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**A designer gives clients a kitchen & master bath with aesthetically pleasing, aging-in-place upgrades**

**By Carrie Whitney**

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WELLESLEY HILLS, MASS., COUPLE WITH TEEN-AGE CHILDREN called on Mark Haddad, CKBD, president of Interiory Design Co., to update and reconfigure their kitchen. Once Haddad completed the project, the clients were ready to launch a second renovation, this time of the master bathroom, which had its own awkwardness. Within the two rooms, Haddad not only increased functionality and flow, he also incorporated a variety of aging-in-place features that look stylish now and will accommodate the homeowners far into the future.

#### **RECONFIGURATION CHALLENGES**

Renovated in the early 1990s, the 620-sq.-ft. kitchen began life as a converted garage. The homeowners, who purchased the home in 2001, wanted to bring new life to the space through several goals. They asked for color, light and openness, along with some serious reconfiguration of the room and its adjacent spaces. Additionally, the homeowners' wish list included a large island for entertaining and cooking, as well as state-of-the-art appliances.

"We changed the window sizes and openings in this renovation and completely reconfigured the kitchen and fireplace, adding a mudroom," said Haddad. "Only the breakfast banquette was original."

The previous kitchen was cramped and awkwardly arranged. To create a more efficient space, Haddad completely altered its layout. Because there was no basement underneath, moving plumbing was challenging but did not inhibit the design.



# FOR THE FUTURE



**LEFT** The penny tile backsplash subtly picks up the lively blue of the island.

To marry the kitchen and adjacent family room, the designer used complementary cabinetry for each space.

"We were able to work with a great plumber who was able to make it all work within the joists and approached all of the plumbing from above," said the designer. "Since we were installing a completely new hardwood floor throughout the space, it allowed the contractor to remove most of the prior subflooring to provide access."

In addition to relocating plumbing and appliances, Haddad wanted to improve functionality and openness with the adjacent family room.

"When you walked in, there was a peninsula greeting you, so we removed that and opened up the space with the large island," he said, adding that he placed coordinating entertaining features in the family room, including cabinetry, refrigerator drawers and a beverage center.

Incorporating lighting proved to be another challenge in the large kitchen space with its vaulted ceilings. Haddad overcame the problem by designing layers of light: uplighting the tops of the beams with LED strips, adding LED track lighting along the bottom of the beams, lighting the island with pendants and using undercabinet LED fixtures.

While his goal was to create openness between the kitchen and family room, the designer closed off an entryway from the garage to provide the homeowners with a mudroom. Not only does the dedicated space offer clutter storage for a family of four, it also serves as an air gap from the non-climate-controlled garage to the home.







#### AGING-IN-PLACE BENEFITS

Along with the improvements to functionality, Haddad incorporated a variety of aging-in-place elements into the kitchen design. The layers of lighting are dimmable, which offers control and ambiance now and can be used at full strength later for increased visibility. He selected a lever-handle faucet, which will remain easy to operate, as will the D-shaped cabinet pulls. Aisles in the workspace are wide enough for wheelchair accessibility, and the quartz countertop is non-glare.

"From a universal design [standpoint], when people are getting older, the glare can be distracting," said Haddad. Using a more matte finish causes less reflection and makes it easier to see items on the countertop.

#### GETTING THE BLUES

What was once an awkward, limiting kitchen, the room is now a beautiful entertaining space with high-end appliances, plenty of storage and room for doing homework. The large island provides significant interest thanks to its Benjamin Moore Van Deusen Blue base.

"The client loves blue, and we suggested using it on the island to create a focal point," said Haddad.

The same color was carried through to the inside of the hutch at the end of the island. The existing bookcase near the banquette was trimmed with the same crown molding as the new built-in hutch to make the two appear as if they were installed at the same time.

A penny tile backsplash subtly picks up the blue of the island with natural stone in azul, cream and white. Tile flooring in the kitchen was replaced

with red oak-stained 3.5-in. hardwoods to coordinate with the rest of the house. White, eco-friendly custom cabinetry provides a traditional backdrop for the eye-catching blues.

#### MASTER BATH REDUX

Once the kitchen renovation was complete, the clients decided they wanted a streamlined, functional and visually pleasing update to their awkwardly laid out master bathroom as well. A mostly unused garden tub took up much of the floor space, the shower was undersized, and the toilet was wedged into the corner next to a double vanity. The bathroom needed to remain within the existing footprint, and the homeowners preferred not to move any of the plumbing.



## SOURCES

**DESIGNER:** Mark Haddad, CKBD, Interiory Design Co.; **PHOTOGRAPHERS:** Nat Rea (kitchen) and Jared Kuzia Photography (bathroom)

### KITCHEN

#### BEVERAGE DRAWERS &

#### REFRIGERATION:

Sub-Zero; **CABINET**

**HARDWARE:** Water Street Brass; **CABINETS:** Pennville Custom Cabinetry;

**COUNTERTOP:** LG Viatera (kitchen) and Caesarstone (bar); **DISHWASHER, HOOD**

**& RANGE:** Miele; **FAUCET:** GROHE; **HOT WATER**

**DISPENSER & SINK:** Franke;

**PENDANTS:** Simon Pierce

### BATHROOM

**CABINET HARDWARE:** Top

Knobs; **COUNTERTOPS:**

Caesarstone; **FAUCET,**

**SHOWER KNOBS &**

**SHOWERHEAD:** California

Faucets; **LIGHTING:** Ayre

Lighting; **MIRROR:** Roborn;

**SHOWER ENCLOSURE:**

Commonwealth Glass;

**SINK:** KOHLER; **TILE:**

LaFauci Tile; **TOILET:**

TOTO; **TOWEL BAR:**

Ginger; **VANITIES:** Pennville

Custom Cabinetry





Here too, the clients had interest in aging-in-place features and requested a curbless shower and an easy-to-navigate layout to meet all their needs, including a private toilet compartment, his-and-hers vanities and upgrades to the connected closet space. By removing the bathtub and replacing a window, Haddad was able to create a large shower and dressing area, and a bold mosaic floor tied the space together.

#### **SPATIAL CHALLENGES**

The clients wanted to maintain the size of the bathroom and closet. In a renovation of an existing space, incorporating a curbless shower can be difficult, and in this bathroom, a bay window above the tub made creating a new layout without a tub even more of a challenge.

The removal of the bay window, which was replaced with a double-hung window more in keeping with the style of the rest of the house, allowed for several benefits, including a revamped layout and lengthened wall space. This new floor plan, coupled with a longer, narrower curbless shower, provided space for a larger toilet area that could be enclosed. Removing the bay window also left room for a second single vanity tucked into the space between the new window and a pocket door to the bedroom.

**FACING PAGE, TOP** The kitchen workspace aisles have enough width for possible future wheelchair accessibility.

**FACING PAGE, BOTTOM** Replacing a big bay window with a smaller double-hung window made a larger, longer shower possible.

**ABOVE LEFT** To create a connected space, Haddad continued the mosaic floor tile into the dressing room.

**ABOVE RIGHT** The new curbless shower combines aging-in-place safety and luxurious fixtures.



“When redesigning an interior, most work within the interior. Not many would revise the exterior architecture, and not many would remove a window, which typically is coveted in bathrooms. In this case, the designer understood the value that removing this item would have on the space and the benefits it could offer the clients.”

—Guest editor, *Tina Ramchandani*

#### **STYLISH SAFETY**

Haddad incorporated a variety of aging-in-place solutions into the bathroom, and the curbless shower the clients had asked for was a big one.

“We have more and more clients who are removing unused bathtubs in favor of creating a more luxurious shower,” said Haddad.

An adjustable-height handshower provides a practical solution, while a rain showerhead above and a custom-made, low-iron glass shower enclosure focus on the luxury aspect. Selecting light surfaces makes spotting items on the counter easier, as does improved lighting.

Custom vanities were wall mounted for easy floor cleaning. The comfort-height toilet tucked into its new nook and non-slip tiles are additional features that will keep the bathroom a safe and functional space for years to come.

#### **UNDERFOOT EXCITEMENT**

Haddad tied together the modernist, practical features of the bathroom with an octagon mosaic floor tile, which runs through the bathroom and dressing room and was used as an accent on the Asian statuary marble shower wall. Crafted from three types of marble, the geometric mosaic grounds the otherwise airy space, and the calming colors provide a counterpoint to all the linear design elements.

Frosted-glass panel doors lead to the toilet compartment and the bedroom, separating the spaces without making them feel boxed in. The six panels on each door echo the six horizontal lines on the vanities.

By keeping the palette neutral and light, using one floor tile throughout to create the illusion of space and choosing floating cabinetry, Haddad maintained an open feeling in the bathroom. His thoughtful aging-in-place solutions add to rather than stifle the overall design. ●