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Two homeowners dive deep into pool house renovations

Sue Strachan JUL 6, 2018 - 11:02 AM

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When Kelp Littlefield was looking to buy a house in 2008, his wish list included something he had wanted his entire life -- a pool, or at least a backyard with enough space to build one. Kelp toured an 1860s Eastlake sidehall cottage with a backyard that had a lot of things -- a guest house, a courtyard, a garden full of tropical plants, including ginger and palm trees, and a koi pond -- but it lacked space to entertain and that all-important pool. He bought the Garden District house anyway and cleaned out some of the foliage to make more space for entertaining, but the pool and renovated pool house wouldn't come along until years later. In 2017, Kelp -- who had naysayers telling him he didn't have enough room for a pool -- took the plunge, so to speak, to build a pool and renovate the pool house, which he had been using as a rental unit. The pool house (which would have originally been a kitchen, privy and carriage house, as those rooms were built separately from the main house in the mid-19th century)

had common walls with both of Kelp's neighbors, so he retained the layout of a previous renovation, keeping the two "wings." One wing has the bedroom and the other has a family room or public area. The two areas are connected by a hallway/kitchen with a bathroom off to the side. Kelp called upon Clayton Carriere of Edifice Builders to make the changes. The bathroom and kitchen were gutted, and a new shower, appliances, sinks, countertops and tiles were installed. The family room and bedroom got fresh paint on the walls and floors. Other major changes included new French doors with transoms to add more light, new shutters and an exterior paint job. The backyard is now covered in flagstones with the pool, built by Gulf Coast Pools, as the centerpiece. The entire renovation took about five months. Since then, Kelp has had out-of-town friends stay the night. In addition to the bedroom, guests can also sleep in the family room on a sleeper sofa. The space now feels like being on vacation in your own backyard, and even Kelp has spent a night or two there, waking up to the soothing sounds of the pool's water feature and his German Shepherd, Bowie, ready to hang out. *****

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