



DESIGNING THE BIOPHILIC HOME

Remodeling to Bring Nature into Your Everyday Life

Article on page 2

SMILEY RENOVATIONS WINS 3 COTY AWARDS



Smiley Renovations won three Contractor of the Year (CotY) Awards from the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) Metro DC in the following categories for 2018-2019:

- CotY Grand Award Winner Residential Addition under \$100,000
- CotY Grand Award Winner Residential Bath \$25,000 to \$50,000
- CotY Finalist Award Winner Residential Interior over \$150,000

The photos featured above are from our Residential Interior over \$150,000. This project was a total first floor renovation, including demolition of the kitchen, along with several other rooms, and numerous load-bearing walls. After multiple prior renovations the

first floor of the home was very choppy with small rooms that did not flow well. The client wanted a large open floor plan, and an open kitchen with island seating, that would connect well with the other main living spaces on the first floor. In addition, they desired a new screened-in porch that would have a convenient location close to their kitchen. To create better traffic flow we demolished, or altered, almost all interior walls on the first floor, along with bearing point, steel beams, duct work, plumbing, and radiator pipes. The result achieved exactly what our client asked for, an open floor plan design that created spacious, informal interiors connecting common areas! **You can see more images of this transformation, and others, online at smileyrenovations.com.**

DESIGNING THE BIOPHILIC HOME

Remodeling to Bring Nature into Your Everyday Life

One new design trend has a deeper meaning and impact than many trends, ensuring its staying power. More designers and homeowners are “bringing the outdoors in.” Most people spend an excessive amount of time indoors. Many indoor environments have artificial light and recirculated air. In his article “What Is and Is Not Biophilic Design?”¹ Stephen R. Kellert states that “We are just beginning to find that these environmentally impoverished habitats foster fatigue, symptoms of disease, and impaired performance.” Large windows, glass walls, skylights, inner-courtyards, and elaborate outdoor living spaces are just some of the solutions designers have incorporated into more and more home remodeling and building projects.

From Commercial Architecture to the Latest Trend in Homes

In the past, biophilic design has been implemented in commercial architecture. Exposure to nature improves focus and productivity. When you look at architecture historically, you can see how both interiors and exteriors mimic nature, from leaf patterns in the stone of a building, to vines in wallpaper: imitating nature is a long-standing design tradition. Recently, home builders, remodelers, and designers are using more biophilic techniques. Biophilic designs combat stale environments in the home. They are alive and place homeowners right up against a natural backdrop in a seamless way.

Experts say specific qualities make a design biophilic; for example, elements included should be alive and native to the area. If a home is in a suburban or wooded setting, seashells and driftwood



Photo courtesy of Nana Wall



Photo courtesy of Cosentino

may be pretty to look at, but they are neither alive, nor biophilic. Living nature incorporated into design can have a positive impact on stress levels, mood, and overall well-being. When homes incorporate components from their environment, it creates a cohesive look between the surrounding landscape and the home.

Varying Environment and Sensory Engagement

When we are in nature, temperature and light often shift, whereas indoors the lighting and temperature remain fairly constant. Abundant natural light, fresh air, and variables in both of these elements are healthy additions to your home. Living walls turn plant life into art pieces and filter the air, adding a biophilic touch. Fountains or indoor water features can replace having a view of water and also produce a nice auditory stimulus. Biophilic design maximizes all the senses, from the sounds of birdsong to the breezes from an open window.

When remodeling your home, incorporate glass walls, large windows, skylights, and even glass blocking. Consider transitional spaces, like the glass wall going onto a deck or outdoor living area. Having quality outdoor furnishings, and several potted plants indoors near the transitional space, pulls the two areas together. Seamless flow of the design from inside to the outside helps to blur the line between you and your natural environment. Bringing the outdoors in is not just a trend for beauty, but for peace of mind.

¹Kellert, Stephen. “What Is and Is Not Biophilic Design,” *Metropolis*, Oct. 26, 2015, www.metropolismag.com/architecture/what-is-and-is-not-biophilic-design/.

New Design Solutions for a Simple, Serene Kitchen Remodel



Photos courtesy of Cosentino/Dekton/Silestone



Can you look around your kitchen and name aspects of it that don't function efficiently? Is countertop clutter always in the way when it's time to prep? Are you shuffling around a collection of small appliances so you can wipe counters down?

Streamlined kitchen designs are appealing. It isn't solely their futuristic, serene appearance, but how they incorporate solutions for maintenance and functionality. Homeowners of all ages are swapping out tired styles from the past for a fresh look and smooth workflow.

Siding Options for Your Home



Your home's siding is vital, not only for curb appeal, but for protecting your home's walls and structure. Weather conditions can impact which type of siding you choose. Preventing damage caused by moisture, insects, or fire are important considerations as is proper maintenance of this investment in your home.

Here are some popular siding options for your consideration:

- **Vinyl** is easily installed and maintained, and tends to be the most versatile, economical siding. It comes in a variety of styles. It is moisture, insect, and fire resistant. Vinyl comes in various colors because it cannot be painted, but make sure the color you select is one you will not tire of in the next 20 years—the average lifespan of properly installed vinyl siding.
- **Wood** has a timeless appearance. While wood does not have the same resistance to moisture, insects, or fire that vinyl has, it is a beautiful siding option. Wood siding has good insulation properties. The color or stain can be changed, but the upkeep is costly due to the frequency of staining, painting, or sealing. Wood siding, when cared for properly, can last for the lifetime of your house.
- **Steel/Aluminum** siding is mold, fire, and pest resistant. It has a modern, sometimes industrial look. One drawback of metal siding is that it is one of the costlier options. If a chip forms in the metal,

it must be sealed right away, or else it may rust—and it is hard to stop rust once it begins. Aluminum siding can form dents and does not provide the same type of noise insulation as wood or vinyl.

- **Fiber Cement or Wood Composite** siding both have a wood-like appearance and come in many styles and colors. They are more expensive than vinyl but less expensive than wood. Although composites can last up to 50 years, they require frequent painting after the first 10-15 years for upkeep. If the surface is damaged and not repaired or replaced, moisture can encroach on the siding's core and cause damages.

- **Brick and stone** siding resists weather, insects, and fire, but is extremely expensive. Real brick and stone can last a lifetime and the look is very elevated. Veneers are less pricey options that are easier to install than true stone. With both real and faux stone and brick there is a risk moisture can be trapped behind the siding. Usually, expert installation prevents this possibility.

Wood, composites, and stone or brick are wonderful for mixing and matching siding on your home to create a more eclectic look. With vinyl, you can have many different styles of siding all made from one material. It depends on what kind of look you want your home to have, but it is a choice to plan carefully!



Upper cabinetry is becoming more obsolete as more homeowners choose lower cabinetry storage. Well-liked options include deep drawers, oversize islands, or floor-to-ceiling storage walls. Microwaves and refrigerators can be relegated to lower drawers, making them more reachable. Open shelving often displays attractive collections of objects. Range hoods are sometimes hidden, adding to the clean aesthetic. Some remodeled kitchens look more like living areas than kitchens. Skylights, large windows, and camouflaged lighting provide an airy, bright, and inviting atmosphere.

Monochromatic color palettes still hold appeal, but many homeowners are embracing bold colors, especially in cabinetry. Matte laminate, and wood veneer cabinets are gaining traction along with the use of metal. Cabinetry hardware is often left out altogether, for a clean, easy to maintain look. Appliance cabinets and “garages” are more popular than ever for stashing away all of those small countertop appliances that can hinder your working space. Customizable storage options in drawers and cabinets have no signs of losing ground as trends.



Smiley Wins Three CotY Awards

Luxury Custom Built Home

Designing the Biophilic Home

Siding Options for Your Home



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Luxury Style Custom Built Home

After more than 22 years of completing extensive home makeover projects for clients, in 2018 we completed our first project as a custom home builder! Technically, this was a remodeling project since the original foundation and other parts of the existing home were incorporated into the renovations, but in large part, this is a new home.

The original home was a split-level, slightly dated, brick home with a total of 3441 square feet of living space. The new home is a craftsman colonial style with classic white siding. Although we used the original foundation, the expanded home now has four finished levels and 6463 square feet of luxurious living space.

Traditionally, the approach to new home building is to clear the entire lot of all vegetation, and install new plantings after the home is complete.



We took great care to maintain the existing landscaping, trees, and to position the home, so it blends into the lot. The final result is a new home that looks like it has always stood in that spot, surrounded by beautiful mature trees and bushes.



The home features all of the latest technology and amenities. From the Jenn-Air appliances package including steam cooking, HD security camera system, streaming music throughout the home, Wi-Fi boosters on every level, heated master bathroom floor, two gas fireplaces, coffered ceilings, and Wi-Fi enabled door locking system.

The home is currently listed for sale with details and pictures on our website. We are very excited to have added Custom Home Building to our services and we can't wait to start our next project.

Are you thinking of having a custom home built? Do you need remodeling done in your home? Smiley Renovations is here for your building needs! Contact us today to get started.