

## RENOVATE!

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# Renovation. **Style.** Now.

Fresh paint, plenty of ideas, let's do it: **Veronica Zepeda** is the model for our do-it-yourself project. Architectural designer **Patrizio Fradiani** wears all the hats to redo a landmark cottage on the North Side. Designer **Jessica Lagrange** uses real applications for a green "dream" of a kitchen. Architect **Austin DeFree** keeps David Adler in mind as he turns a North Shore gatehouse into a home. Evanston-raised **Eric Stromer** of HGTV's "Over Your Head" is quite at home with his "favorites." Architect **Lucien Lagrange** (yes, he and Jessica happen to be married) rethinks the Mies van der Rohe box-in-the-sky apartment. Real estate star **Barbara Corcoran** knows just how much to spend on dressing up a home for prospective buyers. And we showcase some imaginative ways to put your bathroom on a diet. —Brenda Butler



# Pushing the limits

**A RUNDOWN 19TH CENTURY COTTAGE WITH LANDMARK STATUS IS RETOOLED FOR A MODERN-DAY FAMILY**

**WHO LIVES HERE:** A couple, their energetic 10-year-old fraternal twins and a frisky goldendoodle.

**WHO HELPED:** Architectural designer Patrizio Fradiani. "We saw the renovation he did on his own Victorian cottage in the *Tribune Magazine*," says the wife. Says Fradiani in hindsight: "I had no idea it would be so challenging because of all the constraints. It required a lot of creative solutions."

**THE PURCHASE:** Another family snagged the property in 2004 and was going to do a basic rehab. The couple, who wanted to be near a good school, persuaded the family to sell it to them.

**OLD SIZE AND CONDITION:** The 1,500-square-foot, three-bedroom, one-bathroom 1881 cottage—smack in the middle of the Mid-North Landmark District—had been home to an elderly widow who raised a family there. It hadn't been touched since the 1940s. Besides the scant square footage, it was on a slightly substandard lot, had a small yard, rabbit-warren small rooms and "was leaking everywhere. There was even moss growing inside the house," says Fradiani.

**OTHER PROBLEMS:** With a graystone abutting it to the south, the place "was dark and the exterior had to look exactly the same after we were done because of the landmark status. That meant nothing could exceed the original roof line . . . a real pain because the ceilings were low and we wanted to have an open, airy second floor," says Fradiani.

BY LISA SKOLNIK

TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY BILL HOGAN







An addition to the back of the house doubled its length and allowed room for a great room-style kitchen and family room. A sleek new Poliform system was paired with Modernist classics such as Eero Saarinen's tulip table.





A dining area at the far end of the new public living area also sports contemporary classics, namely B&B Italia's Athos dining table and Zanotta's Lia chairs, but topped with reissues of Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni's cocoon suspension lamp. A bold chartreuse accent wall and vibrant graphic triptych by local artist Haas brings the neutral setting to life.

**THE BUDGET:** Appreciable, but not over-the-top. "They were thoughtful and cautious, splurging where it really made a difference . . . like the basement and the roof, which had to be done in four parts to get more height wherever possible," explains Fradiani.

**THE MUST-HAVES:** A formal living and dining area that could seat 12 for entertaining, a large family room, a state-of-the-art kitchen with an eating area, enough bedrooms for family members and guests and a large play space for the twins and their throng of friends. The wife required an enclosed breezeway; the husband wanted an outdoor deck off the bedroom for the hot tub he uses year-round; and they both wanted lots of natural light.

**THE DESIGN PLAN:** Fradiani aimed to enlarge the basement by expanding it from lot-line to lot-line and deepening it 3 more feet to create 9-foot-high ceilings. The new space would hold a playroom, gym, guest suite and laundry room. An addition to the back of the house would double its length on the first and second levels to accommodate all the rooms the family wanted. On the ground level, a deck and the garage. One side of the deck would be edged with an enclosed breezeway connecting garage and house, and a second deck on top of the garage would hold the hot tub. To add height to the second level, Fradiani devised an asymmetrical roof divided into four sections of different heights. "We could increase the roof-line about halfway back on half of the top level, because that part of the house came right up to the graystone next door, so the added height didn't show from the street and violate the landmark guidelines," he explains. To infuse the home with light, Fradiani backed the new addition glass curtain walls; fenestrated the roof with 12 skylights; and added a grand stairwell with enough open space to brighten the living and dining areas on the first floor.

*Lisa Skolnik, a frequent contributor to the Magazine, is a city editor for Metropolitan Home.*

**THE INSPECTOR GENERAL:** Getting the necessary variances and permits for the project was time-consuming and complicated. "It was incredible. We had to mock up the whole addition right on the house—with the new roofline and skylights—then paint it orange. Then the landmark inspector came and looked at it from the street to make sure none of it showed," recalls the wife. That was before construction began. During renovation, every aspect of the project needed approval, right down to the new windows and front door. "We were required to duplicate the original single-pane casement windows rather than use technologically superior double-pane versions, so we had to custom-fabricate them. And we couldn't even replace the leaky wood cladding. We could only patch the rotted parts," explains Fradiani. Getting approvals and permits in order took a year, and construction took another year.

**FURNISHING THE SPACE:** Fradiani also designed the interiors. As a one-man job, it was "easier to keep track of everything" and get a "cohesive relationship between the architecture and furnishings," explains the wife. Fradiani blended the few pieces they wanted to reuse from their last home—Pierre Paulin's 1960s mushroom chairs, Harry Bertoia iconic 1950s wire dining chairs and the couple's bed—with new additions that are contemporary Italian pieces by noted designers and newly bought Modernist classics (see Resources for more information). Burst of color like chartreuse and fuchsia give the streamlined interiors personality.

**NEW SIZE AND STATUS:** Outside, it retains its proletarian cottage-quaint facade by necessity (due to landmark laws), including the simple, sparingly trimmed gable roof, single-pane sash windows and subdued clapboard siding. Inside, it mushroomed to a sleekly finished, light-filled 4,500-square-foot home that holds five bedrooms, 4½ bathrooms, an attached two-car garage and more. □

*For Resources, see page 34.*





Designer Patrizio Fradiani paired the couple's original fuchsia Pierre Paulin mushroom chairs from the 1960s with built-in cabinets of his own design and contemporary classics, such as Patricia Urquiola's T-Phoenix coffee table and a Zanotta sofa.