

Cape Cod Update

A rear addition made more room for a family, while maintaining the original structure's charm.



PLANNING STAGE

Architect Greg Wiedemann suggests that you consider these points before adding on to your house.

- An addition needs to be sympathetic to the character of the original house and enhance the relationship between the house and its site.
- It should take advantage of prominent views.
- It should respect the feel of the neighborhood and not be overbuilt for the site.
- A good addition should make the whole house better and not make the rest of it feel left behind.



You love your house, your street, and your neighborhood, but there's one problem—your house feels like it's about to burst at the seams. Sound familiar? Well, before you put it on the market, consider an addition like the one built by Weezie and Buck Blanchard of Richmond. "The house always had a special feeling, which I realized even more when we thought about selling it," says Weezie. Instead, the Blanchards hired architect Greg Wiedemann to make their special home even more so. Weezie had seen two houses in Richmond with additions that appealed to her. It turned out that Greg,



top, left: Although renovated, this classic 1930s Cape Cod maintains its welcoming street appeal. **above, left:** Separate seating areas and a fireplace comprise an outdoor room. **above:** The new rear addition complements the home's appearance. The bluestone porch is an inviting gathering spot.

based in Bethesda, Maryland, was involved in both projects. "I knew we would be on the same page design wise," says Weezie.

"We wanted to maintain the overall quality of the original one-and-a-half story Cape Cod," says Greg. "The front approach with its southern

facade is very welcoming, and we wanted to respect that." The result was a rear addition with a kitchen and family room downstairs and two bedrooms and a bath upstairs. "What I love most about the addition is that the house has grown with our family without losing its coziness," says

right: While open to the kitchen, the family room still has its own identity through the column detail and coffered ceilings. The stone fireplace and window seats are cozy elements common in a Cape Cod house. **below:** The kitchen layout was designed around an old farm table—the focal point of the room. Bright green cabinets provide a welcome contrast to the white trim and stainless steel appliances.



Weezie. “Guests are immediately drawn to the back. It sets the tone for the whole house and is very warm and inviting.”

Mix of Styles

Greg’s focus on the details of the Cape Cod style created the effect that Weezie described. “Window seats and stone fireplaces are often found in this type of house,” says Greg. The addition’s roofline is also in keeping with the Cape spirit. “The side porch, as a one-story element, creates harmony between the two-story house

and terrace; it’s more intimate and human in scale,” he explains.

The gravel terrace is a little unusual for Richmond, but very common in Europe, where the Blanchards lived for several years. “The old slate terrace needed to be taken out, and we wanted to do something a little untraditional. At first, we thought it might be temporary, but we loved it so much that it stayed,” says Weezie. “Some people hesitate to use gravel because it can be a little uneven, but I think it nicely incorporates the surrounding landscape,” notes Greg.

Special Details in the Kitchen

Inside, one is immediately struck by the lively green kitchen cabinets. Weezie saw a similar look in a British home magazine and had the paint custom mixed. “With the color, I think they look more like furniture than just cabinets,” she says. Kitchen designer Jo Anne Hale and woodworker Ken Adam faced some space challenges. The Blanchards planned to use a large dining table they purchased while living in Brussels. “We wanted the table to be the focal point in the room and the central gathering spot,” explains Weezie. “The island couldn’t be big because of the table, but it fits the scale of the room and provides additional storage,” says Jo Anne.

Delft tiles, also collected in Belgium, add interest to the backsplash. For the countertops, Weezie chose natural soapstone. “We saw it used in a lot of country homes in France that were 100 years old. It gets a wonderful worn patina and is softer looking than granite. I found the imperfections in soapstone charming, and that’s what drew me to it,” she says. And charming is a great word to describe the whole Blanchard home, both the old and the new.

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