

Project Description/Narrative

Construction on the home began in 2018 but was never completed through two previous owners. The house was purchased by the current homeowners in 2021 and finally completed a year later. While the design team was given a blank canvas to work with, they were also challenged to work within the existing footprint of the home and tasked with incorporating more natural light into the space. This was accomplished with the installation of a 6-foot circular skylight in the middle of the home and by relocating the existing stairs with a floating staircase. By changing the wood railings and stair walls to glass, it now allows light to travel freely throughout the different levels of the home.

The homeowners are avid art collectors, which significantly lead the design of the interior renovation of the space. Like an art gallery, the aesthetic needed to be clean, light, and modern, placing the art as the focal point of the interiors. A custom bookshelf was designed to hold smaller art installations and the lighting in the house can be focused on certain pieces throughout the house.

The NanaWall system opens the ultra-modern kitchen to the rear patio, creating a natural outdoor oasis in an urban setting. While the color palette for the home is neutral, some design features are intentionally bold, including unique scratch-and-sniff banana wallpaper in the first-floor half bath, that gives the home a playful and unconventional touch. The basement was finished to include a 750-bottle capacity wine cellar, home theater, exercise room and storage.

AIA's Framework for Design Excellence

1. Design for Economy: How does the project efficiently meet the program and design challenges and provide “more with less”?
 - The original plans called for a lavish 90 degree spiraling wooden staircase to be the center feature of the house spanning two floors, with an additional stairwell in the back of the house. That design was reduced to a simple open atrium, repurposing the rear stairwell as the main circulation and design feature of the house.
2. Design for Wellness: How does the design promote the health of the occupants?
 - The basement was finished to include a large gym area for daily exercise and meditation. Bringing natural light into the home was important to the clients and was accomplished through a 6 foot centrally located skylight and by the installation the NanaWall system in the kitchen. The kitchen walls now allow the homeowners to enjoy fresh air during the warm months and still enjoy the relaxing view of the tranquil backyard during the winter months.
3. Design for Resources: How did the design team optimize the amount and makeup of material used on the project?
 - The clients optimized materials in many ways, with the greatest being the decision to reuse the existing foundation and shell of the abandoned house instead of starting fresh. The design team was able to use the left-over pieces of wood plank flooring to create the cantilevered floating stair treads, minimizing resources and making more with what was already arriving to the site. The concrete floor in the basement that runs into the wine room was intentionally left bare to not only reduce unnecessary material costs but to highlight the overall minimalism design aesthetic.

AIA Rochester Community Impact Award

The empty lot, on high demand city street, was purchased by the original owner in 2014 but sat vacant until construction on the house began in 2018. Progress quickly stalled and the property was put for sale. The project was purchased by a contractor in 2020 who only completed the shell of the house and once again it was put on the market. The current homeowners purchased the project in 2021 and completed the home in 2022. This brought great joy to the neighbors, who were delighted to finally see the completion of this home that sat empty in a constant state of construction for over 4 years. The property overlooks a popular city park and is surrounded by some of the finest historical homes in the area. Having been an uncompleted eyesore for many years the house now perfectly integrates with the other homes on the street. Even though the homeowners have a more modern style - it was important to them that the exterior of the house look appropriate for the area and maintained the historic character of the neighborhood.

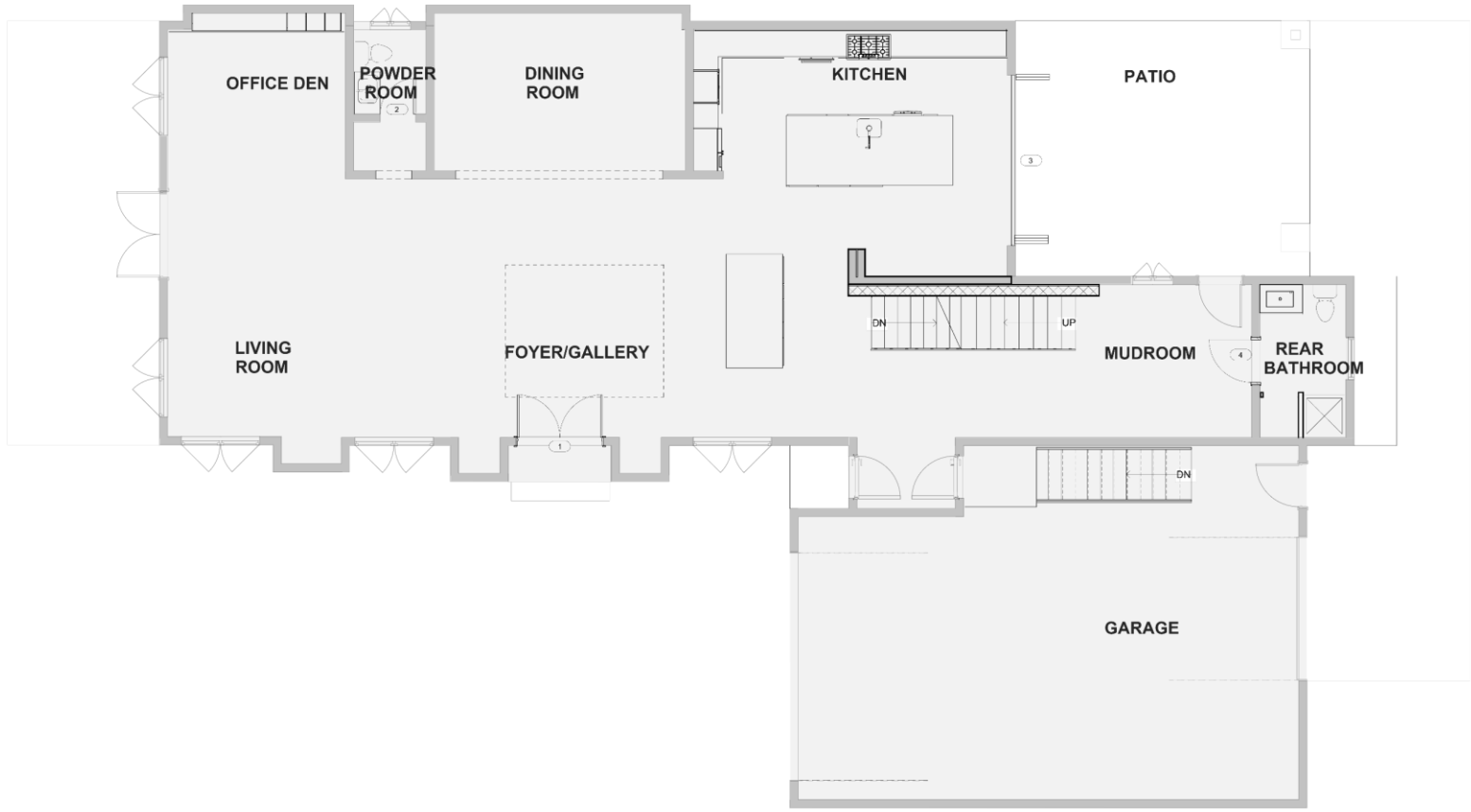


SITE PLAN

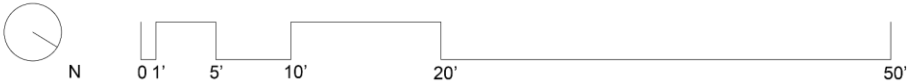
SCALE:

0'10' 20' 50' 100'

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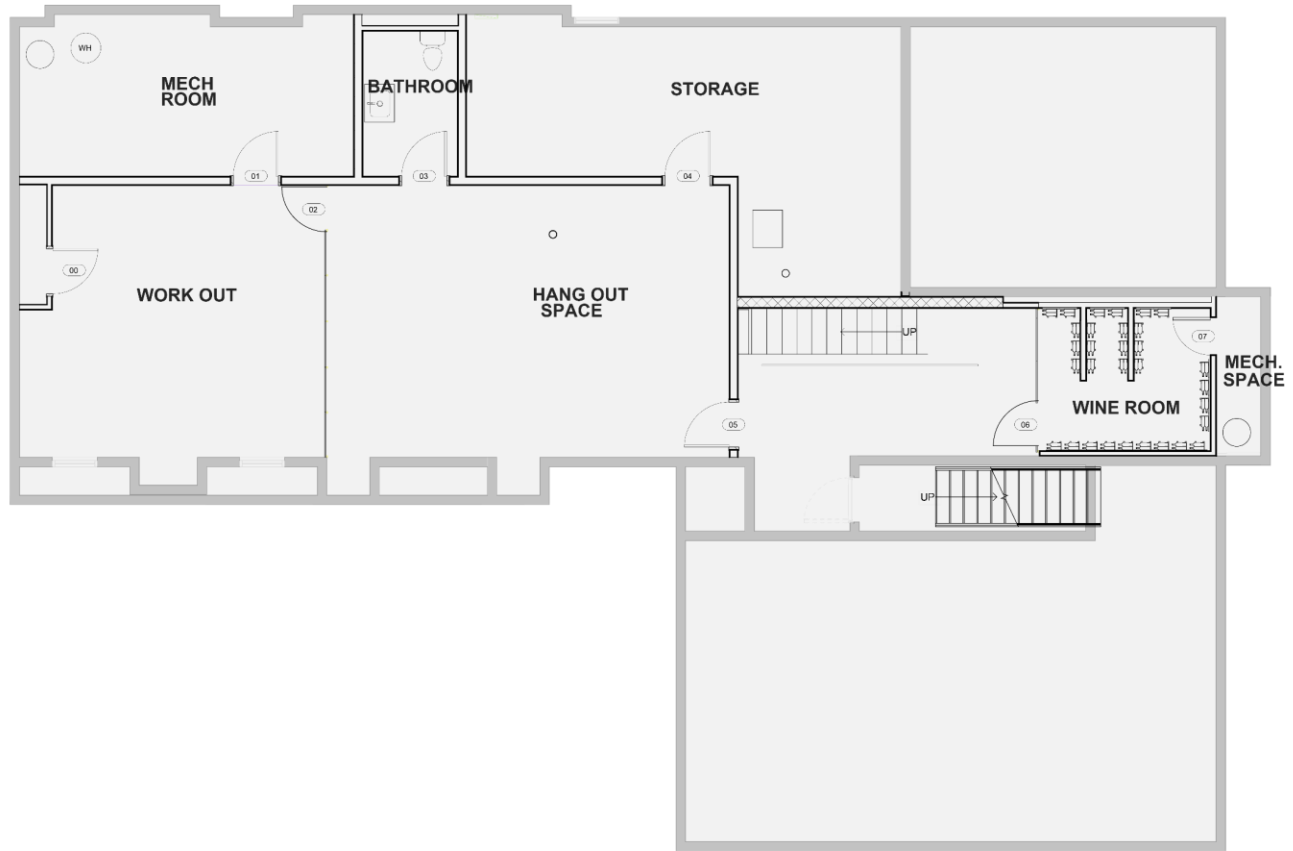


FIRST FLOOR PLAN





SECOND FLOOR PLAN



BASEMENT PLAN





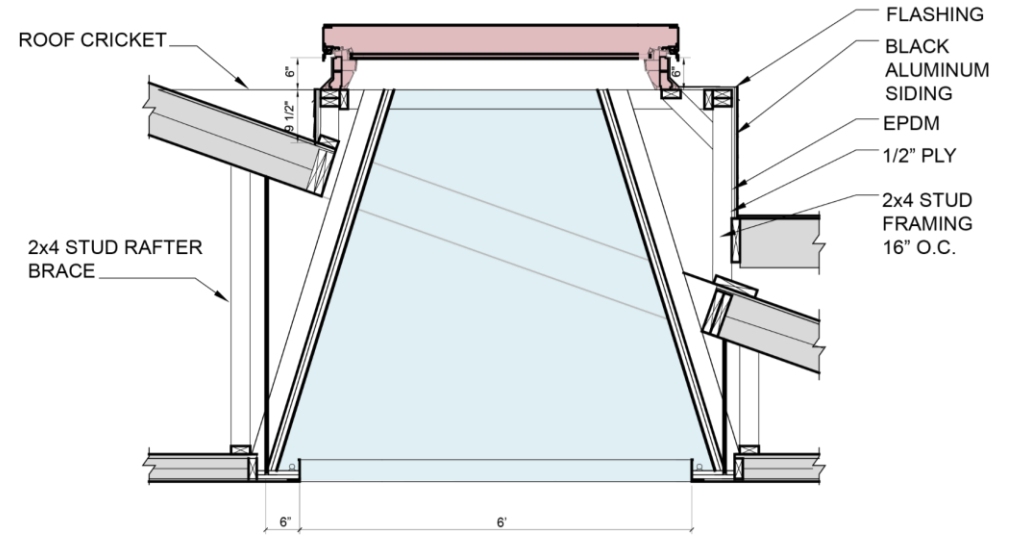
Foyer Before



Foyer After



Skylight After



LEGEND :

- VELUX SKYLIGHT
- SKYLIGHT CONE

SKYLIGHT SECTION



Kitchen After



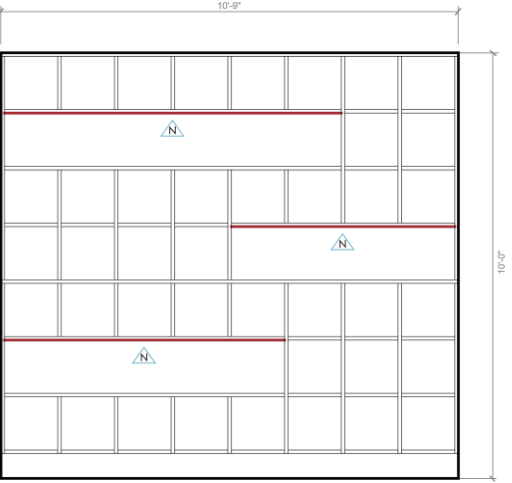
Kitchen Before



Dining Room After



Bookshelf After



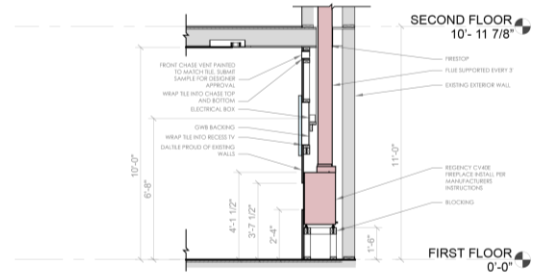
LEGEND:
 ▲ NEWTON LIGHTING AL7-NF ALUMINIUM EXTRUSION LED STRIP LOCATION



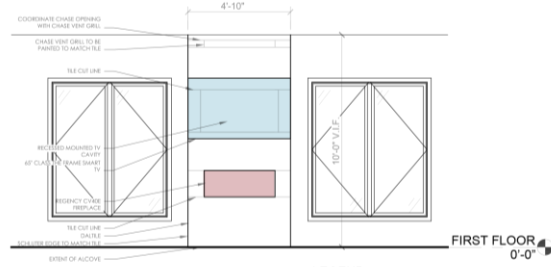
Livingroom After



Livingroom Before



LEGEND:
■ FIREPLACE
■ TV
FIREPLACE SECTION



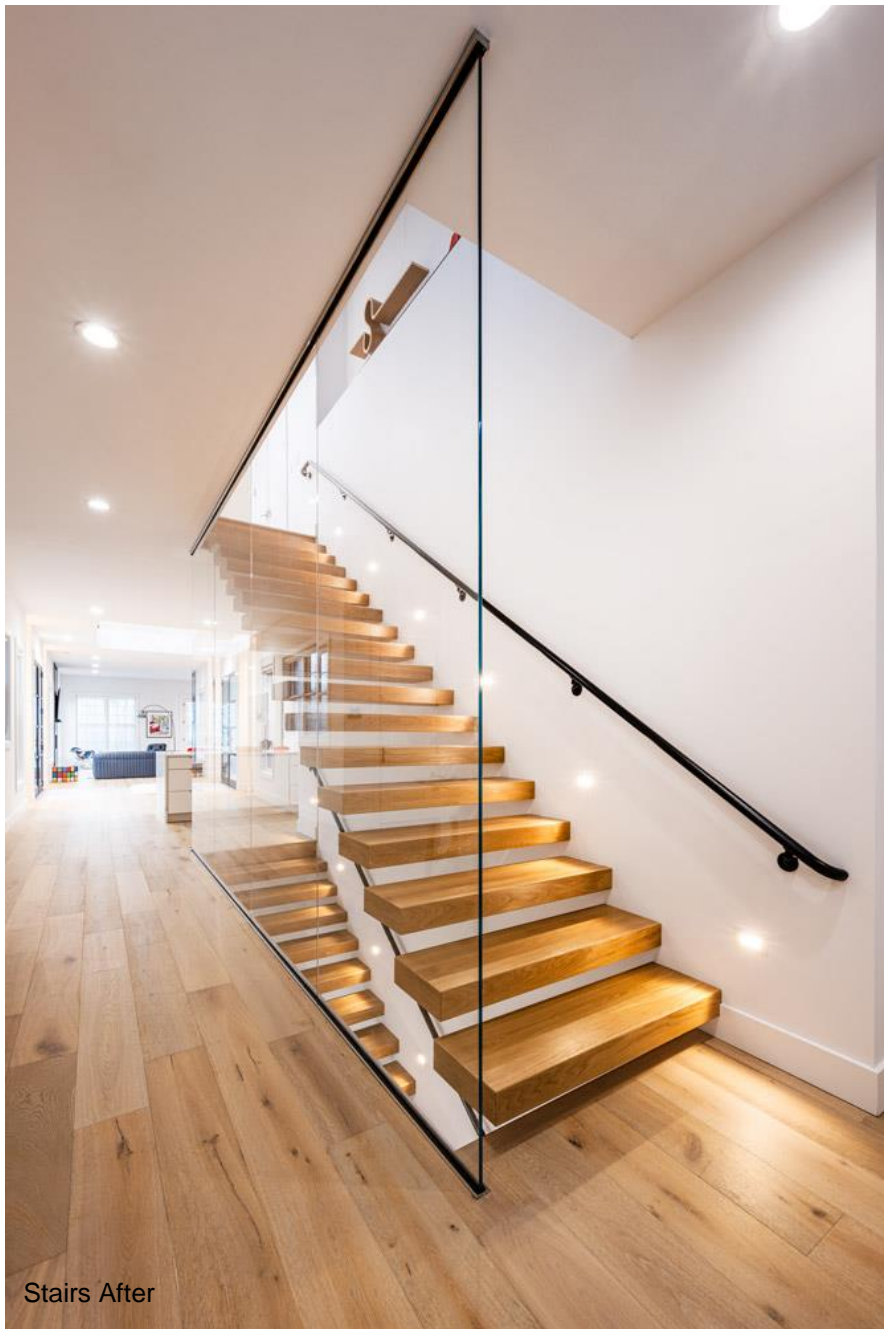
LEGEND:
■ FIREPLACE
■ TV
FIREPLACE ELEVATION



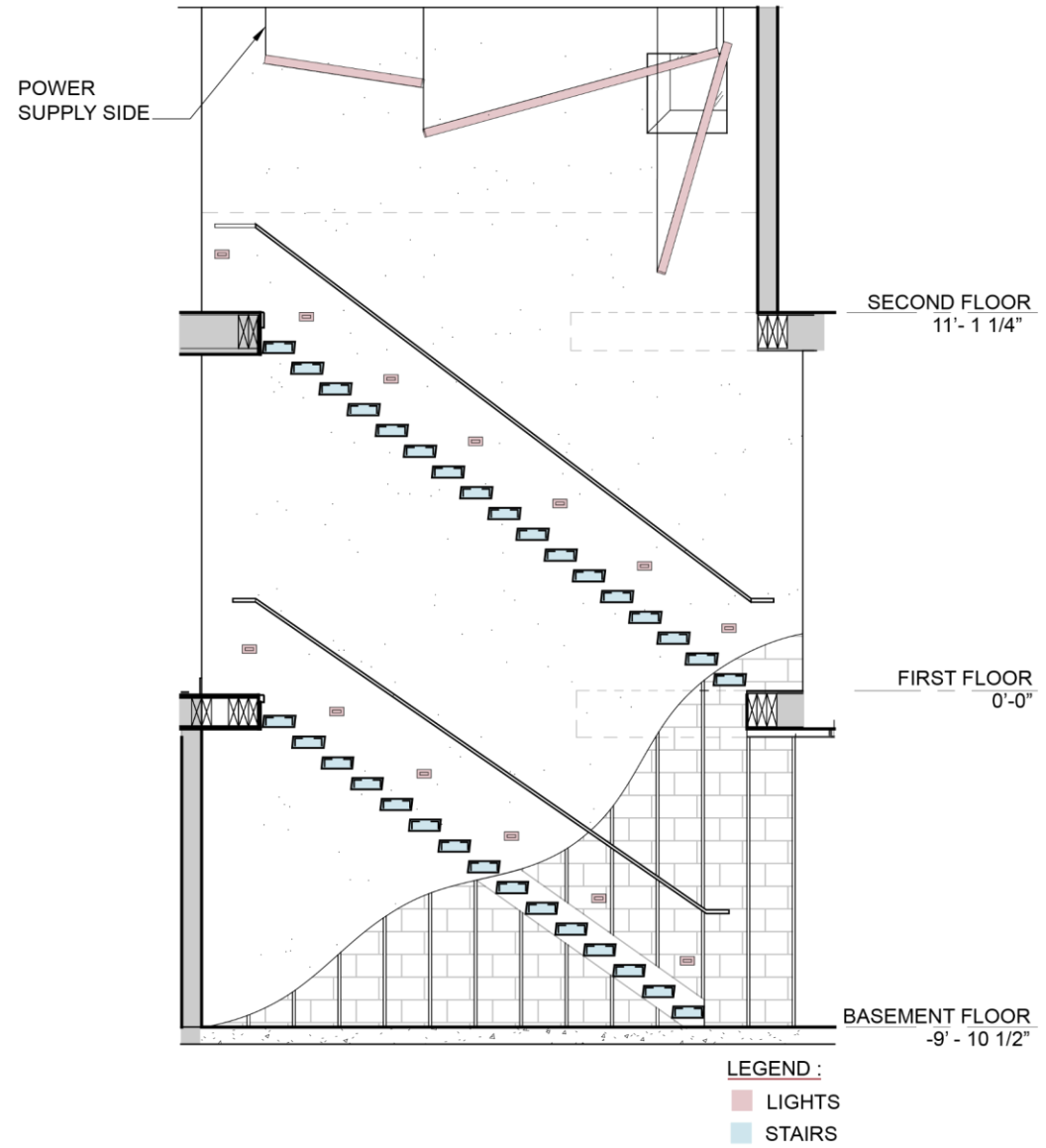
Powder Room After



Powder Room After



Stairs After



STAIR SECTION



Basement After



Basement Before



Second Floor Railing and Skylight After



Second Floor Railing Before



Primary Bathroom After



Primary Bathroom Before