trim, windows, built-ins, warm wood tones, lighting, and layered materials bridge the Colonial architecture with a fresh perspective. The expanded plan introduces accessible main-level living, connected gathering spaces, and practical support areas while remaining respectful of the original home's scale and architectural bones.

The result is a warm, cohesive home that feels as though it has always belonged—honoring its history while giving it new life, new purpose, and a future designed to be enjoyed for generations.





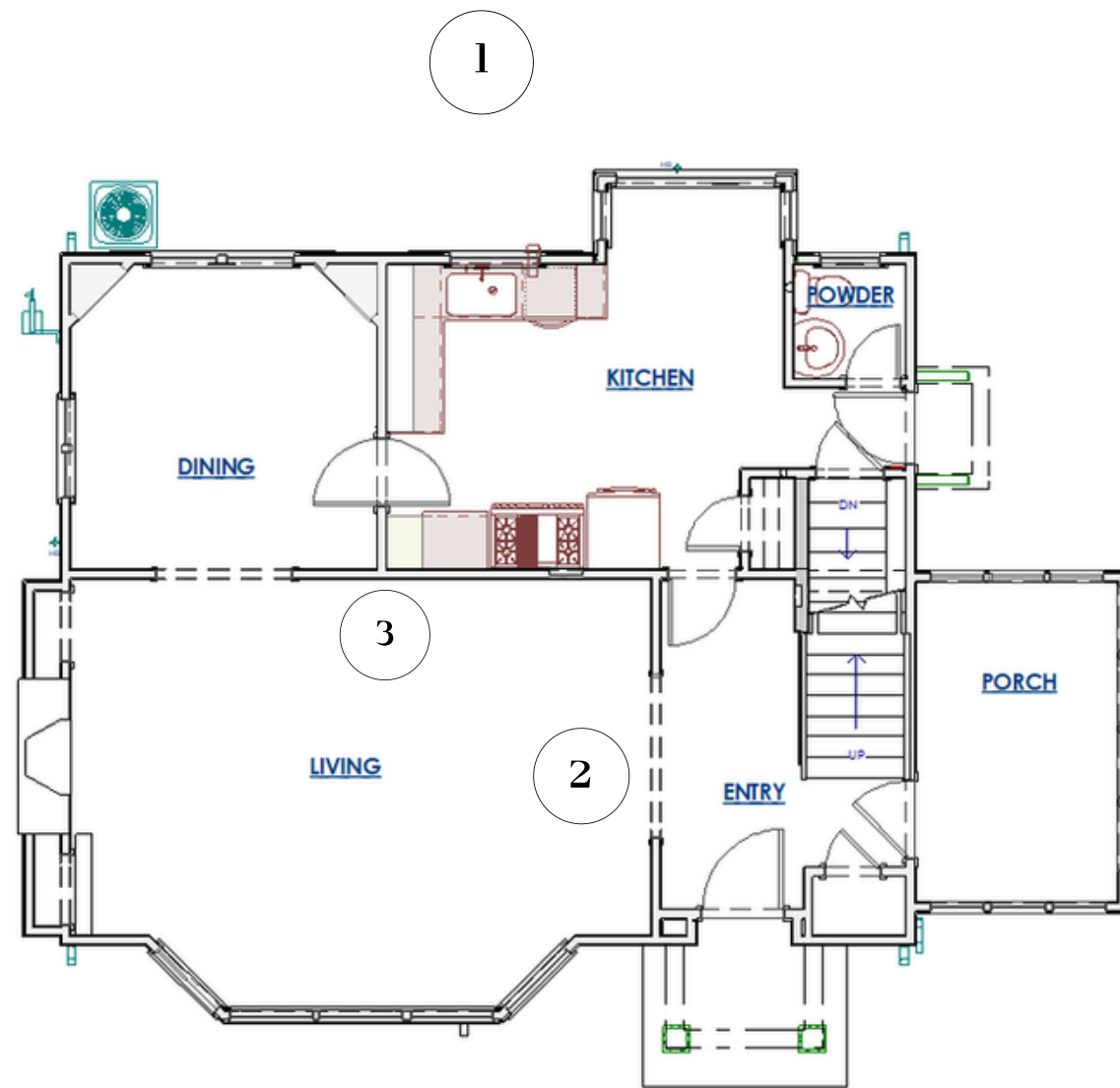
Client Goals & Preservation Objectives

- Adapt the compartmentalized 1939 Colonial for retirement, aging in place, multigenerational gatherings, and modern-day living.
- Introduce a main-level primary suite, accessible bath, laundry, connected gathering areas, and essential support spaces through a comprehensive renovation and 1,036-square-foot addition.
- Improve accessibility, circulation, storage, and everyday function without diminishing the residential character of the original home.
- Preserve the home's Colonial identity while bringing a fresh perspective to its style and function.
- Ensure that new spaces, architectural details, and materials feel naturally connected to the original house.

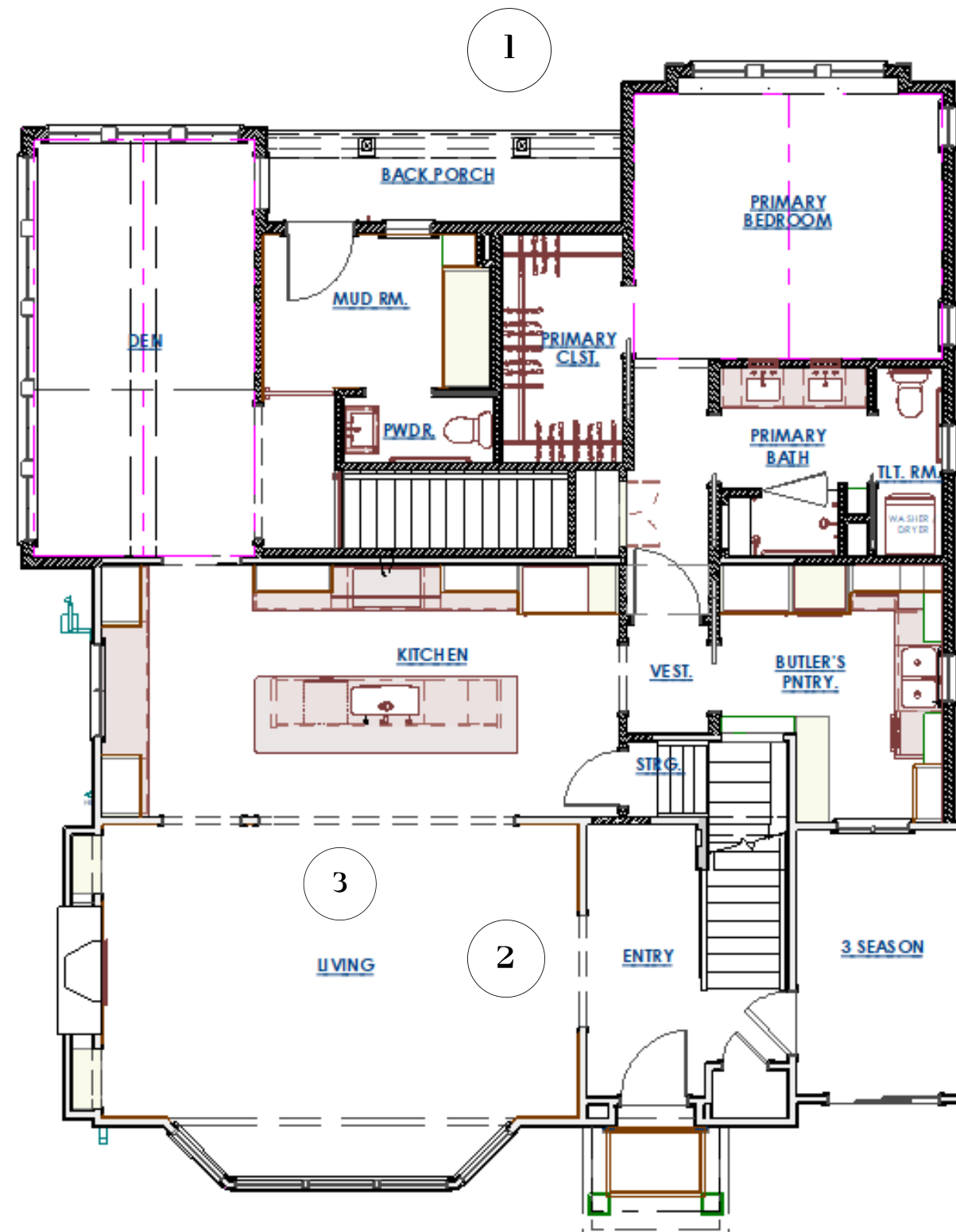
Project Constraints

- The substantial addition and remodeled main level had to accommodate an extensive new program without overwhelming the scale or character of the 1939 Colonial.
- Removing a major load-bearing wall required careful structural planning while creating a more connected kitchen and living core.
- Accessibility improvements and modern service spaces needed to be integrated without appearing visibly specialized or out of character.
- New openings, trim, windows, built-ins, lighting, and materials had to create a cohesive transition between the original house and the addition.

Floor Plan Transformations



Before Floor Plan

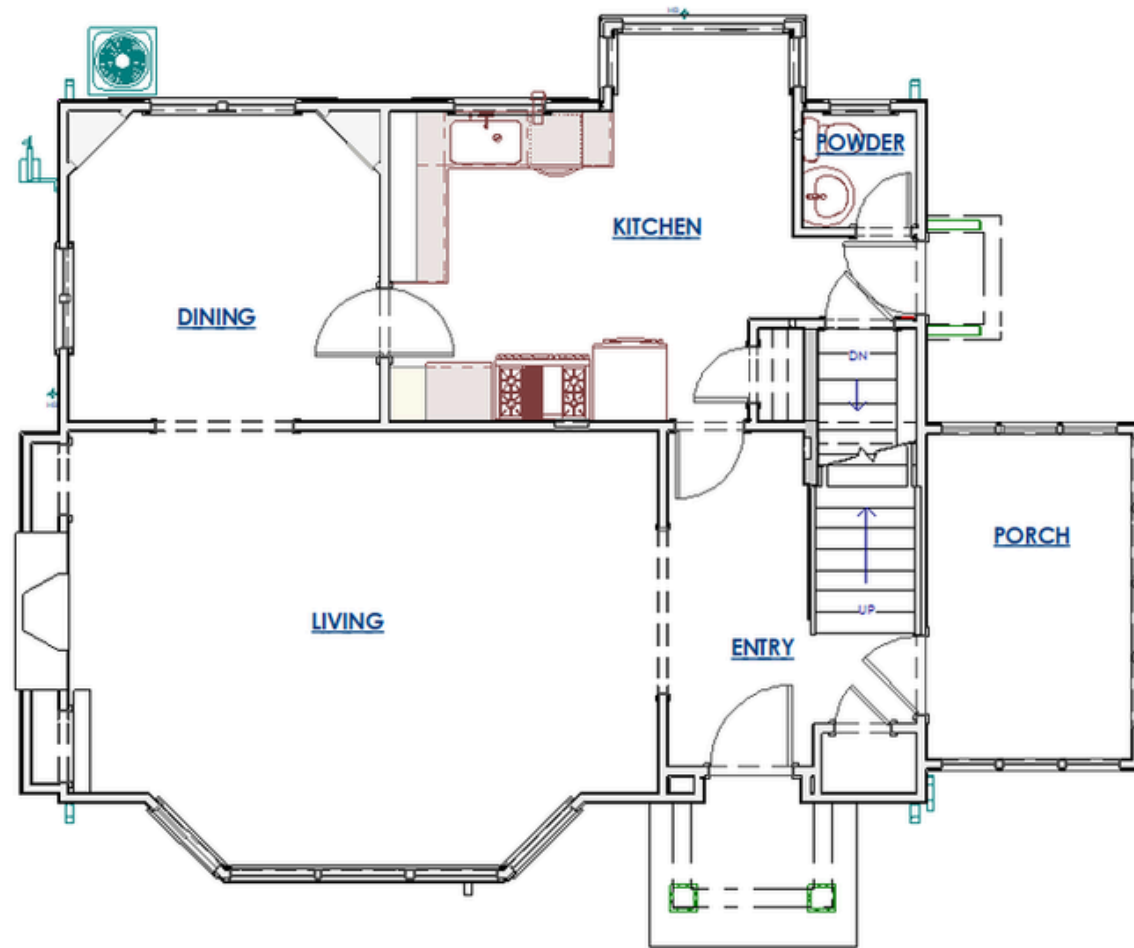


After Floor Plan

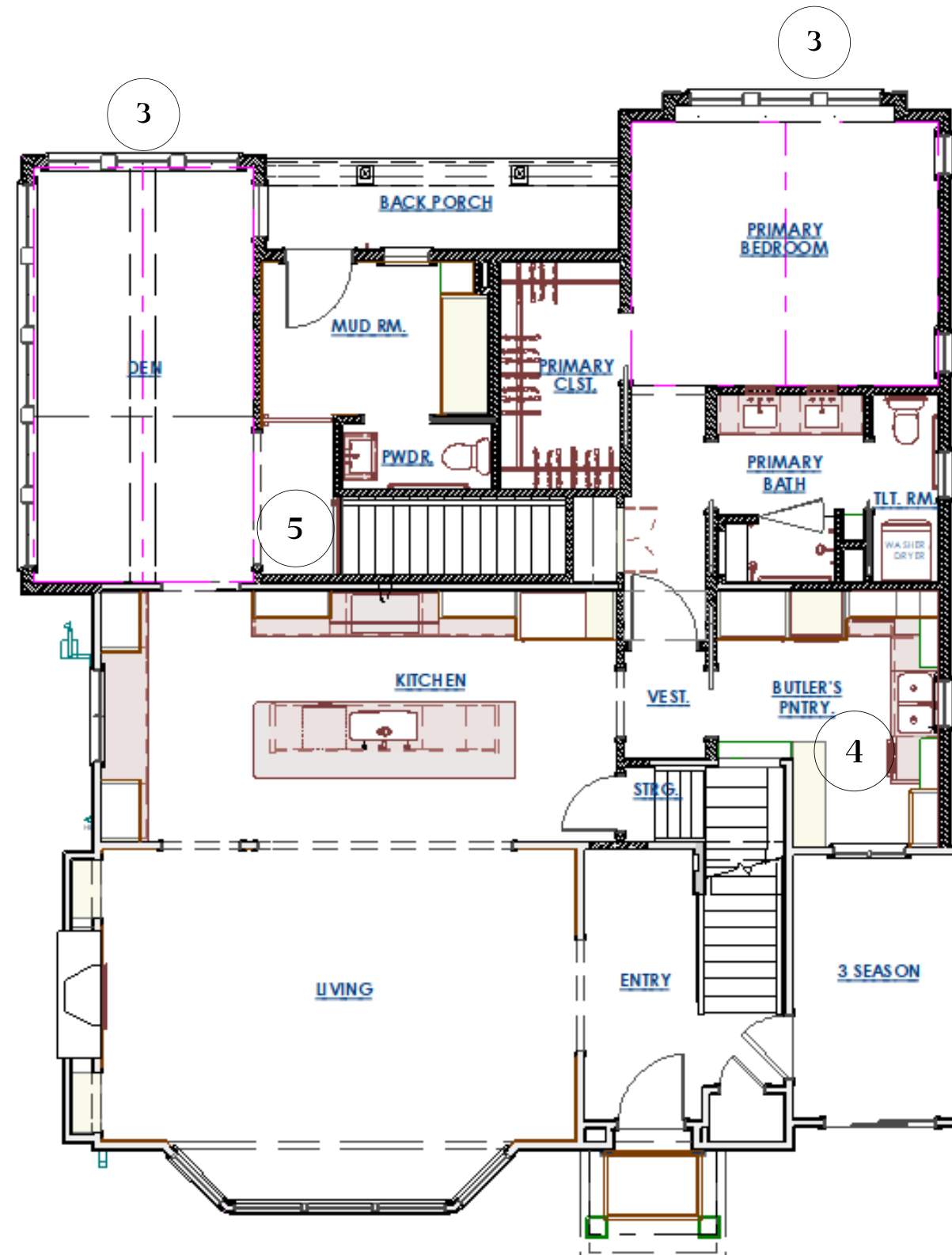
Design Solutions

1. **Expanding Without Erasing the Original Plan:** The 1,036-square-foot addition concentrates the new primary suite, accessible bath, laundry, mudroom, den, and scullery around the original main level.
2. The front entry, living room, central stair, and three-season porch remain recognizable, preserving the house's established organization and character.
3. **Creating Connection Within the Historic Framework:** Removing the major load-bearing wall between the kitchen and living room transformed the compartmentalized center of the home. The expanded opening connects the original living room with a larger kitchen while allowing each space to retain its own identity within the Colonial plan.

Floor Plan Transformations



Before Floor Plan



After Floor Plan

Design Solutions

- 3. Two Purposeful Wings:** One side of the addition creates the private primary suite; the other introduces a mudroom and flexible sunroom for daily life and large family gatherings.
- 4. Discreet Kitchen Support:** A previously underused area was transformed into a scullery beside the expanded kitchen. Preparation, cleanup, appliances, and storage are contained within this secondary workspace, keeping service functions from visually overtaking the kitchen and surrounding living areas.
- 5. Modern Access, Carefully Integrated:** The central stair configuration was redesigned to improve basement circulation and make bicycle storage easier to access. Wider doorways were incorporated throughout the renovated plan to support long-term accessibility without dominating the home's residential character.

A Clear Welcoming Arrival

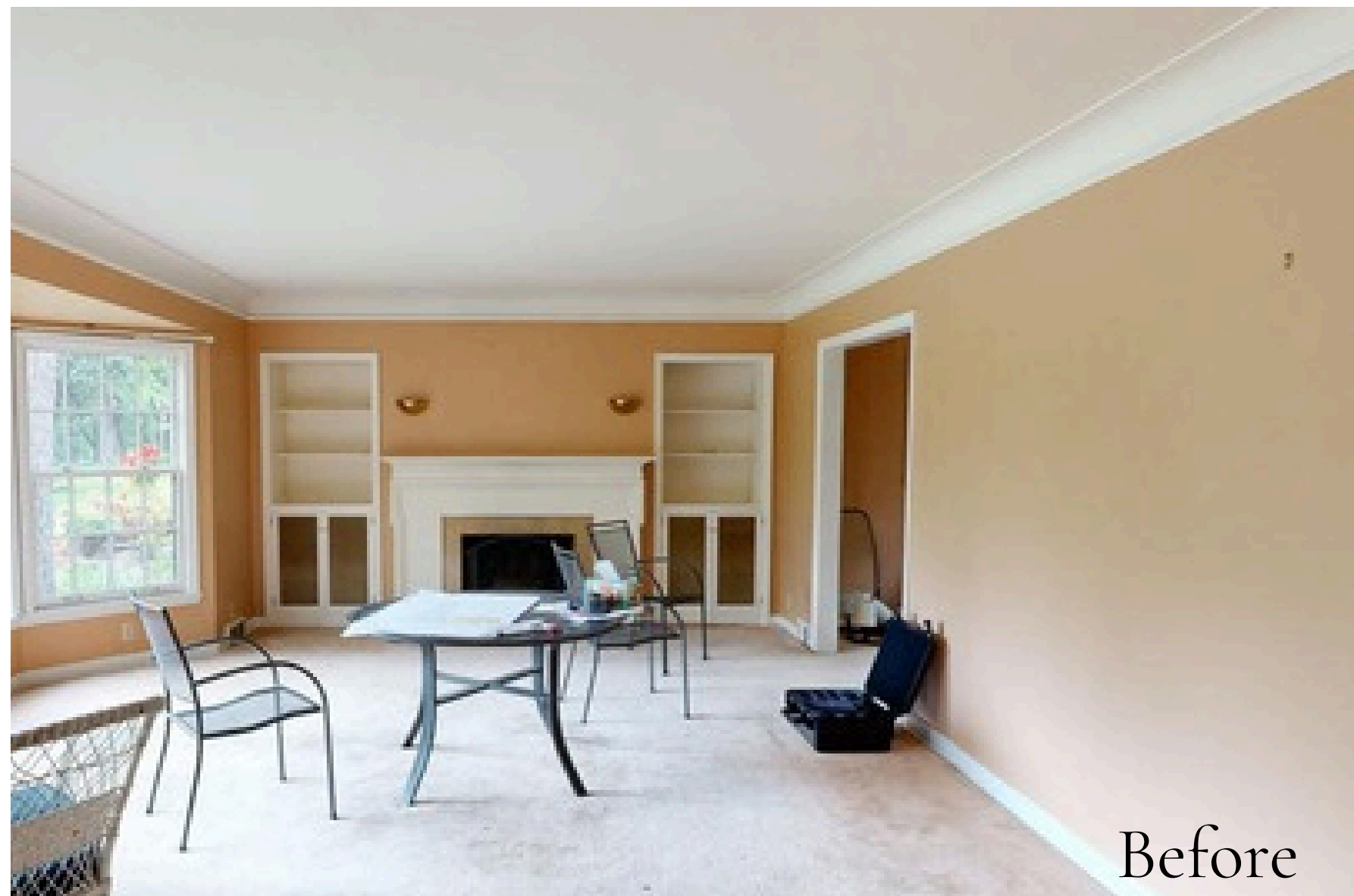
The entry was designed around the clients' desire to create an immediate sense of welcome, to draw you into the home while establishing a clear and intentional transition into the living spaces.

In honoring the character of the home, we refinished the existing railing and banister and paired the original stair with a traditional runner that complements the warmth of the wood stain. We reused existing doors and hardware where applicable restoring them to pristine condition.

At the entry, a cement-based terrazzo tile was introduced as a nod to the era of the home, reinterpreted in a playful repeating pattern. The circular motif speaks directly to the clients' love of curved forms and movement while bringing a sense of joy and personality to the arrival experience.

The result is an entry that feels distinctly connected to the home's history while reflecting the clients' personality—warm, welcoming, playful, and full of life.





The original living room had beautiful bones, with symmetrical built-ins flanking the original fireplace. Rather than replace these defining features, we refreshed them with new finishes and a playful pop of color, giving the room new life and reflecting the homeowners' personality.

The fireplace was upgraded with a gas insert for modern comfort, while period-inspired sconces elevate the space and reinforce its connection to the 1939 Colonial. Removing the major load-bearing wall created a broad connection between the living room and kitchen, bringing the home into modern-day living while preserving its traditional character. The detailed cased opening maintains definition between the spaces and ensures the original architectural language remains present throughout the renovation.

The buffet wall which is shown along side the existing living room built-ins also shows symmetry which was a key characteristic of a colonial home. Done in a more modern way, these two alongside each other show how old and new can blend seamlessly together.

The result thoughtfully balances preservation with modern function, allowing the room's original character to shine in a fresh, livable way.



Key Architectural Elements: Seamless Integration

A detailed cased opening maintains definition between spaces while reinforcing the home's original architectural language. The existing 1939 base, casing, and cove molding profiles were carefully matched in both size and proportion, creating continuity between the original and renovated spaces.

Modern, hand-blown glass fixtures reinterpret the look of milk glass common to the era, bringing a contemporary layer while reflecting the homeowners' love of circles, movement, and the moon.

New wood flooring was installed throughout the home, but the original character was preserved through a narrow-plank red oak floor reminiscent of the 1939 construction.

Together, these details create a seamless dialogue between historic character and modern design.



Key Architectural Elements: Warmth, Color & Character

The buffet wall extends the kitchen's functionality while drawing inspiration from the character and details of a 1939 Colonial kitchen.

Materials were intentionally selected to evoke the warmth and familiarity of the era. Schoolhouse-inspired sconces reference period lighting, while the butcher block countertop introduces a traditional work surface in contrast to the quartz used in the main kitchen.

Cup pulls reinforce the Colonial character along with glass knobs, and cafe-style curtains, reminiscent of vintage tea towels, soften the windows while maintaining natural light.

Unexpected blue tile inside the cabinetry and a small pop of orange bring the homeowners' playful personality into the historically inspired palette.

Together, these details create a space that feels rooted in the home's history while remaining fresh, functional, and distinctly theirs.

Key Design Element: Bold and Colorful

Bold color, pattern, and layered textiles were often characteristic of 1930s interiors. To restore that sense of traditional warmth, fresh wallcoverings and textiles were introduced throughout the home, referencing the past while feeling intentional for today.

In the vestibule leading to the scullery, a vine-patterned wallcovering brings together the home's palette of teal, buttery yellow, and blue, creating a visual connection as you move between spaces. Paired with traditional beadboard walls, the combination evokes the warmth and familiarity of a well-loved Colonial home—reminiscent of the homes many remember from their grandparents' generation.

The result is a playful interpretation of period character that feels authentic to the home's history while allowing the homeowners' personality to shine through.





Key Design Element: Lighting & Moldings

Lighting played an important role in restoring the character and warmth of this 1939 Colonial. In the scullery, schoolhouse-inspired sconces pair with a traditional milk-glass surface mount, bringing period-appropriate forms into a space designed for modern function.

A warm brass finish reinforces the nostalgic quality and adds the warmth characteristic of the era.

Glass cabinet knobs provide another subtle reference to the past, adding a traditional detail to otherwise simple cabinetry without overwhelming the room.

Ornate crown molding was selected to complement the home's Colonial architecture and carefully fitted around the entire room, reinforcing the sense that the scullery belongs to the home rather than feeling like a newly added space.

Together, these details create a layered, historically inspired character that feels both authentic and fresh.





Key Design Element: Bold & Ornate

The bold wallcovering may not be a pattern found in a 1939 Colonial, but its rich color palette and sense of pattern feel right at home in the era. Yellow, brick red, and blue were familiar colors in Colonial interiors, and this wallcovering reinterprets that palette with a fresh, modern perspective.

Traditional details provide a thoughtful counterpoint to the playful pattern. An ogee-edge countertop, decorative backsplash, and beaded cabinet door reinforce the home's historic character, while an arched recessed mirror conceals additional storage and echoes the architectural shapes found throughout the home.

Warm brass finishes continue the period-inspired palette and tie the elements together. The result is a layered composition that feels nostalgic and distinctly connected to the home's history, while still reflecting the homeowners' personality and a modern approach to design.

A Forever Home. Reimagined.



This 1939 Colonial had become rundown over time and had lost much of the architectural character that once defined it. Adding an addition presented an opportunity to restore that identity while introducing the larger windows and modern functionality the homeowners desired.

The addition was thoughtfully shaped around two gable rooflines, echoing the long, simple gabled form characteristic of Colonial architecture and allowing the new construction to feel connected to the original home. Large windows bring in abundant natural light, while a simplified divided-light grid carries a familiar architectural detail from the original home into the new spaces without overwhelming the larger openings.

White trim and a historically inspired blue exterior color restore the home's traditional palette while bringing a sense of joy and personality. The result is an exterior that feels renewed rather than replaced—bridging modern living with a thoughtful respect for the home's 1939 character and original bones.

The Details

The kitchen is layered with subtle details that reference the Colonial character of the 1939 home while embracing the needs of modern living. The graceful arch of the custom range hood recalls the arched doorways found throughout traditional architecture, while warm, mid-tone cabinetry reinforces the warmth of the era.

Fire-molded glass was selected as a contemporary interpretation of reeded glass, adding texture and visual movement. Unlacquered brass switch plates continue the historic material palette, paired with paddle switches to provide a more intuitive solution for Universal Design. Circular forms, often associated with the Art Deco influence of the period, inspired the sculptural, organic tile selected for the backsplash.

Individually, each detail is subtle; together, they create a kitchen that honors where the home came from while thoughtfully bringing its character into today.





Restoring the Spirit. Reimagining the Future