

Zipkos Raise The Roof to Remodel

The Challenge: Not Enough Space

When Dawn and Ken Zipko looked at their 80 year-old ranch house, they viewed it from two perspectives. First, their house held 22 years of memories and was located in a neighborhood they loved. But secondly, their home no longer fit their needs. The laundry facility was in the basement, and their one daughter's bedroom was crammed between two other bedrooms and didn't have a window. The home was also in need of repair. "The door seals were rotten because of water damage," said Ken. "The house was livable, but it was also run-down."

The Zipkos aren't alone. According to the National Association of Home Builders, two of the top ten reasons homeowners decide to remodel are: 1) to repair and 2) to modernize the home so it is more comfortable and functional.

The Solution: The Decision to Remodel

Because they loved their neighborhood and didn't want to move, Dawn and Ken decided that remodeling their home was the right solution. They asked friends for referrals and contacted some area contractors. After meeting with a few, they immediately knew that Wheatland Custom Homes was the contractor they felt most comfortable with. "[Rick Martin] was very personable and understood what we were looking for. He also knew we had a tight budget," said Ken.

Additional space was a major need for this family of five. Rick, Ken and Dawn worked together to develop a floor-plan to maximize the functionality of the space they had. Instead of an addition, they elected to build up—to add a second story that included a bedroom for their daughter, an unfinished bonus room, and a welcomed second bathroom to the home.

The project also called for moving the laundry room to the first floor, replacing the crumbling front stoop with an expanded covered porch, and making some needed home repairs.

Staying Put. The Zipkos remained in their home during the remodeling project. Since they were adding a second floor, this meant removing the roof. Dawn recalled Rick calling them to say, "Hold onto your hats, guys! We're going to start this week!"

"It was very scary to come home that first day," said Dawn. "Ken was out of town on business, and all summer, we'd experienced a rainstorm every few days." The rain held off, and Dawn was amazed at how quickly the Wheatland crew got to work. "They took the roof off in two days; they framed it and had us back under roof in another two days."

The entire family had to live quite minimally while remodeling, living without a lot of furniture and other comforts of home. There were a few discoveries during the demolition phase of the project—uncovering an extra chimney hidden behind a wall,

and a wall that bowed out the wrong direction. But those finds are all part of the excitement of remodeling a home.

In total, the house remodel only took two-and-a-half months. “The entire process was pretty fluid,” said Ken. “We were amazed at how quickly things were done.”

The Results: Enjoyment

Dawn is ecstatic about not lugging laundry up and down basement steps anymore, and she couldn’t wait to get her rocking chair out on her new front porch to sit in the sun and chat with the neighbors as they strolled by.

Ken said, “It is a nice feeling being able to give our daughter a comfortable space to relax and spread out.” The entire family is also enjoying having a second bathroom.

“Everyone at Wheatland—Rick, Michelle, and Dave—was more than helpful with any questions or concerns we had,” Ken continued. “We never felt pressured to do more than what this project entailed. They always took into consideration our ideas. If I had to do it over again, I’d do it exactly the same way.”

Zipkos’ 3 Tips for Remodeling Success

1. **Have a plan.** Before Ken and Dawn started interviewing contractors, they had a plan of what improvements they wanted to make to their home.
2. **Have a budget.** Before your first contractor interview, know how much you are comfortable spending on your remodeling project.
3. **Be flexible.** Realize that there will be problems that come up during a remodel, but the right contractor will smooth them out quickly, quietly, and effectively.



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