

GO WITH THE FLOW

Bumping out a kitchen wall becomes the key to a smarter layout in a blended family's Waldwick home.

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These Waldwick homeowners didn't want a "cookie-cutter" kitchen. Wyckoff designer Sharon Sherman delivered with this functional and distinctive space of their dreams. "It was a lot like on those design shows where the client walks in and is overwhelmed with happiness," Sherman says. "It makes me happy."



Before the gorgeous reno and revamp of a Waldwick kitchen, it had a laundry list of things that needed fixing. "It had very little storage, inadequate appliances, no work surface, bad lighting and a sewer pipe running through the middle of the cabinets," says Sharon Sherman of Thyme & Place Design in Wyckoff, who redesigned the heavily trafficked room and, consequently, the entire layout of the main floor. A number of changes were needed to make this living space work for the clients: a working couple with a blended family that includes two college-aged children, two younger kids, two cats and a bevy of bunnies. And the mother and daughter duo love baking, so they required a lot more counter space.

So, with the help of her contractor, Veenstra and Sons of North Haledon, Sherman began space planning, eventually bumping out a wall, opening up the oversized doorway into the former sunroom (now the family room) and improving the overall flow by providing access to the laundry room/mudroom from the

kitchen. "It makes all the difference in connecting the first-floor rooms," Sherman says. "They all flow together, and the family got a great space for watching movies, playing games or just hanging out."

Once the renovation work was underway on the 1950s-built colonial, it was time to figure out the kitchen's overall aesthetic. Sherman was inspired by the homeowner's existing furniture and palette preference for "subdued hues." Natural stone countertops now line the soft taupe Shaker-style Greenfield cabinets along the perimeter, contrasting wonderfully with the delicate travertine green granite on the peninsula. The Oceanside Glass tile on the backsplash, made in California from recycled materials, is, the designer says, "a combination of caramel, clear and soft taupe iridescent glass, which picks up the colors of the countertops."

The large rectangular floors resemble concrete but are actually made of porcelain, so they're easy to maintain (a must with kids and



It was the designer's idea to install a dry bar in an empty, recessed wall beside the fireplace in the living room. Opposite page: The family uses the new peninsula for casual meals, whereas the dining room next door is a sit-down area for larger groups. Hardware from Top Knobs "has strong lines that complement the cabinet doors," Sherman says.



pets). The bump-out also allowed for a small vaulted ceiling in the work area, which gives height to the kitchen and visually opens the space.

But it wasn't all about looks. Sherman made sure to include some practical features in the kitchen too. These include pull-out drawers for dishes rather than shelves to make access easier for the petite lady of the house. Nearby is a nook complete with a charging station and file drawer storage, as well as a custom barn door that separates the kitchen and laundry room and adds another stylish element to the space.

In this "game-changing" laundry room—which previously was located in the garage—is a five-foot closet for pet and cleaning supplies and bulk storage. "The house is on a slab, so there is no basement and they don't have an accessible attic," Sherman says of the 1,800-square-foot abode. "Storage is valuable real estate." The team also built a large framed pantry beside the peninsula to house kitchen essentials and food paraphernalia.

In the nearby living area, Sherman also installed a dry bar with



Calacatta marble in an empty recessed wall. "The base cabinet has the liquor, the glasses stand on the floating shelves and we added an undercabinet refrigerator for wine, beer and soda," Sherman says. "I think it is perfect and the homeowner loves it."

The design pros enlarged and revamped both of the home's bathrooms as well. Pushing out the wall for the kitchen allowed for ample space in the downstairs bath, so the new James Martin vanity, wooden with black hardware, could be twice the size of its predecessor. In the all-white upstairs hall bath, they relocated a linen closet and added more storage and a full-height shower. Both bathrooms also got a face-lift with recessed lighting and sconces.

Sherman is still collaborating with these clients on their family room, she says. But even though the project—which she calls "contemporary traditional"—is not yet finished, the "change in the home and how the family interacts with the new layout is tremendous," she says. "It had a totally positive impact on their lives. That is what designing should be about."

This page: Sherman and her team removed an obtrusive linen closet in the upstairs hall/master bathroom to make way for a more spacious shower and open shelf storage. Opposite: Bumping out the wall in the kitchen allowed for more square footage in the downstairs bathroom, which made room for a larger vanity and a bigger shower, in wood and white subway tile, respectively.

