

## **Project Description/Narrative**

### **Local Mash**

For a community-owned microbrewery in an 1860's horse barn, the design recipe deploys local history and artifacts, with a twist.

Perry, NY, has a reputation for bootstrapping, bottom-up revitalization. Nowhere is this more present than Silver Lake Brewing Project, co-founded by an architect, a brewer and a strategist, but owned by a 45-person community-wide LLC.

### **The History**

This local ethos starts with the building's history. An 1860's horse livery became an early 1900's movie theater colloquially dubbed the "Horsatorium". In 1916, editor Guy Comfort purchased it to be a print shop for the local paper, a role it played for the next 99 years. Vacant by 2015, the brewery team spotted its potential for celebrating local history at a catalytic location in a resurgent downtown.

### **The Twist**

The program is simple - a brew house, bar, seating and related functions - and lends itself to a simple solution. A 15° pivot in the plan elements accomplishes four things:

- Links front and rear entry, aiming visitors from the corners across the heart of the seating area
- Expands space for the brewhouse and cold room.
- Distinguishes old from new construction
- Promotes social seating at the wrap-around bar.

### **The Artifacts**

We opened up the "barn" to the roof, exposing structure and long-buried openings. Dark marks from well-oiled print machines mottle the original hardwood floors. All this honors the building's origin story while bringing long-absent natural light into the space.

Investor/members collaborated with us, stretching a shoestring budget and assisting in construction, like a poured concrete back bar. Salvaged materials stretch the budget and strengthen the narrative: The main bar is repurposed slate chalkboard from the old school; donated barn siding clads the interior; a 10' long table comes from the old knitting mill, with pins in its cracks; lumber from a member's land is fashioned into the remaining tables. "Guy Comfort"-branded shipping crates are reworked into a bar door and a merch display that incorporates original leaded glass windows.

A theatrical setting results, rich with the subtle background flavor of history; a touch of downtown sophistication balanced by an improvisational character. "Light, refreshing and quirky", sure, but most importantly a backdrop to the social experiences at the center of this very public, Public House.

## AIA FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE

### ***Design for Ecology: In what ways does the design respond to the ecology of its place?***

The intersection of Silver Creek and the Village of Perry has long been a junction of raw environmental power and frontier economic growth. In the early 1900s, the Andrus Lumber Mill churned out rough sawn timber to provide building materials for the area. Today, the former mill pond has become a municipal parking lot for guests, while a trail is being developed to link Silver Lake to downtown Perry. The Brewing Project is situated at the terminus of this trail, capitalizing on environmental tourism and its authentic placement in the heart of Downtown Perry. The outside deck overlooks the creek, enjoying views of what once was an ice skating and later roller skating rink underneath the Borden Avenue bridge.

### ***Design for Economy: How does the project efficiently meet the program and design challenges and provide “more with less”?***

Through the creative use of foraged and salvaged materials, the design reduces the carbon footprint of its materials acquisition. But more importantly we included authentic elements in its construction vital to social sustainability within the community. Resources were pooled using a community LLC model that ensured capital - cash and in-kind - required for the construction and business plan. Risky? Not at all. When you have a downtown full of cheerleaders, they are your customers. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy.

### ***Design for Change: Is the building resilient, and able to easily accommodate other uses in 50-100 years?***

Building served as Perry Hotel's horse stables and later as an early movie theater before acting as the Perry Herald's print shop for nearly 100 years. Through its design, the space maintains the ability to transform itself — into an art gallery, a wedding venue, an event space, a brunch restaurant, a rock concert venue, a comedy club. Through the repair work and structural stabilization that was done, the building is now up to the task of standing another century of varied uses, business plans, and events that will continue to shape the way locals engage with Silver Creek and the historic center of the village.

## **AIA Rochester Community Impact Award**

### **Community Impact Award summary:**

In many ways the Silver Lake Brewing Project is the zeitgeist of downtown Perry's larger and on-going revitalization. The project took a blighted, woefully underutilized building with a rich history and transformed it via local money and labor-pooling into a popular destination for locals and visitors. With a shoestring budget, a plucky band of problem-solving locals used historic artifacts and donated materials to accomplish what had been considered impossible for so long - a craft brewery succeeding in little ol' Perry.

The three managing owners were active in the community, planning out events and developing the Silver lake Trail for years - seeing their efforts slowly gain traction as downtown Perry became more and more of a destination for visitors AND locals. While the idea for a brewery had been floated for years and the business plan cooked up and shelved numerous times, the original members finally had sufficient peer-pressure to team up and open the project to community investment. With capital sufficient to proceed, the project began.

The effect is something urban communities take for granted but rural communities desperately want: options and variety. There are places in Perry to get a beer, bring your grandmother for a trivia night, have a wedding reception, book club or knitting group, see quirky repurposed details, or enjoy brunch. But there isn't any other single place in Perry where you can do all of those things.

So, community impact here is deeply rooted in the design process and execution - a community-wide business model, community participation in the design and guiding the execution, community money and in-kind, and now community use.

The brewery design, itself a local mash of 150 years of local history, embeds itself in its hometown through unburying, repurposing and incorporating artifacts from its own past and from other notable buildings in the area - old barn siding, old school chalkboard slate, old knitting mill table, old signs.

From conception, business model, funding, design, artifacts and execution, this synergy between the community and the brewery is the secret sauce to its success. Luckily, it's a recipe that Perry is willing to share.



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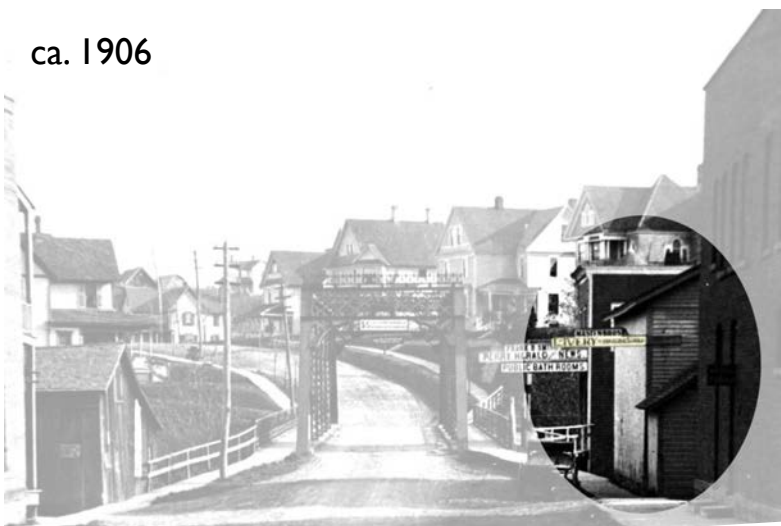
### Local Mash

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ca. 1906



ca. 1909



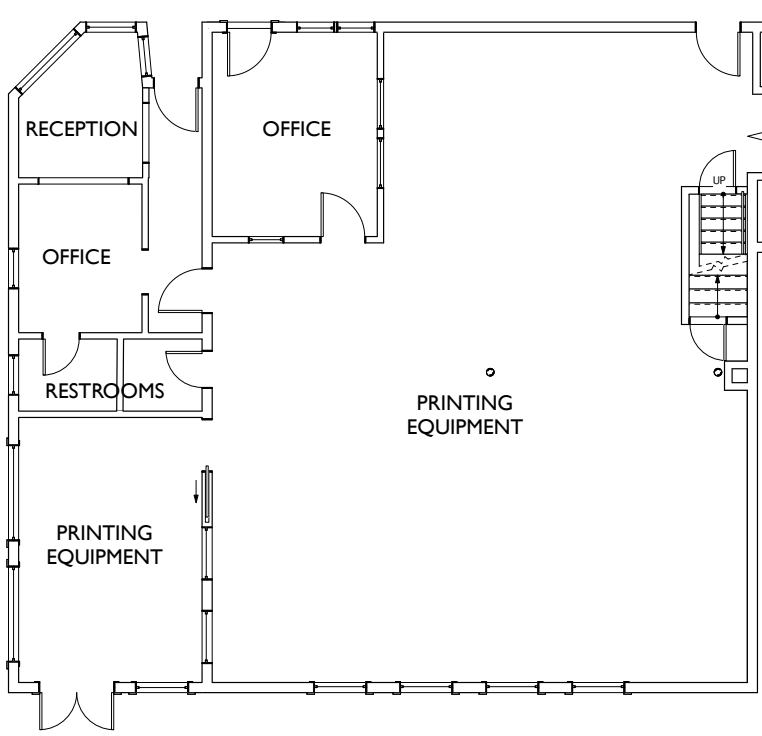
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BEFORE - BAR LAYOUT IN BLUE



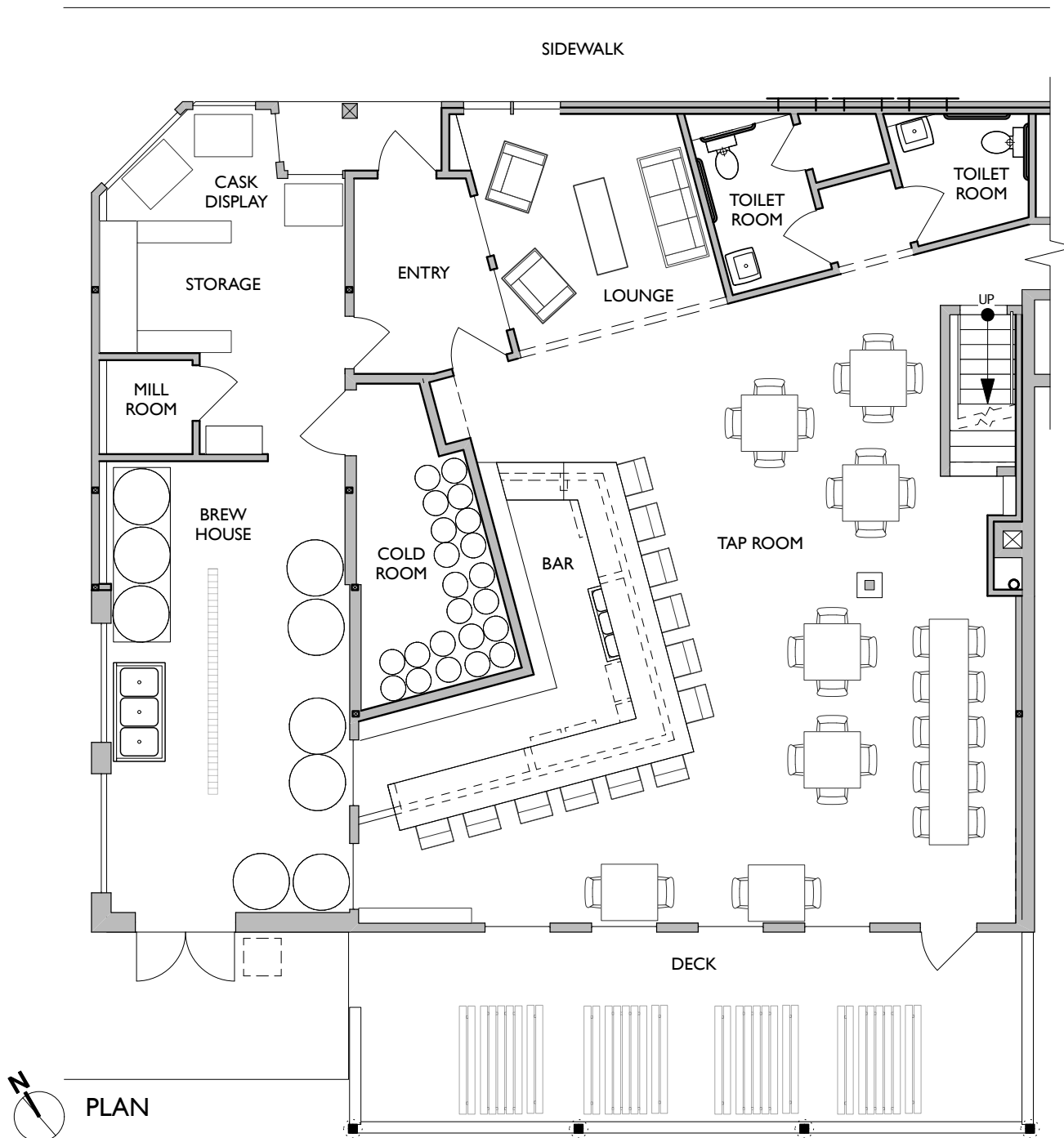
EXISTING PLAN



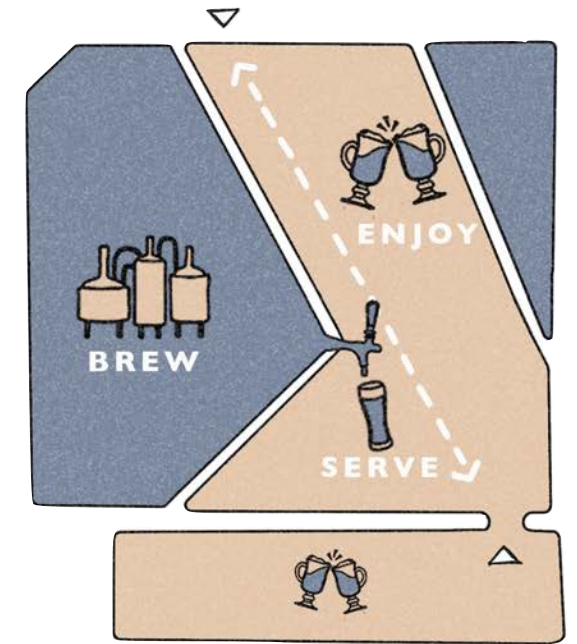
BEFORE - SOUTH FACADE

Vacant by 2015, the brewery team spotted its potential for celebrating local history at a catalytic location in a resurgent downtown.





PLAN



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 and lends itself to a simple solution.

A 15° pivot in the plan accomplishes 4 things:

1. **LINKS** front and rear entry, aiming visitors from the corners across the heart of the seating area
2. **EXPANDS** space for the brewhouse and cold room.
3. **DISTINGUISHES** old from new construction
4. **PROMOTES** social seating at the wrap-around bar.





PERRY AUTO CLUB  
DANGER  
SOUND  
KLAXON

The Standard Lineup  
Sleeping Bear Beer 1/2 1/2  
White River Beer 1/2 1/2  
Moose S. 1/2 1/2  
Mare 1/2 1/2  
Michigan Brew 1/2 1/2  
Blackstone Family 1/2 1/2  
E.S.B. (6/6)  
Last Minute 6/5 1/2  
White Bird Gallette 6/5 1/2  
Cherry Brown 6/5 1/2  
Stone Brown 6/5 1/2  
Honey 6/5 1/2

EXIT





Beer Name	ABV	IBU	Price	Beer Name	ABV	IBU	Price
The Standard Cream Ale	5.1%	14	\$13	E. S. B(ish)	6.2%	5	\$15
Sleeping Bag Back	6.8%	6	\$16	Fast Minute	5.5%	6	\$20
Wildflower Honey Saison	7.1%	6	\$20	Little Bird Grisette	4.7%	5	\$16
Moe S. Mosaic pale Ale	5.6%	6	\$20	Quincy Brown	6.5%	5	\$15
Maria	7.5%	16	\$20	Sloop Brewing Mike Bomb	6.5%	7	X

Rotary Show Tickets \$8 adults \$4 kids  
Blackman Farms Juice variety \$350  
NY Chips \$3.50  
Wilson Farms Beer Sticks \$2.00

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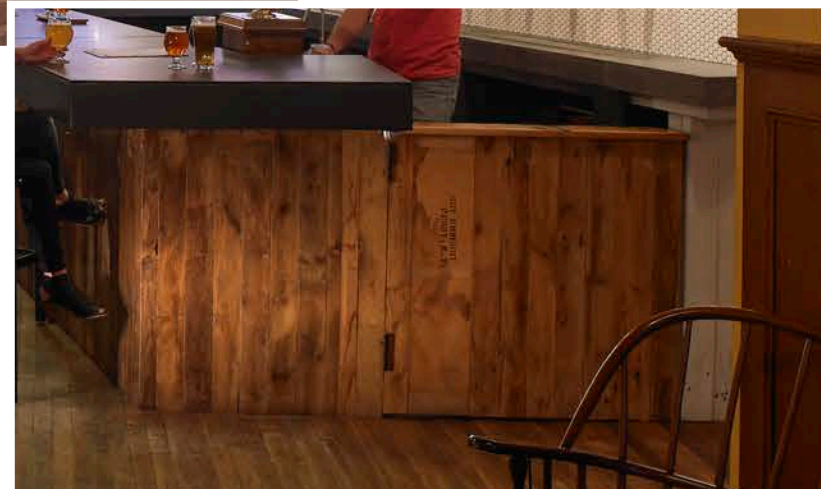
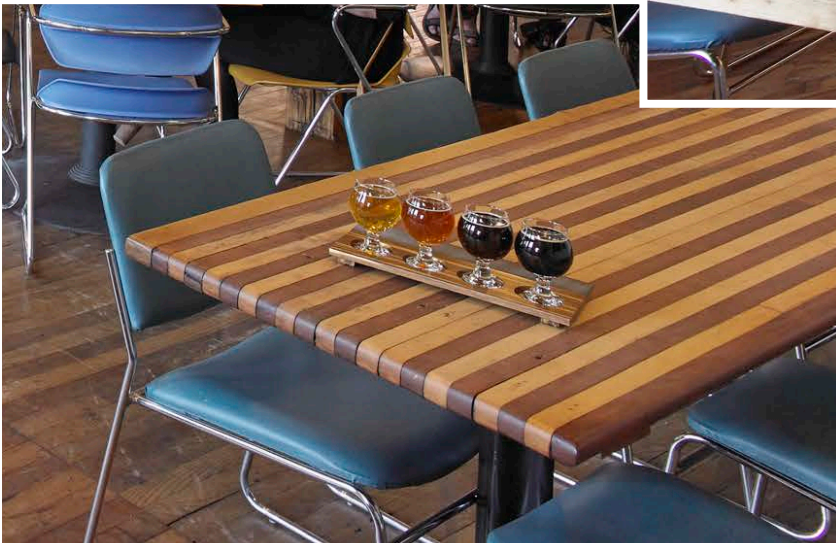
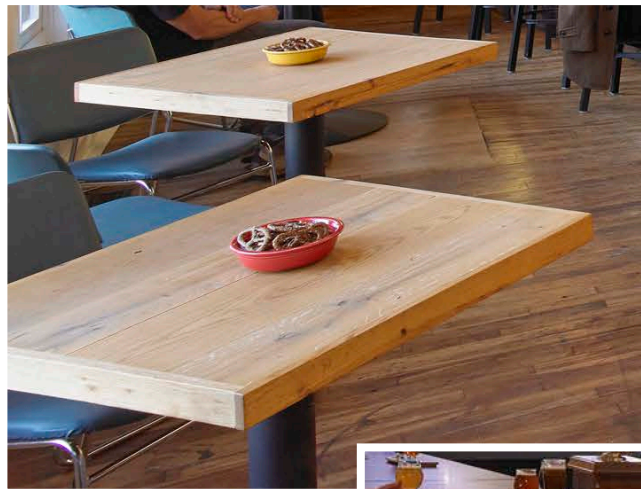
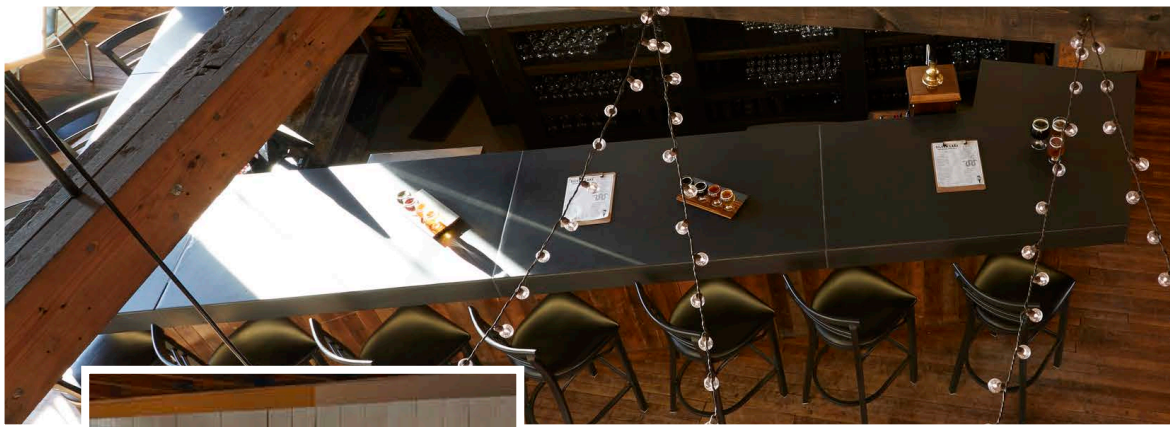




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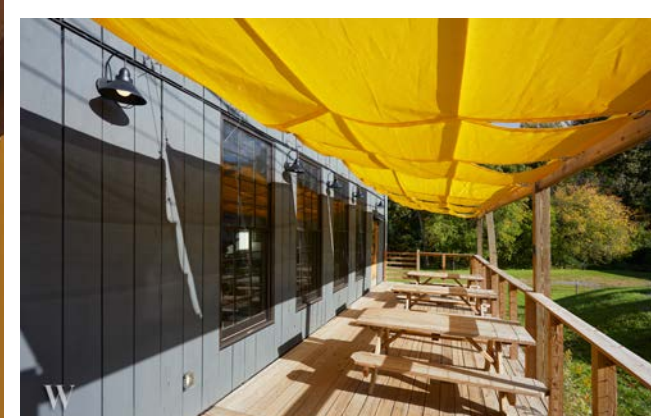


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**Salvaged materials** stretch the budget and strengthen the narrative:

The main bar is repurposed slate chalkboard from the old school; donated barn siding clads the interior; a 10' long table comes from the old knitting mill, with pins in its cracks; lumber from a member's land is fashioned into the remaining tables. "Guy Comfort"-branded shipping crates are reworked into a bar door and a merch display that incorporates original leaded glass windows.





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Wainscot (pictured left) from a ca. 1930 renovation of the print house front office encloses a gaming / family alcove.





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