

BUILDING HISTORY

For the first time in 24 years, the demonstration home for the upcoming International Builders' Show in Orlando was built in a historic downtown locale.

ANOTHER FIRST: A REMODEL PROJECT

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SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL

If The New American Home focuses squarely on the future, its next-door neighbor offers a glimpse into the past.

A remodeled home has never been featured as a showcase for the International Builders' Show. But this year, from a confluence of factors emerged The Renewed American Home, a renovated 1909 Florida vernacular house to complement the ultra-modern concrete New American Home in the Lake Eola Heights Historic District downtown.

The result: two homes that span a century of architecture in half a city block.

"They're two different ends of the spectrum. They cover a vast area of design and construction methods," says Tucker Bernard, executive director of The New American Home program for the National Association of Home Builders.

"The transition from the historical neighborhood to the condomini-



The Renewed American Home is a renovated 1909 Florida vernacular house near Lake Eola.

THE RENEWED AMERICAN HOME

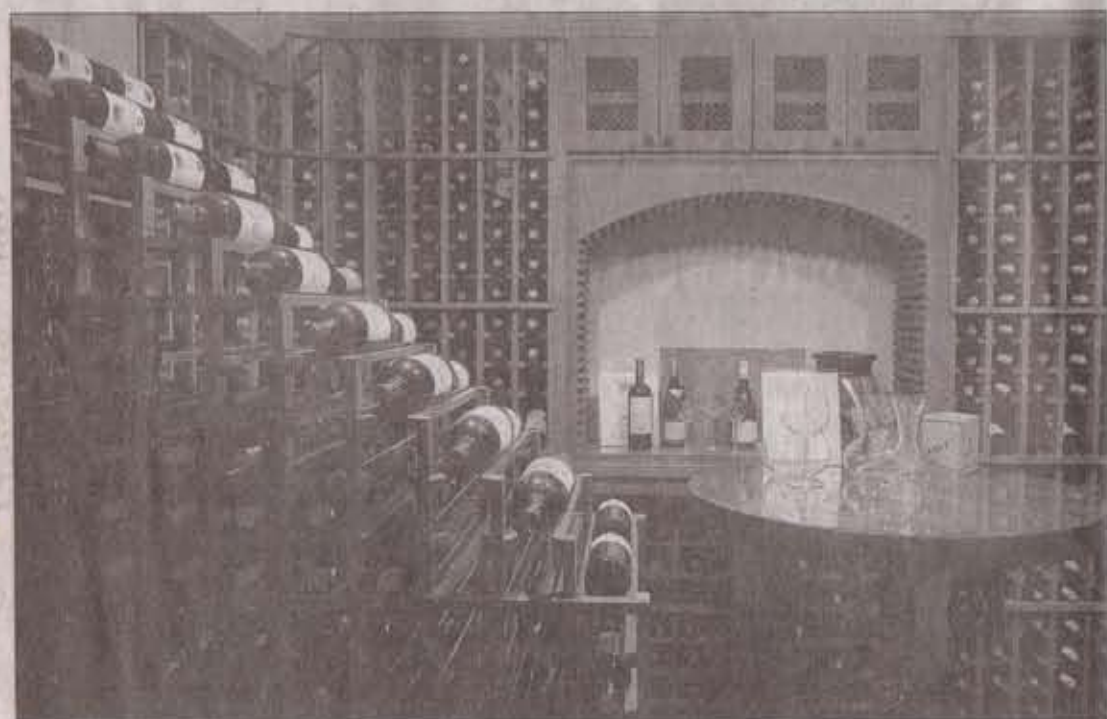
ums and the offices on the corner works really, really well."

The graceful, light yellow house with a blend of Victorian, coastal

PLEASE SEE **REMODEL, H5**



The kitchen in the home has warm hues yet is modern with stainless-steel appliances, solid-surface countertops and an oversize island.



How do you put a wine 'cellar' in an old Florida home? Simple, just move the house and dig a hole.



PHOTOS BY SAMMY FOSTER/SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL

The 'renewed' interior mixes formality in furnishings with Craftsman details, such as in this dining room.

Remodeled house is complement for New American Home

REMODEL FROM H1

design and bungalow features stands taller than the other historic homes on Broadway Avenue to accommodate a feature few of the others have — a basement.

Builder PSG Construction and residential designer Lucia, Kassik & Monday, which both specialize in remodeling, more than doubled the size of the original home and still kept the original roof line with three gables. A sleek, 2,073-square-foot basement and a rear addition account for the home's expansion.

Although the home appears to be finished, work remains to be done — or rather, redone — on the exterior to meet the city's preservation guidelines for renovations in a historic district. At issue are the siding and windows.

Builder Stephen Gidus replaced the original wood siding with a composite material and subbed out the original wood windows for an Andersen composite and vinyl-clad product.

"If the house is presented in the state that it is right now, it would not be a true historic structure," says Raymond Cox, chairman of the City of Orlando Historic Preservation Board.

He says the board has asked Gidus to replace the siding and the two first-floor windows on the facade. By the end of the month, the builder expects to have a natural cypress wood siding in place and new windows in front. Gidus says he's working with Andersen to supply a wood sash for the windows.

"It will be a hybrid of what the original product was," he says, explaining the difficulty of finding an all-wood window that is certified to meet Florida Building Code requirements.

The interior, however, is not subject to the same preservation guidelines as the exterior. The residential designers were free to incorporate luxurious amenities. A morning bar in the upstairs hallway is practically a galley kitchen with an undercounter refrigerator, a single-drawer dishwasher and a microwave. A large laundry suite in the basement provides the newest high-end appliances. A climate-controlled wine cellar — also in the basement — can store 1,500 bottles.

Architectural touches inside set the scene for an early 20th-century home. Bright-white paneled custom millwork in the foyer, formal dining room and office complement the light harvest-gold walls. A coffered ceiling adds interest in the family room.

Stop the wrecking ball!

Originally, The Renewed American Home stood where The New American Home has been built on the corner of Ridgewood Street and



Bright-white custom millwork stands out against honey-oak stairs and light harvest-gold walls.

Broadway Avenue. Builder Carmen Dominguez bought the three lots there as a site for the modern home.

But city officials deemed the house had historical significance, and they would not allow its destruction. They approved its relocation from the corner lot, and Dominguez sold the house and one of the other lots to PSG Construction.

That began an ambitious project on an accelerated timeline. Showcase homes are usually planned for years, but this remodeling project was completed in 10 months.

As a demonstration home for the builders' show, most of the home's building materials and products are supplied by companies that also exhibit at the convention.

Before the renovation began, the old home was moved three times at a cost of \$50,000. It first was moved from the original site, again to dig and build the basement and a third time to set it over the basement, says Gidus.

Crews started digging Jan. 31. Soil testing showed the building could go as deep as 5 feet. Raising the house 4 feet above ground allowed for a 9-foot basement. Gidus received a permit to start construction March 3. The construction required gutting the house, leaving only the outside walls and floor and roof rafters.

"There wasn't a whole lot of integrity left to the house," Gidus says of the prerenovation structure. "It was intended to be a restoration, but it became a replication."

He is still calculating the sales price when the home goes on the market, but he says it will be at least \$3 million including the window treatments but not the furnishings.

Plenty of room for plenty of people

Through the years, the original 2,462-square-foot house served several purposes, says Karen Kassik, managing partner at Lucia, Kassik & Monday. It was a single-family home and more recently provided offices for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orlando, which enclosed the original porch for more office space.

With a mandate to update and expand the home, Kassik had a blank slate to create 5,439 square feet of traditional and inviting space. Designers added a front porch, and the original porch — now enclosed — is a formal dining room and an office.

The four bedrooms and 5½ bathrooms can accommodate a family with children and grandparents. A 421-square-foot studio apartment above a detached two-car garage provides a private place for extended-stay guests or a temporary home for a child returning from college.

"It has the flavor of a traditional home for a modern family," Kassik says.

Ron Nowfel, lead designer for Robb & Itucky's Altamonte Springs showroom, focused on decorative details and finishes to create formality, unlike in The New American Home, which has unfinished concrete walls inside.

That detailed work can be seen in the white, custom millwork designed by Jessica Iaconis, Nowfel's design partner, which was applied 5 feet high on walls in the main living area. Crown molding tops the walls, which are decorated with mirrors and sconces. Swags and drapes frame the windows.

For a lively touch, Nowfel used wallpaper in some rooms, including a black-and-white toile in the powder room.

The honey-colored oak floors and stairs duplicate in color and texture what was found in homes at the turn of the past century.

The kitchen exudes warm hues and is modern with stainless-steel appliances, a vegetable sink near the gas stove, solid-surface countertops and an oversize island. Yet it has country charm with its ribbed-glass and ribbed-wood cabinet fronts and drawers.

A bedroom and private bathroom on the main floor accommodate a wheelchair, as does the elevator that reaches all three levels.

The upper level includes three bedrooms, each with its own bathroom, and closets seemingly tucked into every nook and cranny. The front two bedrooms — a girl's room done in rose

and celery colors and a boy's room, in periwinkle and green — conjure a cozy attic feel.

The master bedroom is burgundy and gold. A white chair rail tops striped burgundy-and-gold wallpaper, which matches the harvest-gold paint on the walls. Nowfel hung an ornate mirror over the dresser to give the undersized room a formal touch.

"It's not a huge room, but we did all we can to make it as elegant as we can," Nowfel says.

In the master bath, the centerpiece is a claw-foot tub surrounded by walls decorated with diamond-shaped tiles with raised tile buttons. A gas fireplace tucked into the wall mixes the old and the new and warms up the cool white-and-mint-green room.

Hurricane coming? Grab the corkscrew!

Now the biggest surprise in the house: The basement is not your great-grandmother's with worn, mismatched furniture and dust gathering on forgotten appliances.

This underground addition is shiny and new with an exercise room and a cozy game room.

The laundry suite at the end of the three-level laundry chute has a washer and dryer, a steam-refresher machine, a sink with jets and an island that invites you to fold socks all day long. A gift-wrapping station provides a craft area.

A safe room provides a place to gather when a hurricane approaches, with refreshments just down the hall in the wine cellar.

Gidus says he has wanted for years to include a wine cellar in a home, and the basement provided a fitting opportunity for the 10-by-12-foot room. It has a dedicated air-conditioning system, a vapor-barrier system, insulated glass, room for 1,500 bottles of wine, a bistro table and two chairs. And a door that locks.

Though remodeling projects have wide appeal, The Renewed American Home probably won't become an annual feature of the International Builders' Show.

They require older homes generally found in historic neighborhoods, and the likely sites for The New American Home through 2010 dictate new construction, says Bernard of the home-builder association. Orlando will host the show in 2008, and again in 2011 and 2012. In between, the show goes to Las Vegas.

"We realize it was a very unique opportunity and one that may not present itself again," Gidus says. "There may never be another builders' show that has two such homes side by side."

Sentinel Homes editor Terri Winefordner contributed to this report.