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A growing family adds much-needed space to their historic home.

By Kelly Davidson

Soon after bringing their third child home from the hospital, John and Trish Koval looked around their 2,000-square-foot home in downtown Boulder, Colorado, and realized they needed more space. Their Victorian home, built in 1893 as a farmhouse, had narrow hallways, small rooms, and a tight, curved staircase—all of which spoke to the home's original character but offered little room for a growing family.

Besides space, they also wanted direct access to the backyard from the kitchen. (At the time, reaching the yard required going out the front door and walking around the house along a sidewalk to a side gate.) "We loved the house—its brick, windows, everything about it," John says. "Moving was not an option."

So the couple began collaborating with Karen Thomas, a project architect with Boulder-based Coburn Development, to design an addition for a family room with a rooftop deck. Having tackled several projects since purchasing the home in 1996, they knew remodeling a historic house came with challenges. Their latest plan, however, had unique obstacles.

Built long before zoning rules even existed, the home hugs the northern edge of its L-shaped corner lot, just a few feet from the bordering sidewalk and streets. Though the lot's dimensions would easily accommodate a sizable addition, setback requirements left only 200 square feet on which to build the family room, absorb a five-foot change in grade from the main floor to the yard, and create better connectivity among the kitchen, family room, and yard.

On the lower level, Thomas's solution was to absorb the grade change at both ends of the room. French doors open onto a covered porch with three steps down into the yard, while on the main floor an open entry with four steps, where the outside wall once stood, connects the family room to the breakfast nook.

A raised ceiling makes the 13-by-13-foot addition feel bigger, while windows and doors on all sides create a sense of openness. Along one wall and beside the breezeway stairs, custom white cabinets frame a gas fireplace, store toys, and hide electronics without infringing too much on space.

Upstairs, the original plan for a flat rooftop deck grew to include a partially enclosed shelter for a hot tub. Accessible only from the master bedroom, the deck and hot-tub shelter give the family another common area, and also provided Thomas the opportunity to maintain the home's historic appearance, by blending the addition with the existing roofline. Its gabled roof, main ridgeline, and dormers mimic those on the existing house. "The addition gave them everything they needed in the space that was available," Thomas says. "All the details create



The Problem

The Koval's 2,000-square-foot historic home did not have enough space for their growing family. In addition to needing a family room, they also wanted direct access to the backyard from the kitchen.



The Solution

The 200 square feet on which the family room was built connects the kitchen and breakfast nook to the outdoors. The addition also transitions, at both ends of the room, the five-foot grade change from the main floor to the yard.

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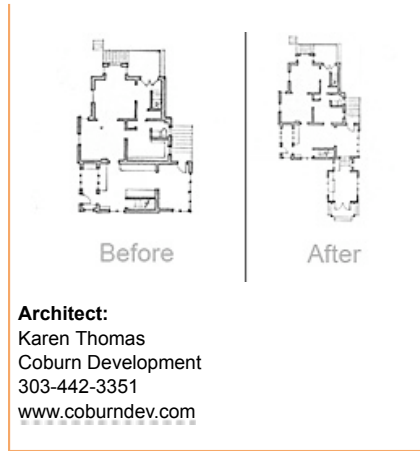


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cohesion between the new and old and preserve the home's historic look.”



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