



American *Family*

— This renovation has a
fresh farmhouse vibe. —

Written and styled by **Charlotte Safavi**
Photography by **Robert Radifera** for
Stylish Productions



Flagstone pavers cut across the front lawn, making the front entry a smooth one. They match the ones in the backyard, where alfresco dining is popular in the warmer months. The newly added screened porch has a fireplace for year-round use.



Homeowners Libby and Jason Newman started

their journey home with an all-American Alexandria, Virginia, neighborhood.

"Before even setting eyes on the house, we fell in love with the neighborhood for its big green yards, old trees, and quiet streets for our kids to roam," Libby Newman says. The couple has two children, son (age 10) and daughter (age 8), as well as three pets.



Custom window treatments, with banding, add a layer of sophistication to the living room in the front of the house. The palette here is largely neutrals with touches of calming blue. The double stairs from front and back meet on a small landing, before heading up on one side to the upper level.

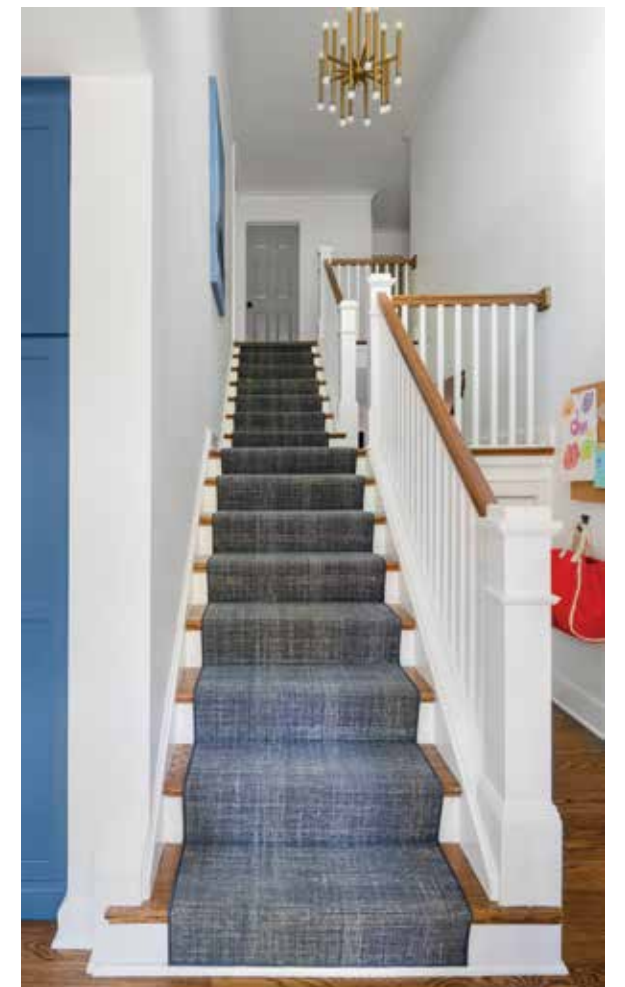
BUILDING AN ALL STAR RENOVATION TEAM

The Newmans purchased the 1961 Colonial red-brick house in 2019, with the intention of renovating it to meet the needs of their growing family. They chose to work with architect Christine Kelly of Crafted Architecture, Justin Olewack of BOLT Builders, and local interior designer Kristin Try of Kristin Try Art + Interiors, who happened to be raising her own family in the neighborhood.

"Their wish-list was to open up the floor plan for a better flow and then expand the footprint to create additional living spaces, including a larger kitchen on the main level and primary suite upstairs," architect Christine Kelly says of taking the house from 2,600 square-feet to 3,100 square-feet.

FUN & FUNCTIONAL ADDITIONS

Though the basic layout remains the same, a wide-cased opening now separates the kitchen and family room, which were formerly compartmentalized. In place of a series of smaller windows, a large pair of French doors open from the family room onto the new stone patio outside. The kitchen has also expanded to include an eat-in banquette and coffee bar. This space further connects to an added screened porch.





The indigo blue kitchen sits in the heart of the home. Polished nickel accents add a modern vibe and nautical touch. The lighting was sourced at Visual Comfort.

"Though this renovation was planned before Covid, we really focused on the details of the screened porch, knowing it would be a place where the homeowners could relax and unwind," builder Justin Olewack adds.

The screened porch has comfortable seating arranged about a wood-burning fireplace, rendering it suitable for year-round use. The ceiling features a stained wood beadboard finish, and the floors are slate.



The coffee bar and breakfast nook are all abuzz in the mornings. The rush chairs add organic warmth and match the bar stools.

"The additions and renovations allowed light and air to permeate the spaces for good flow and to showcase beautiful architectural details," Kelly says.

Interior designer Kristin Try was involved with the building process and architectural detailing every step of the way, including designing a geometric-patterned wainscoting for the dining room and custom built-ins for the family room. The team chose an indigo blue for the paint finish on the built-ins and the new kitchen cabinetry.



BRINGING IN WARMTH

"Our clients leaned toward a cool palette, so part of our challenge was adding in warmth, which we did with medium-toned wood finishes, like in the open shelves in the kitchen's coffee station or with the wood ceiling beam added to the main bedroom," Try says.

The old parquet wood flooring was also replaced throughout. "We were able to source an engineered red oak flooring that was compatible over concrete slab," Olewack adds.

The home's furnishings, most of which are new, have what Try references as "a cozy, comfortable and classic American style," perfect for casual, daily, family living.

A narrow built-in to the right of the fridge creates nooks for cookbooks and displaying items. In the family room, a beautiful wallpaper by Sandberg flanks both sides of the fireplace. Custom built-ins are finished in the same hue as the kitchen's cabinetry for continuity.



The breakfast nook features drawer storage in its banquette. Artisanal textiles for the Roman shade and zigzag pillows are by Caroline Cecil and Alex Conroy respectively.

The homeowners' existing dining table and chairs were repurposed for this home. Custom window treatments frame the large front windows and a bar cart sits in one corner, ready for parties.



"For the most part, we upholstered the larger pieces in neutral Performance fabrics that hold up well with dogs, cats, and kids, but we layered in some lovely artisanal textiles in accent pillows and drapery embellishments. These add interest, color and character," Try continues.

In the public spaces, the selections are bolder and more vibrant, such as the family room's mix of pillows, which pull their jewel tone palette from the modern botanical wallpaper on the TV wall. The main bedroom, by contrast, is softer in warm neutrals.

The overall decorating style, though more traditional, has contemporary detailing and lines, from the kitchen's polished nickel hardware to the minimalist, yet timeless, four-poster bed in the main bedroom. The home is designed to reflect the fun, young family who live in it.

"Our house has become a hub of activity for our friends and family," the homeowner adds. "It's what we hoped for. We host family gatherings for all the holidays, from 4th of July to Super Bowl parties. There are countless sleepovers, movie nights and cocktail hours!"



Mom or dad can prepare a meal, while kids do homework at the adjacent banquette or play a game in the family room directly across from the island.



The artwork is by Kirstin Try and adds some soft color to this neutral bedroom. The modern four-poster bed is from Serena & Lily.



Above | The new main bathroom features over-scale dark tiles, clean white walls, and a warm wood double vanity. Below, left | A wicker chest offers blanket storage and a cozy touch to the main bedroom. Below, right | The powder room was refreshed with new lighting and botanical wallpaper.