

# 2021 Look Book

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design projects from the region's  
most talented architects

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# Home of the Month Look Book

## Find Inspiration on Every Page



PHOTO: ERIC MUELLER

AIA Minnesota is pleased to present a look book featuring architect-designed homes throughout the Midwest region and showcasing the innovation and skill of Minnesota architects. The projects on the following pages were each submitted for the 2021 Home of the Month program, a collaboration between AIA Minnesota and the *Star Tribune* that highlights a different architect-designed home each month in the Sunday Homes & Gardens section.

Among the pool of 40 projects submitted this year, a panel of peers selected twelve that best represent the pinnacle of architect-client collaboration and demonstrate the innovation, problem-solving and creative design skills that architects bring to a project. These twelve distinguished homes are identified with a corner ribbon icon. Watch for the projects to be featured in a multi-page article over the next twelve months in the *Star Tribune*, both in print and online.

Among the cabins and lake homes, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) and renovations, we hope you'll find inspiration for ways to make your own living spaces more comfortable, efficient and beautiful. Contact information for the firm that designed each project appears at the bottom of the page, so you can easily get in touch with the architect when you see something you like. Enjoy the beauty found in the following pages, and let inspiration find you.

## About Us



Star Tribune is Minnesota's #1 local source for news, information and community events. Since its first day as the Minneapolis Tribune in 1867, Star Tribune has grown to become much more than just a newspaper.

Today, Star Tribune is Minnesota's most-trusted source for news and information reaching more Minnesotans than any other local media brand. Throughout its 150-year history, Star Tribune's focus has remained the same: delivering more of what matters to Minnesota. All day. Every day.



The American Institute of Architects Minnesota, founded in 1892, is the professional association for architects in the state of Minnesota. As a state component of AIA National, with three local chapters, AIA Minnesota has nearly 2,300 members and a staff of nine professionals.

AIA Minnesota provides services to all chapters, produces a regional convention, publishes the award-winning magazine *Architecture MN*, lobbies on behalf of the profession at the state legislature, and delivers continuing education to all members.



# Projects By Architecture Firm

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# Campfire

**Project type:** New Construction

Wisconsin's countryside is dappled with forest and small lakes and getaways. Campfire is a cottage nestled between birch, maple and evergreen trees with a serene lakefront view. A sense of anticipation hits upon arrival, once the car tires connect with the long gravel driveway. The cottage stands with an unassuming exterior painted of colors reminiscent of park ranger stations and windowpanes laced with white. The metal roofline claims the drama for the exterior, highlighting the dramatic roof forms. It's both durable and fire retardant but listen up: you'll be all ears when the weather tells its stories through the material.

When the family arrives at Campfire they pull into the garage, intentionally separated from the cottage, and that's when the recharging begins. They are encouraged to leave their keys on the hook and forget about them until the long weekend is over. After dropping the groceries at the kitchen island conveniently located just inside the front door, the screened porch immediately calls for a long breath of lake life.

The exterior reflects the outdoor wooded environment, whereas the interior is bright with the soft white charm of the nickel gap paneling. Nostalgia washes over you while you take in the designed experience. The scale of the spaces is modest, but moments of curiosity are found in the volume changes of the vaulted and lofted ceilings. In the loft, a bunk room overlooks the kitchen through timber trusses. The vista through the spaces is punctuated by the woodburning stove, the campfire within the gathering room surrounded by windows. The timber openings give the family a clear view into the other spaces, but allows them to focus on the room they're currently in. The reclaimed wood flooring and timber truss are highlighted by the contrast of the pristine, smooth walls.

Campfire currently stands at 1,900 square feet of finished space and includes two main-level bedrooms and a bunk room in the loft. With two bathrooms, the one relegated to the owner's bedroom has a sauna. The cottage has future expansions in mind. This residence will stay in the clients' family for a long time, welcoming growing generations. The owners have the next phases of growth planned for the unfinished basement with an additional bedroom and bath.

The charm and allure of Campfire will keep all ages entertained for ages.



## Kell Architects, LLC

[www.kellarchitects.com](http://www.kellarchitects.com) • (612) 812-5687

**Design team:** Meghan Kell, AIA; Dan Wallace, AIA, CID



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PHOTOS: TROY THIES



# Lake Harriet Classic

PHOTOS: SCOTT AMUNDSON



## Project type: Remodel

This classic, 1916 Craftsman house located just east of Lake Harriet in South Minneapolis had beautiful, unaltered bones and details in the formal front half of the home. But in the late 1980s the kitchen was remodeled, and an attached garage was converted into a family room —both lacking details consistent with the original home. The previous remodel also left the upstairs with two disproportionate bathrooms: a cramped master bath, and a much-too-large family bathroom which used to be the sunroom.

The new design reorganized the kitchen, and reshaped transitions between spaces to incorporate the existing old house trim. Cabinetry details now match the adjacent dining room's original built-in buffet and could be mistaken as vintage.

A second pair of windows added in the family room balances the light and now completely belies its former life as garage. Space on the second level was reallocated without shifting exterior windows, resulting in two comfortably sized bathrooms. This sensitive remodel brought the kitchen, family room, and bathrooms up to a consistent level of design without adding a square foot. Sometimes less is more.

## Rehkamp Larson Architects

[www.rehkamlarson.com](http://www.rehkamlarson.com) • (612) 285-7275

**Design team:** Jean Rehkamp Larson, AIA; Laurel Johnston, AIA





# North Minneapolis Infill

**Project type:**  
New Construction

This single-family home built on an empty lot generated a great deal of interest from the residents of its North Minneapolis neighborhood right from the start. The local fire department made a drive-by part of their routine and took a tour after completion. Local residents would often stop to chat, ask questions, and provide encouragement for the unusual new build.



With the help of her father acting as the general contractor, our client chose to build a slab-on-grade home using energy-efficient structurally insulated panels (SIPs) to frame the walls and roofs. Clad in cypress and corrugated metal, the home brings a modern design and progressive construction type to an established neighborhood, expanding recent investments in affordable single-family homes.

The flat lot fronts on a typical city block with a rear view overlooking the alley to a prairie-buffered stormwater pond. This fortuitous view provided a unique opportunity to rethink typical home planning on an urban lot with alley access. A central design question became how to maximize the visual connection of the main living spaces while maintaining the functional connection between an attached, two-car garage and the alley. The solution, in this case, was to split the two-car garage into two single stall garages that frame a central private courtyard space.

This strategy informed the interior organization of the house as well: a central, double-height space extends the courtyard inside and serves as the focus of the main living area. The volume also creates a clear separation on the upper level between the owner's suite and a secondary bed and bath suite. One garage serves as the owner's, while the other can flex as a tenant garage or owner's studio.

The programmatic separation provides flexibility in the future for taking on a potential tenant or adapting the home for multigenerational living. A lower-level bathroom and bedroom were designed to meet accessible guidelines, providing additional plan resiliency and ensuring that this efficient 1,700 square-foot home will be able to accommodate the homeowner's changing needs over time.



## Christian Dean Architecture

[www.deanarch.com](http://www.deanarch.com) • (612) 886-2814

**Design team:** Christian Dean, AIA; Jessica Harner, AIA; Julian Menne, Assoc. AIA



# Beard Avenue Urban

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PHOTOS: COREY GAFFER



## Project type: New Construction

After raising three children in a 1950s Edina rambler, the owners of this new home were ready for the next phase of life. As many of their neighbors have done, they replaced their older home with a new one and hired us to transform their design goals into a reality, after walking through another project designed by our firm. They challenged the design team with creating a classic home that defies trends and sets a modern example of timelessness: a kitchen without an island, a dining space that is not a formal dining room, and enough living spaces so that different family configurations could comfortably coexist without the house feeling too large.

An updated version of the center hall colonial layout, the spaces in this home maintain their individual characters without being separate from each other. The back half of the main floor is designed to convert to a future primary bedroom suite, if needed, allowing the homeowners to age in place. Bedrooms are right sized. The second floor features a generous laundry room, and spaces are flooded with natural southern light, enhancing the quality of life. Despite the challenging narrow lot that the house sits upon, we also achieved an attached garage and workable driveway.

## Albertsson Hansen Architecture, Ltd.

[www.aharchitecture.com](http://www.aharchitecture.com) • (612) 823-0223

**Design team:** Christine Albertsson, AIA, CID; Mark Tambornino, AIA; Emily Pressprich, Assoc. AIA







# Eye-Land at White Oaks Savanna

## Project type: New Construction

White Oaks Savanna is an architecturally master-planned development near Stillwater, intended to preserve the lush landscape of the native rolling prairie. Its first completed residence is the Eye-Land Home, named for its “Eyes on the Landscape.” A crucial part of the siting and design process was creating a detailed digital 3D-model that considered all exterior perspectives as well as secondary views from inside the home. Despite its 5,200 square-foot size, the home nestles gently into the landscape as it slopes down to a wetland and pond. The lot’s 360-degree exposure presented a challenge as it is the highest point in the development—with few trees—and is very exposed on all sides. All four sides of the home had to be animated; there were no “throwaway” elevations.

To meet this need without busting the budget, the architects focused on simple ingredients: proportion, color, and scale. From a distance, the attached garage is camouflaged as part of the living space, with a gable end and the home’s largest window facing the street. A large window spans into the attic space, helping to reduce the visual bulk of the garage. The builder added drywall and a light fixture behind the glass to hide the attic space from view and enhance the illusion.

To deviate from the concept of “Modern Farmhouse,” the owners rejected the typical white cladding with black trim. Instead, the architects opted for a grayscale appearance, combining the black-framed windows the homeowners desired with two shades of dark-gray cladding. The garage window and the window above the nearby entryway stand out for their light-blue frames. Strategic pops of color add visual interest without additional cost.

In designing the windows and layout, the architects sought to balance interior room usage with the outside scale, as the house is defined by its volume rather than costly architectural accessories and details. The windows break up the mass and define positive and negative space on the house. Scale was critical in the dining room, as well, which bumps out into the wetland at the rear of the home and offers sweeping views across the prairie. Its form breaks from the rest of the house, with a flat roof and windows from corner to corner, compared to the gables and sharper angles of the front elevation.

Throughout each room, window placement and layout also considered long-range views to the exterior. In the master bedroom, for example, the bed and the bay window are on the same axis as a distant 200-year-old oak tree. From the start, the clients requested a specific exterior view: they wanted a view from the kitchen (also referred to as “Command Central”) to the front yard. This would allow for them to watch their children at play as they cooked. The careful planning paid off in not only achieving the functionality required for the growing family of five, but also serving as a striking kickoff to the ambitious vision of the planned community.



## Christopher Strom Architects

[www.christopherstrom.com](http://www.christopherstrom.com) • (612) 961-9093

**Design team:** Christopher Strom, AIA; Eric Johnson, AIA; Elizabeth Akkerman, Assoc. AIA





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Selected Project

PHOTOS: PAUL CROSBY

# Rapson Revival

## Project type: Remodel

This remodel gives new life to a Rapson-designed home, affording a modern-day lifestyle for its current owners within much of the original architect's footprint.

Ralph Rapson was an architectural hero and thesis advisor to the architect of the revival. In 1977, when Rapson was advising the architect as a student at the University of Minnesota, he was also designing this home for local artist Gloria Tew and her husband, Vern. Fast forward to 2019 and the home is now owned by a young professional couple wishing for a few changes to better accommodate their lifestyle.



An even deeper connection for the architect to the Rapson home came from the fact that he had been neighbors with the Tews and shared connections with them in the artist's world. Thanks to Gloria, they had all spent time together over lunch in the home years ago. It was a day the architect will always remember fondly. And so, creative worlds and a bit of history came together. Not only was the architect now a part of reviving his mentor's design, he was also working with a past client's daughter and her husband—the new owners—to rework the plan.

Adding to the “family” feel of the project was the fact that the architect's son, a local builder, was chosen by the couple for construction. Architect, client, and builder approached the project with utmost respect for Rapson's work. The envelope of the building was mostly unchanged, preserving Rapson's original design intent. Remodel efforts focused instead on expanding interior living spaces of the home while still retaining the spirit of the original design.

The home was opened up to accommodate a modern lifestyle with increased flow inside and out. A three-season porch was converted into conditioned spaces to provide a more spacious kitchen connecting to informal dining and living areas. The original central glass atrium was preserved, but kitchen island upgrades made the kitchen space more efficient for its new residents. Extra windows were incorporated to bring in light from multiple directions, enhancing the work of the original round skylights seen throughout the home. The home now opens from the great room living spaces to a new and generous outdoor living area overlooking the woods beyond.

Like the original owner, the current owners are both artists and needed a gallery space and studio for their photography. The architect moved and aligned interior spaces to accommodate and create a new version of an artist's workroom. The couple can now enjoy and utilize Rapson's original light-scooping gallery and skylight as it brings illumination into the heart of this historically significant and stunning revival.



## Charles R. Stinson Architecture + Design

www.charlesrstinson.com • (952) 473-9503

Design team: Charles R. Stinson, AIA; Chuck Thiss; Kim Streeter





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# Shape Sorting House

**Project type:** Remodel

Described by *Inland Architect* magazine in 1990 as a “deft manipulation of volume and façade, with a whimsical rooftop village of geometric shapes that seem to move in relation to each other,” this home, designed by MS&R in 1987 for its current owner, remains a playful and highly functional example of Postmodern residential architecture.

In 2018, the owners still relished their rooftop village, now seemingly held aloft by the emergent tree canopy, but

decades of wear prompted a desire to upgrade finishes and features, and most significantly, to open an existing sunroom in the southeast corner of the main level to the adjacent kitchen and dining areas.

The 1987 design intended a screened porch in this location, accessible from the dining room and a service pass-through from the kitchen, but a desire to embrace the sunny spot year-round prompted its immediate enclosure and access via a set of French doors. Recognizing and honoring the home’s original geometry was key to maintaining its integrity in this, the most significant intervention.

These days, the prominence of the “open plan” is inescapable and given the formal and discrete positioning of the living room, the benefits of integrating casual gathering into the kitchen and dining area were clear. Doing so while continu-

ing to “move in relation to each other” took greater consideration. Since its inception as a screened porch, followed by sunroom, the skewed orientation of this “box” had been hidden from interior views. Opening this space to the others made its angled and taller volume visible for the first time since the home’s construction. Now, a continuous soffit at the height of the kitchen ceiling flows between the revamped sunroom and dining rooms, identifying distinct functions like a child’s shape-sorting toy matching rooms to voids. Along those lines—quite literally—the wedge-shaped kitchen island and reflected ceiling plane pinwheel around the nexus of all three spaces.

Nearly every remaining surface of the home was touched, with replacement products selected to respect their predecessors. Expansive triple-pane windows replaced rows of less efficient casements, accentuating treetop views. Larch veneer was selected for custom cabinetry to create a warm transition between new (lighter) and original (ambered) maple, and white enameled accent cabinets recall the original melamine, all now bonded to NAUF substrates. In consideration of waste reduction and embodied carbon, original kitchen countertops were re-fabricated into bathroom vanities and the tub surround. New selections for stone, tile, and steel all borrow from the original monochromatic palette, bringing warmth to a substantial refresh that remains as whimsical as the original.

## SALA Architects, Inc.

www.salaarc.com • (612) 379-3037

**Design team:** Bryan Anderson, AIA; Jessica Wilder







PHOTOS: SCOTT AMUNDSON

# Rural Retreat



## Project type: New Construction

Nestled in southwestern Wisconsin’s unique Driftless Area of sweeping farmland and river valley, this rustic retreat is a true getaway from the city. Materials are durable, raw, and authentic: Corten steel wrapped around the base of the house will change to a rusty patina as it weathers, its metal roof draws inspiration from local barns, and the exterior siding is reclaimed Ipe wood from an old highway sound barrier in Chicago. Salvaged siding is carried through to the interior and mixes with locally-milled Douglas fir, darkened steel, and concrete tile floors to create a modern, refined space with a utilitarian aesthetic.

The main level’s open floor plan flows outside, with great views from the porches and access to all sides of the site—perfect for weekend gatherings. A workshop tailored toward the homeowner’s passion for biking and Nordic skiing is equipped with an overhead glass door for great natural light and an easy in-and-out.

Personal elements are thoughtfully incorporated throughout the house: a much-loved road bike as art above the main stair; a side pantry for organic cooking, places for books; and firewood storage for the living room’s wood burning stove. This is a house meant to settle into the landscape for generations.



## Rehkamp Larson Architects

www.rehkamlarson.com • (612) 285-7275

Design team: Mark Larson, AIA; Ryan Bicek, AIA; Laurel Johnston, AIA



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# 1031 Residence



PHOTOS: PAGE PHOTOGRAPHY



**Project type:** New Construction



As long-time residents of St. Paul, the clients wanted their new home to fit the Highland Park neighborhood and seamlessly integrate the architecture with the beautiful, wooded site. They also hoped to carry forward the character of their former historic home through the use of art glass windows, millwork, cabinetry, and separately defined rooms.

The house is sized small enough to feel comfortable for the couple yet large enough for family gatherings. The main floor includes a guest bedroom that allows for one-level living in the future.

Energy efficiency and sustainability goals were established and met with the design. T-mass foundation construction to reduce energy bills, the use of SIP wall panels for more efficient insulation, prioritizing daylighting and the use of energy-efficient windows placed strategically to promote cross-ventilation are a few of the strategies used.



## McMonigal Architects

[www.mcmonigal.com](http://www.mcmonigal.com) • (612) 331-1244

**Design team:** Rosemary McMonigal, FAIA, CID; Kyle Thrapp, AIA; Nick Dellwo; Phil Hofstad



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# Historic Addition



**Project type:** Addition

For the Collins family, their charming 1878 Italianate beauty was in desperate need of modern lifestyle amenities to suit the needs of their four-person family. Their desired program, an attached four-car garage, a bright, open family room, and a mudroom, seemed simple enough. However, attaching this large addition to their existing home was no simple challenge. The solution was a perfectly sited new addition that on the exterior, blends in well with the old home, and on the interior, takes a modern turn, providing them a bright, open space away from the small darker rooms of their existing house.

The new mudroom, acting as the link, is located conveniently near the existing back of house’s second staircase and perfectly connects the new addition with minimal modifications to the existing older home. On the inside, fresh white paint, architectural-grade exposed fir beams with knotty pine decking and steel accents give the new addition a casual, modern vibe. On the exterior, custom-made trim and brackets from an original template found in the attic were replicated to look as though the new addition was always there.

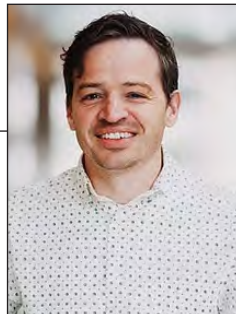
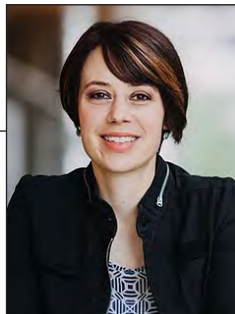


Sited for maximum views of the St. Croix River, overlooking downtown Stillwater, its historic Lift Bridge and the new Highway 36 St. Croix Crossing in the distance, the new addition has become a well-loved space for the whole family. For their efforts to ensure the new addition maintained the character of their existing 1878 Italianate, the homeowners were honored with a Historic Preservation Award from the city of Stillwater.

## Imprint Architecture and Design, LLC

www.imprintarchitecture.com • (651) 440-0334

**Design team:** Sara Imhoff, AIA; Jeremy Imhoff, AIA







# A Light Transformation

**Project type:** Remodel

Quite often, stripping away and pulling down, uncovering and revealing, is our biggest task. When remodeling a home, the canvas is not blank. The constraints are usually many and this project was no different. The clients held hope that the home could be transformed into something fully new. What we saw was great space, but no light. We believed that if we let the light in the house would transform.

Built in 1962, the house needed some updates, but was in good shape overall. One of the first challenges of this home was that the entry was a story below the main living space. Creating a welcoming, interesting, and functional entry was critical. We added glass to allow more views in and out, created a small area for coats and shoes, and rebuilt the stair into a sculptural element that ties the two floors together.

Through the main level core of the home, we took down walls, added new windows, and brought existing windows down to the floor. This extended the main living area out, borrowing space and air from the beautiful private surrounding woods.

Most dramatically, along the ridgeline and central spine inside the home, we cut a 25-foot clear glass skylight. Through this slice, we left the roof trusses intact. With the dense tree canopy above, the exposed roof structure serves to filter and bounce the light, flooding the middle of the home. The skylight is oriented north south and on sunny days it acts as a sundial revealing the time and seasons.

By adding and enlarging windows wherever possible, opening a portion of the roof to the sky via a dramatic skylight, and combing rooms to create living spaces with views to the adjacent woods in every direction, this modern and elegant renovation transforms a dark and fragmented layout into a light-filled retreat among the trees.



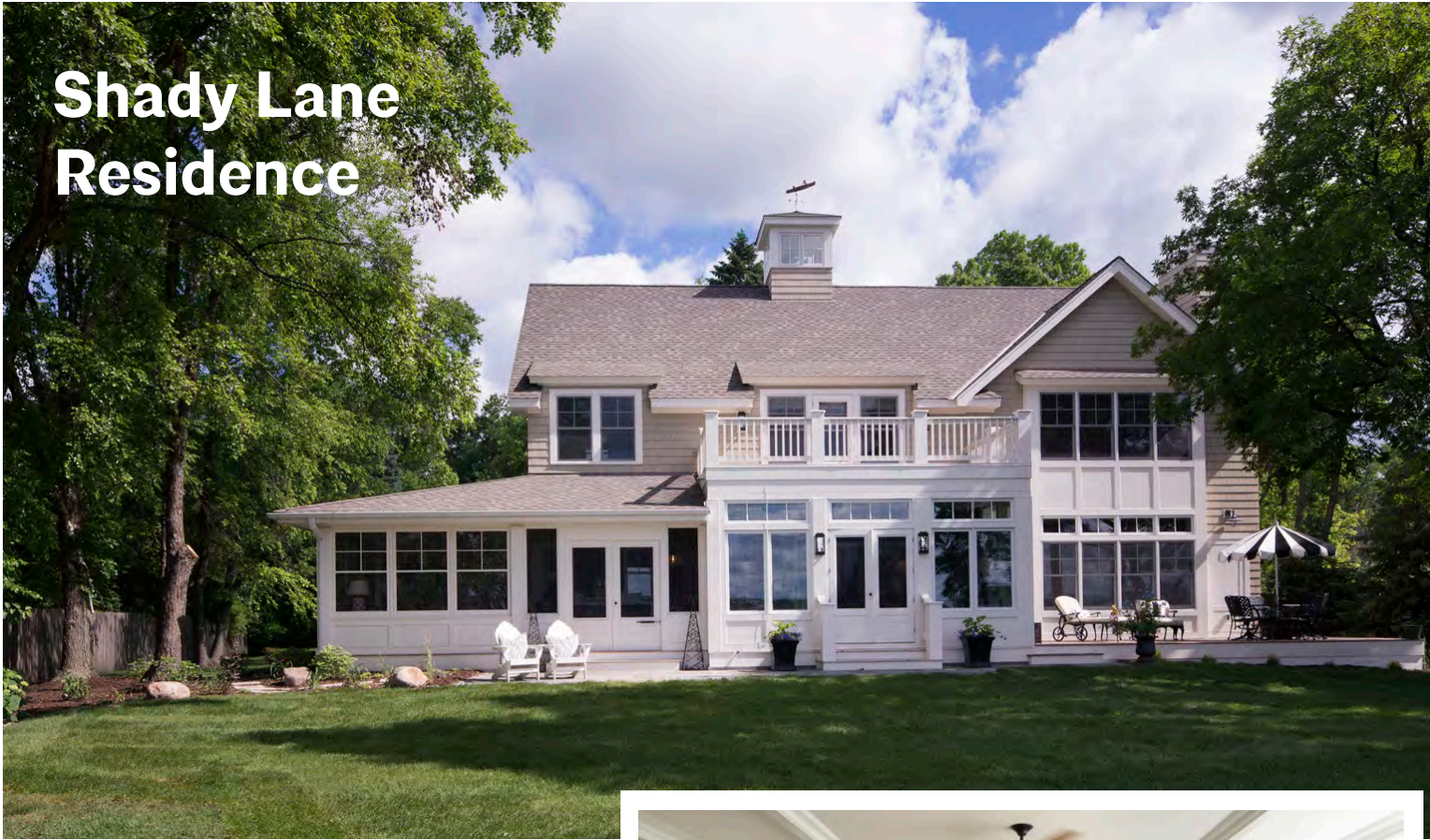
## CityDeskStudio

[www.citydeskstudio.com](http://www.citydeskstudio.com) • (651) 644-1106

**Design team:** Ben Awes, AIA; Nate Dodge; Perri Kinsman



# Shady Lane Residence



## Project type: New Construction

After living in their circa-1970 ranch-meets-ski chalet-style house on Wayzata Bay for nearly a decade, the clients commissioned the architects to resolve a myriad of issues while maintaining the original foundation and responding to the home's surrounding context.

The home was once part of a vast estate on Lake Minnetonka but it was tucked to the far left of the lot so it had no front entry presence and no presence on the site. Among the many challenges posed by the 1970s layout, the dark, cramped kitchen faced the driveway, so the best views of the lake were obscured by a wall of cabinets.



Among the clients' numerous goals, they wanted tall ceilings, an integrated kitchen, dining and living area for entertaining, guest rooms, a home office, and plenty of storage to make up for the lack of a basement—all of which were achieved by the architects' thoughtful design. The architects responded to the surrounding context by designing an open layout that takes full advantage of the lake views and creates an easy, natural flow between the porch, the sunroom, the dining room, the living room, and a pantry.

As the heart of the new home, the kitchen features a wall of white glass-fronted cabinets and an expansive white center island balanced by a wall of black soapstone, plus a pass-through serving station to the screened porch. The client is an interior designer so the house has many distinguishing features, including a charming cupola with a handcrafted copper weathervane, a dramatic interior palette of white shiplap paneling and white custom cabinetry punctuated by black enameled doors, and glamorous chandeliers and sconces that function like jewelry for each room. Other thoughtful details include storage built into the staircase, a soundproofed TV room, and other welcoming features.

## PKA Architecture

[www.pkarch.com](http://www.pkarch.com) • (612) 353-4920

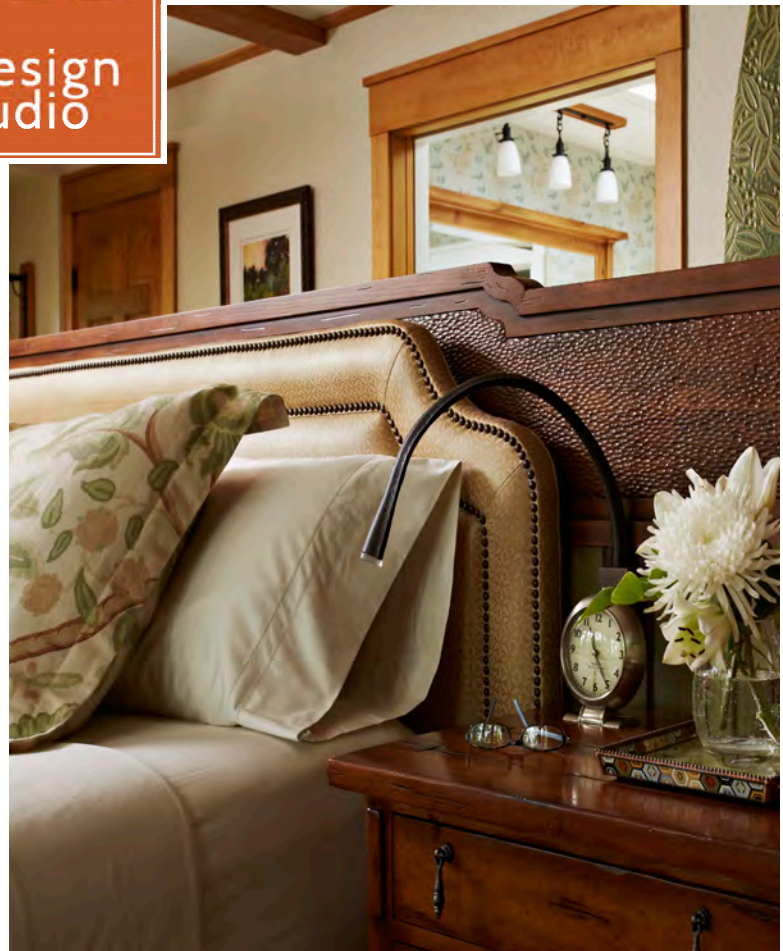
**Design team:** Ryan Fish, AIA; Lars Peterssen, AIA







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# Sommerhus

**Project type:** New Construction

Sommerhus is a private retreat for two empty-nesters. The clients purchased the previous cabin after falling in love with its location on a private, lakefront peninsula. However, this beautiful site was also challenging to build on, due to its position sandwiched between the lake and protected wetland. The clients disliked the old cabin because a lack of insulation and heat meant it could only be used in the summer months. In addition, it was too small for their needs. They wanted to build a new, larger retreat, but were met with yet another constraint: the new cabin would be limited to the previous cabin's small footprint. Thus, they decided they needed an architect's expertise to design a new cabin, and contacted Christopher Strom Architects. Their goal: a year-round retreat with an open floor plan for entertaining and a modern design that blends Scandinavian and beach house aesthetic.

The clients were committed to keeping all existing trees on their site. Thus, to maximize the square footage of the cabin without removing trees or expanding the footprint, the new structure had to grow vertically. At the same time, the clients wanted to be good neighbors. To them, this meant that their cabin should disappear into the woods, especially when viewed from the lake. To accomplish both these requests, the architect selected a dark exterior metal façade that would visually retreat into the trees. The metal siding is a modern, low-maintenance, cost-effective solution, especially when compared to traditional wood siding. Warm wood on the soffits of the large roof overhang contrast with the metal siding. Sommerhus' resulting exterior is just as the clients requested: boldly modern yet respectful of the serene surroundings.

Due to their desire for a modern aesthetic, the clients wanted a flat roof. However, flat roofs are more expensive than a traditional trussed roof. The architect determined a creative solution: a low-sloped hip roof. Because the cabin was so tall, a low-sloped hip roof would always appear as a flat roof when viewed from the ground or the lake. Thus, the client could realize significant savings. A clear glass canopy above an exterior door compliments the horizontal lines of the roof.

The clients desired a beach house-inspired interior, full of light and warmth, in contrast to the dark exterior. The living room has two walls of sliding glass doors that connect to the wrap-around porch. This creates a beautiful, inside-outside living space. By utilizing sliding patio doors to create a wall of glass instead of selecting a pricier window system, the architect used the budget efficiently. The crisp and bright kitchen also connects to the porch with the window that opens to an outdoor counter—perfect for passing food and drinks to those lounging on the porch. The kitchen is open to the rest of the first-floor entertaining space and brings a playful, beach-house feel to the cabin.



By utilizing sliding patio doors to create a wall of glass instead of selecting a pricier window system, the architect used the budget efficiently. The crisp and bright kitchen also connects to the porch with the window that opens to an outdoor counter—perfect for passing food and drinks to those lounging on the porch. The kitchen is open to the rest of the first-floor entertaining space and brings a playful, beach-house feel to the cabin.



## Christopher Strom Architects

www.christopherstrom.com • (612) 961-9093

**Design team:** Christopher Strom, AIA; Eric Johnson, AIA; Alison Markowitz Chan, AIA



# Courtyard Shingle Style

**Project type:** New Construction

## Part of the Neighborhood

After raising their family on a large property outside the Twin Cities, our clients wanted to build their new home in more of a neighborhood environment; one that was friendly and inviting from the street and that encouraged a relationship with the neighbors. The entry sequence—the welcoming face of their home—was designed with this in mind. They were also mindful of the scale of the home within the neighborhood, recognizing that size and form had to be appropriate to achieve their desired character.

## Engaging Site Opportunities

The planning, form and site orientation play to this corner lot's natural advantages while minimizing its weaknesses. The site has a busy road to the south and a significant downward south-to-north slope. The natural sloping of the site was leveraged to create a walkout basement to the north of the house for a future pool and to preserve the flat area for the "Hidden Gem." Because aging in place was also a consideration, our clients wanted their main living on one level and their views from these spaces allow them to observe activities on the pool terrace, front yard, and courtyard. With the significant slope, this was a challenge to balance not exposing too much of the home from the ground while still creating accessible outdoor spaces. The courtyard creates that accessibility.

The owners noted a desire from the start to create an outdoor courtyard space at the heart of their home. Due to the lot's proportion, significant setbacks, and a desire to push the front of the house back from the street, there was not much traditional "backyard" left anyway, providing the perfect courtyard opportunity. We created this private retreat by wrapping three sides with main living spaces and bedroom suite and completing the fourth with a wall of trees and plantings. Invisible from the street, this unique oasis is revealed by a wall of glass as one enters the home. The courtyard flows to the outdoor terrace and has a path leading down to the future pool.

## Gathering at the Perfect Spot

With a love for entertaining, the owners wanted plenty of space to accommodate friends and family. The primary living spaces were arranged in a way that was comfortable for two but could gracefully handle larger groups. The kitchen, living, and dining areas are continuous and open, but still defined by changes in ceiling plane and flooring material to create intimate spaces and allow easy gathering for parties. The linear form with the main living spaces in the north wing also located the courtyard facing-wall to soak in the south light and enabled the main living area to take advantage of the north views of the pool and woods.

## Materiality and Detail

The owners did not come to us with a predetermined "style," but rather an idea of the character they sought. As one of the owners was the son of a cabinet maker, his expectations of the care and consideration that should be put into the design of their home was heightened. The cabinetry and woodwork were carefully detailed to meet these expectations.



Materials were vital in creating the desired character, and presented an opportunity to connect exterior and interior. The exterior bluestone flows into the floors of the entry, kitchen, pantry, and mudroom. The stone wrapping from exterior terrace wall to interior fireplace work to create a connection between outside and inside. Ultimately, between material, form, and courtyard organization, this home both grows out of the site and sits solidly intertwined with it.



## TEA2 Architects

www.tea2architects.com • (612) 929-2800

**Design team:** Dan Nepp, AIA, CID; Tom Van De Weghe; Chloe Sackett; Ruth Foster, Assoc. AIA



Home of the Month  
Selected Project

PHOTOS: CHAD HOLDER



## Tile House



### Project type: Remodel, Addition

The long-time homeowners of this 1955 South Minneapolis rambler were determined to revitalize the look of their home and make a small home live large. Situated respectfully within the existing footprint, the remodel added space and stature by expanding vertically with a new 550 square-foot, light-filled owner's suite. The main level spaces were replanned and updated, including a new stair location, skylights, and custom kitchen.

Living in a mid-century home for nearly two decades gave the homeowners an eye for the era's distinctive style. Over time, they acquired a collection of furniture and art from mid-century design icons such as Isamu Noguchi and Russel Wright. The interiors were inspired by the client's love of mid-century design with refined details such as decorative screen walls, custom shelving, and cat perches throughout.

The owners requested a stronger street presence for their small lot surrounded by larger-scaled homes. Clad entirely in Ludowici terracotta shingles, the updated home acquired an assertive, distinct, and textured form. The terracotta shingles, an unusual choice for residential construction, present a familiar texture of shake clad homes in the neighborhood and are a cheeky nod to the neighbor's Spanish Colonial terracotta roof tiles. Unlike most other cladding materials, these tiles have a 75-year warranty, ensuring the home's durability long-term.

The result of a collaborative owner-architect relationship is a home with transformed daily ritual that creates "comfort and calm" for the occupants. This is a home designed for the owners, their beloved cats, and their prized mid-century furnishings; it was designed to put their life front and center, to combine functional design with minimal details, and to allow room for shadows to dance all year long.

## Christian Dean Architecture

www.deanarch.com • (612) 886-2814

Design team: Christian Dean, AIA; Jessica Harner, AIA; Nathan VanWylen, AIA







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# Old Farm New



## Project type: New Construction

This modern farmhouse sits on an old farmstead in Lake Elmo. The homeowners wanted a comfortable home with an edge that celebrates the panoramic views of the rural site. A vintage white barn served as inspiration for the exterior material palette. The traditional gable form is paired with a corner of glass that accents the steel structure of the stair within. A classic wraparound porch on the south and west facades shelters the living room's three sides of floor-to-ceiling glass. A covered walkway connects the house to the three-season porch and forms a courtyard centered on the existing pool.

The kitchen opens up to this outdoor room that is perfect for intimate gatherings or entertaining a crowd. Surprises of color and materials are found throughout: polished concrete floors are combined with timber headers and whitewashed wood wall boards; hints of red complement white oak and fresh blue cabinetry in the kitchen. Reclaimed wood from the site was used for the fireplace mantel and barn doors, and an old metal Butler grain bin door was repurposed in the basement. The spaces are defined but open, allowing for long views through the house that frame the surrounding pond, outbuildings and fields.



## Rehkamp Larson Architects

[www.rehkamplarson.com](http://www.rehkamplarson.com) • (612) 285-7275

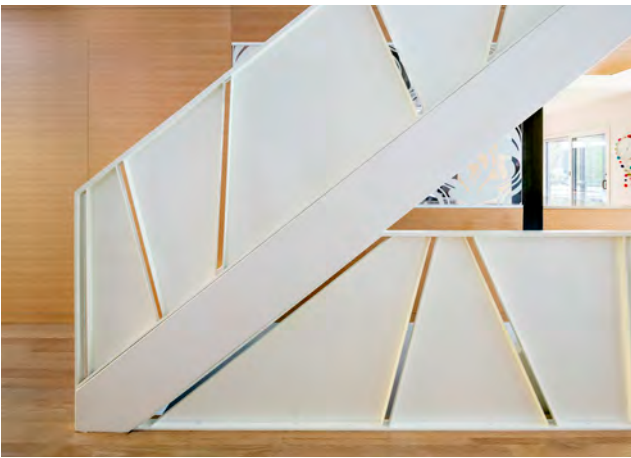
**Design team:** Jean Rehkamp Larson, AIA; Sarah Nymo, AIA; Ryan Lawinger, AIA; Angela Taffe Wingate



# Nordic Shift



## Project type: Remodel



Nordic Shift is an uncovering and revealing of the best traits and qualities of an already well-designed home. Quite often our client's love their home, but it is not performing well any longer, they want it to meet them where they are today. Often this can be done without additional square feet.

Our first task was to explore the form of the home with new textures, materials, and colors, highlighting what was interesting and unique. The existing verticality created an odd proportion that lacked human scale. We introduced a horizontal band using different materials. This banding reduced the scale and also highlighted more interesting features of the home, including the long-sloped roof. The cedar base echoes the dense vegetation and also helps ground the house to the site, something important and often missing in homes.

The upper half is made white, creating a sense of lightness and lift. The smooth panels contrast with the weathering cedar below. Laser cut panels add a focal point to the home which lacks a visible front entry. The pattern is a fresh take on traditional folk art which holds importance to the clients. Facing west, these panels provide beautiful sweeping shadows that glide across the front façade.

These elements are repeated inside at a more human scale. Clean lines articulated in white oak, steel, fresh white, and splashes of color, reflecting the owner's Scandinavian heritage. The redesigned kitchen, still in the center, now anchors and connects all rooms. Playfully, the cabinetry twists and turns into defining features of each space. Upper cabinets turn and become the stair landing. The appliance cabinet becomes the base for a double height living room art display. Island cabinets wrap around a center table, providing support for seating and a place to work. The house is completely refreshed and renewed without adding any additional square feet.



## CityDeskStudio

www.citydeskstudio.com • (651) 644-1106

Design team: Ben Awes, AIA; Chris Bach





## L-M Cabin

### Project type: Remodel, Addition

In October 2016, the architects received an e-mail stating, “After a summer of navel gazing, I think we have determined the program and zoning limitations of our cabin redo. I have also determined that I am fried and need someone else to generate the next round of alternatives. Do you have time to put this into your schedule?” A document titled “Cabin 4.0” was attached.

Built in 1961, the cabin was on a beautiful lake lot on a secluded bay of a larger lake, complete with scenic island at the bay entrance. It was an efficient, 1960s style, appealing to the owners. However, as the owners approached retirement and spent more time at the cabin its limitations became clear. The 540 square-foot of living space contained a small kitchen with suspended cabinet which were head knockers with anyone on kitchen duty, a bathroom sized for a small RV, a 20-gallon water heater, and décor dating from the 1980s. The sole heat source was a 55-year-old propane space heater in the living room that only heated the bedrooms if their doors were left open. The cabin appeared larger because of the attached boathouse, which was under the same roof but not accessible from the living quarters.

The architects undertook the tasks of mediator, psychologist, and architect, interviewing all interested family members before developing a design plan. Requirements included maximizing the views, modernizing the bathroom and kitchen, storage space, utility room with washer/dryer, and year-round habitability, all while making it “age in place” accessible. Additional requests included a third bedroom, second bathroom and office space/music room. Design restrictions included a maximum addition of 200 square feet that could not be toward the lake, road, or wetlands. There was no height limitation. The boat house floor was 16 inches below the cabin floor, making its incorporation into the existing living space a challenge.

Cabin 5.0 specified demolition of the existing cabin, creating a level foundation to incorporate the boathouse into the living space, and an expansion of 200 square-foot to the south. It included an overhanging second story with two bedrooms, a bathroom, and an open loft area for office and music space. Upon careful review however, the height did not “nestle” into the existing trees and site. Additionally, the cost was not commensurate with other cabins in the area. Architects began work on Cabin 6.0.

Cabin 6.0 incorporated all the “must haves.” It is one story with a loft whose design frames lakes views, including the front door straight out to the lake. The dramatic roof line and multitude of windows give a sense of space much larger than the square footage, inside and out. The open kitchen has a lake view from the sink, a pantry, and a peninsula counter. The bathroom has a zero-threshold shower, two sinks, and towel heater. Blocking is provided for future grab bars. The master bedroom, built over the old boathouse, has windows overlooking the lake and a large walk-in closet. The second bedroom also serves as an office. The utility room includes more storage, cleaning tools/supplies, and washer/dryer.



## hw<sup>2</sup> design + architecture llc

www.hw2design.com • (612) 532-4147

Design team: Andrea Hammel Wollak, AIA; Jon Wollak, RA





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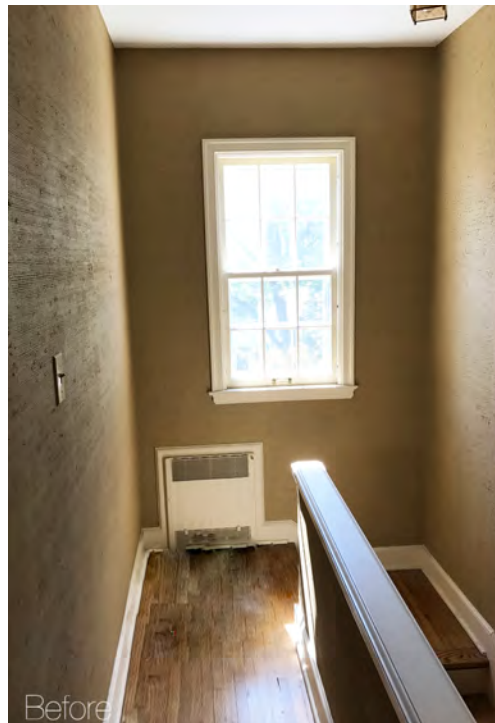




# Henn House

## Project type: Remodel

This roost needed a multi-functional kitchen fit for everything from homework to grown work. By removing the study, back staircase, and powder room, the kitchen now sprawls and connects the living spaces. Mama Henn’s cooking oasis offers tons of luminous daylight, room for prep, and practical storage. A new pantry holds loads of stock food items for the family of seven, reducing trips to the grocery. An added designated beverage refrigerator at the kitchen perimeter keeps the little ones out of the kitchen and is located directly next to the family table for ease. To complete the main level, the former breakfast area is now a new powder room in an out-of-the-way nook.



Upstairs, a new laundry room replaced the unnecessary second staircase. Bringing the appliances from the basement up to the second floor near the bedrooms, where laundry tends to pile, was another functional and practical decision that the owners appreciate. True to Colonial Vintage style, built-ins and materials reflect a timeless endurance.

The natural reclaimed wood upper cabinets offer contrast to the pristine light quartz counter tops and encourage wear-and-tear to enhance the patina. The white cabinetry brightens the space along with the casual, brick tile backsplash. Now a more open



## Kell Architects, LLC

www.kellarchitects.com • (612) 812-5687

Design team: Meghan Kell, AIA; Ann Hauer, Assoc. AIA; Kelly Kraemer, Assoc. AIA

PHOTOS: TROY THIES



# Vernacular Modern



PHOTOS: SCOTT AMUNDSON



## Project type: New Construction

The owners wanted a home for their young family that created connections between indoors and outdoors in the quiet of restored prairie. This house, barn, pool, and pool house are situated on a rolling prairie west of the Twin Cities. Organized into crossing wings, the floorplan is splayed to create outdoor courtyards and take advantage of long views in all directions. The main level contains the more public spaces for daily living—kitchen, dining room, family room, and porch—as well as the supporting spaces of mudroom, wine cellar, dog room, and master suite. The master suite is directly below the kids’ bedrooms, which are easily accessed by a private stair.

A bridge connects the kids’ rooms to the other wings of the house containing guest suites and a loft with built-in bunks. The house connects to a new barn and pool via a curved gravel path and low, dry-stacked stone wall, which also serves as a border between manicured lawn and restored prairie. The barn contains fly-tying and potting rooms, which look out onto the vegetable garden, and has a large, open space for equipment. A raised patio with pool and pool house lies just outside the wall and path, reaching out into the tall prairie grass.

## Rehkamp Larson Architects

[www.rehkamlarson.com](http://www.rehkamlarson.com) • (612) 285-7275

**Design team:** Mark Larson, AIA; Ryan Lawinger, AIA; Kari Nelson, AIA; Laurel Johnston, AIA; Jean Rehkamp Larson, AIA; Angela Taffe Wingate





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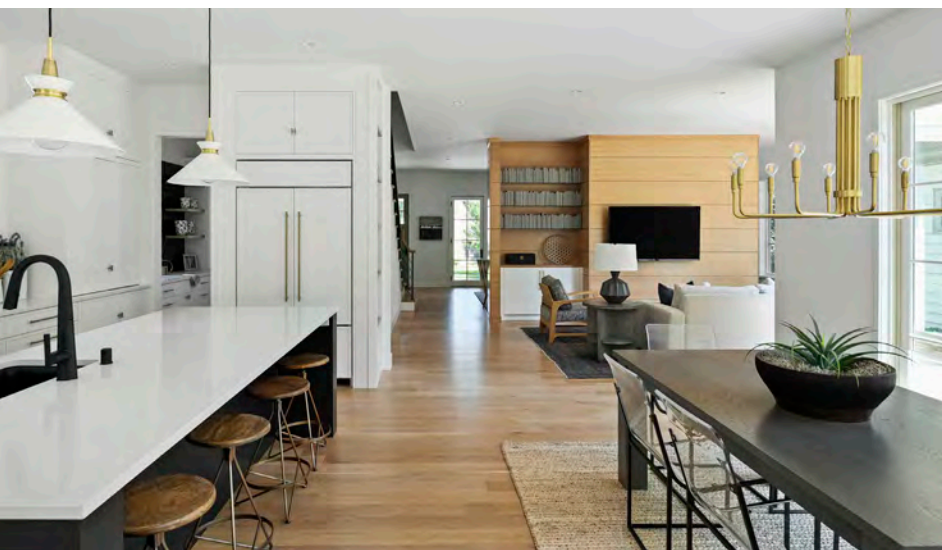


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# New Gambrel on the Block

**Project type:** New Construction

This Linden Hills home was designed to appeal to an unknown future buyer; a “spec home.” It sought to accomplish two contradictory goals: to blend with the existing, smaller neighborhood homes, and to sensitively maximize square footage on a compact city lot. Spec homes are common in Linden Hills; this house sought to elevate the typology in an uncommon way.

To blend the home with the neighbors, the gambrel roof form was selected to continue the existing typology on Vincent Avenue South, part of the “Cottage City” portion of Linden Hills. A gambrel has a barn-shaped roof that reduces the scale of a two-story home to appear as a story-and-a-half. This roof form allowed the home to blend with neighbors while helping it appear smaller than it is. With a gambrel home existing on either side, this is the New Gambrel on the Block.

To maximize square footage, the architect leveraged a detailed understanding of Minneapolis zoning code. The tuck-under garage was designed with a minimally sloped driveway to allow for the basement to be far enough below grade that it would not count towards the city’s determination of square-footage, yet was also designed to be attractive for potential buyers

and included a laundry room, guest bedroom, entertainment space, and fitness room.

The open front porch provides two important functions: it connects the family’s activities to the neighborhood through a series of large French doors and it minimizes the scale of the tuck-under garage door (there was no alley available for a detached garage). Visible glass on the front of the home doubles the required code minimum. City zoning code required the home to match the neighbor’s 50-foot setback, even though standard regulations require only 25 feet. This requirement limits the scale of the home and aids in blending it with its neighbors.

Plantings, water management, and views from neighboring homes were considered with this traditional—yet fresh—design. Columns are of the Doric classical order, with authentic proportions incorporated into the scale of the base and frieze. Guardrails are visually minimized with a light, modern materiality that stands in counterpoint to the classic frame.

An investment in quality materials sets this home apart from other new construction in the neighborhood. Crisp lap-siding, multiple-pane windows, and a cedar shingle roof add richness and timelessness as if this home was restored from an earlier age. It will contribute to the neighborhood’s character for generations.

The home’s new owners, empty-nesters Lisa and Todd, explained that they “were drawn to the house instantly when we walked in.” Lisa says, “the house reminded me of the traditional home I grew up in near a lake with a big porch, iron railings, and white columns.” It also brought back memories of Victor Gruen’s beautiful mid-century Southdale interiors from when it first opened in 1956, “with the staircase, bright windows, open floor plan, and wood centerpiece. At the same time the house reflects a new, bright, and modern home, which we appreciated for this new journey.”



## Christopher Strom Architects

www.christopherstrom.com • (612) 961-9093

**Design team:** Christopher Strom, AIA; Theo Grothe, AIA; Elizabeth Akkerman, Assoc. AIA





## Casa Loon

**Project type:** Remodel & New Construction

This project is about how an old and abandoned fishing cabin destined for demolition was transformed by the new owners into becoming their family lake retreat.

The old structure had been a summer fishing place built and shared by a big Minnesotan family. It had been uninhabited for many years. When the land was sold and developed, the cabin was left standing in one of the lots. It was in such disrepair that it was destined, in the developer's words, to be "a knock down."

When the future owners visited the lot with the "knock down cabin," they were able to sense, beyond the smelly orange carpet and the critter remains, the feeling of a comforting cabin. The closeness to the lake brought to mind the floating nest rafts that neighbors build to house the loons. They could tell that the place was home to many happy memories and decided to buy the property and transform it into their dream cabin, to make memories of their own.

In the first stage, the cabin was repaired and used by the family. Summers were spent ripping through old carpeting, frequenting antique stores, and revamping the charming property. As an immigrant family, the new owners were making their mark on Minnesota. To them, this cabin represented years of hard work and adjustment to Minnesotan culture.

After six years, it was time to remodel. The owners needed a year-round cabin that could hold more family and friends. This brought on some unique design challenges. The existing structure could not grow outside of its 700 square-foot area and should keep a low profile, as seen from the lake. The solution was to add a partial basement and a partial upper level for a total of 1,800 square feet. In order to minimize the visual impact of the structure, the upper bedrooms were located away from the lake, leaving the lakefront volume one story high like the original cabin.

The cabin is separated from the street by a deep bluff. To ease access a bridge was added, connecting the driveway with the upper level of the cabin. The bridge starts at the edge of the bluff and ends at the upper-level dormer on a door adjacent to the stairs. The tight quarters inspired creative solutions to meet the needs of the new home.

Completed during the pandemic, the family decided to quarantine temporarily in the new cabin, a place half the size of their home in the Twin Cities. Here they discovered the virtue of living and working in a smaller place very close to nature. And they also figured out that a space designed to accommodate the real needs and dreams of its dwellers can become an inspiring home to live and work in, regardless of its size.



PHOTOS: GEORGE HEINRICH

## M. Valdes Architects, PLLC

[www.mvaldesarc.com](http://www.mvaldesarc.com) • (612) 834-9551

**Design team:** Marcelo Valdes, AIA







## A Stitch in Time

### Project type: Remodel

Built in 1989, this home beautifully followed through with its rotated square design. No room was a completed rectangle, and all rooms had triangular features, creating interesting and unexpected spaces both indoors and out that connected and flowed into and through each other. This was true everywhere except in the center of the house where it was most needed. The kitchen locked itself into a square with one access point and little visual connection to the living room, dining room, family room, or entry. For this young family of 4, the kitchen is the center around which most daily life rotates. They love to cook and want to remain close and accessible to each other.

By thinking of the kitchen not as a separate space but rather as a means to stitch it all together, we expanded the footprint beyond the original walls, reaching just slightly across thresholds to adjacent rooms, allowing us to link them all together. Multiple flooring changes were replaced with continuous wood flooring throughout, to reinforce the space being connected. Rose painted accents are used across each of the larger kitchen elements creating interest and highlights in a new unified space.

The centerpiece is a monumental island that serves as the stitch planting a foot in both the family room and the atrium. The multi-angled island not only works with the direction of the walls of the space it encapsulates, but it also provides different places for sitting, washing, or prepping. The home is now opened up and reconnected to support the family in the way they want to live.



## CityDeskStudio

[www.citydeskstudio.com](http://www.citydeskstudio.com) • (651) 644-1106

**Design team:** Ben Awes, AIA; Chris Bach







PHOTOS: CHAD HOLDER

# Grain

**Project type:** Remodel

This renovation transforms a small mid-century, tuck-under rambler into a sustainable, daring modern home rich in local materials. The growing family loved their neighborhood but couldn't squeeze into the modest 1,300 square-foot home any longer. The architects were hired to find a solution for a second-story addition. St. Anthony has restrictive zoning codes that barely allowed the architects to negotiate a flat roof into their prescriptive height limits. The solution is nestled in a neighborhood of two-bedroom, mid-century ramblers in the Village of St. Anthony. This house was expanded to serve the needs of a blended family.

The owners also wanted a modern, light-filled home. The design solution maintains the first-floor framing, adds a second floor and wraps the exterior in charcoal-stained and natural cedar. The interior walls were removed to create an open plan with white walls and rich wood accents. The living room and metal staircase have floor-to-ceiling glass that allows these open areas to be bathed with natural light. The house is transformed into a four-bedroom home complete with a family room and office. The landscaping features architectural planters, a master-suite terrace and a seamless deck that is sheltered by a cantilevered roof.

The overall effect is a rich combination of locally sourced hardwood with finely detailed modern elements of charcoal and white. The interior design is playful but conforming to a strict pallet of black and white. The project highlights how reuse, local materials, and simple modernism can blur the boundaries between old and new, and inside and outside.

## D/O Architects

www.do-architects.com • (612) 259-8623

**Design team:** John Dwyer, AIA; Colin Oglesbay, Assoc. AIA; Ted Tuggle; Edward Eichten, AIA; Al Rahn; Zheyang Yuan, Assoc. AIA





# River Roost

Home of the Month  
Selected Project



## Project type: New Construction

As it turned out, this home presented a unique, but most interesting design dilemma on the main living level. One client wanted a traditional arrangement of separate rooms to house each activity and the other preferred a totally open plan. We explored a series of plan arrangements and finally arrived at a solution that used a combination of three cedar “boxes” to modulate the overall space. Two were used to partially or totally obscure one activity from another, depending on where you stood, and the third served as a vertical conduit delivering one from level to level while thrusting you into the backyard at each midlevel.

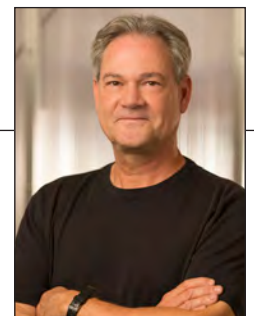
Perched on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River, the house wanted grand views of the river bluffs to the west and an intimate, but open, connection to the backyard to the east. The result is a linear home stretching from north to south with lots of glass to maximize both exposures.

The windows on the river exposure play a little cat-and-mouse to outwardly reveal and inwardly conceal, as opposed to the expanse of glass to the yard, which unashamedly lets the inside out and the outside in. The second story is all about the western view with bedrooms lined up like berths on a river cruise, sporting large bay windows for the three smaller berths and a grand balcony for the couple’s suite designed for river-viewing as well as star-gazing.



with recycled and recyclable materials as well as three green lower roofs and a solar-ready upper roof to catch the other rays of the sun.

Looking at the house through a sustainable lens, one sees a super insulated and incredibly “tight” home



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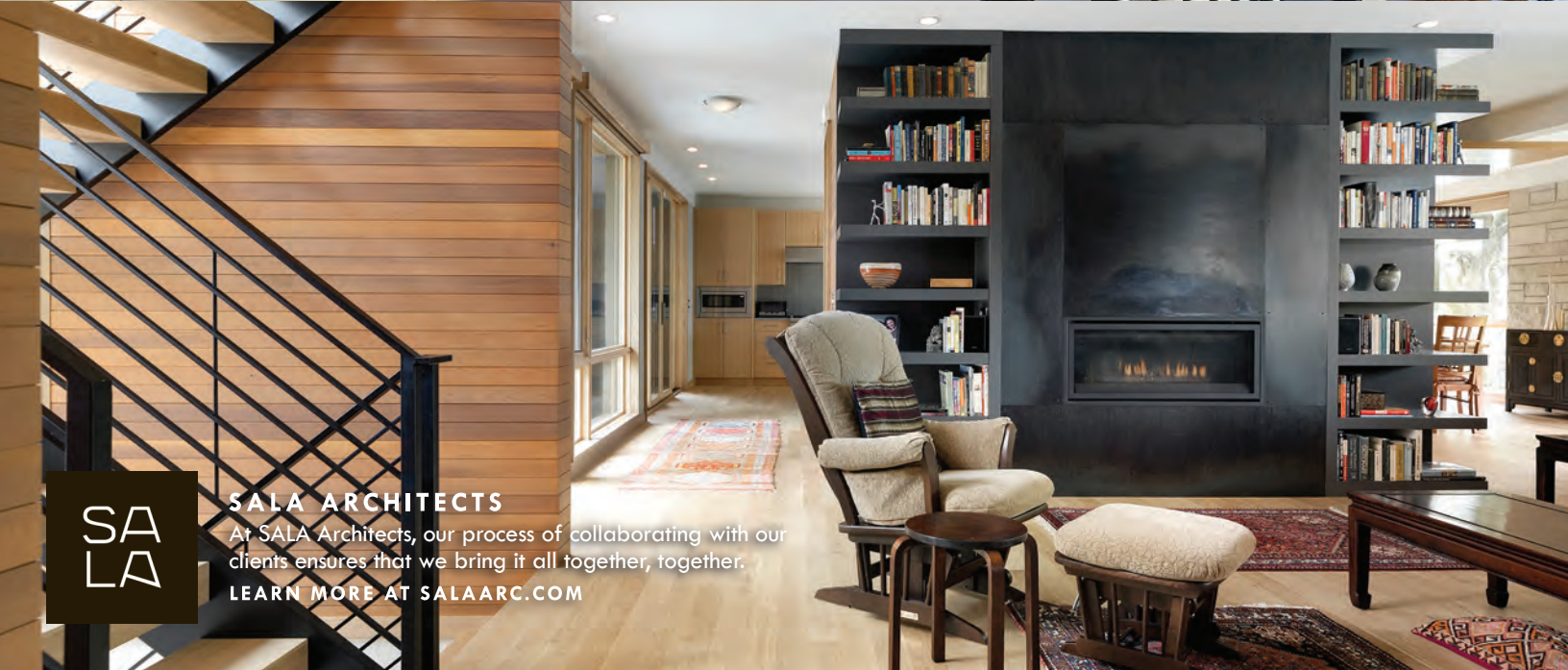
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Design team: Eric Odor, AIA; Ben Dose



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# Modern Dellwood Transformation

PHOTOS: CHUCK CARVER



## Project type: Remodel, Addition

This whole-house transformation in Dellwood was all about releasing the modern home trapped inside its 1980s builder prison. The home was originally purchased as a place for the owners to stay while visiting their adult children. Although the aesthetics of the original home were challenging, they chose it anyway for its wooded lot, convenient location, great views, awesome pool, and two-story atrium space.

While it already had plenty of space, it was laid out poorly and was chopped up by multiple levels and half-walls that obscured the atrium. Located adjacent to the White Bear Yacht Club Golf Course, the beautiful views of the 13th green were blocked by the lack of windows. A strange roof line on the exterior made it difficult to anticipate the clerestory windows and the vaulted space inside.



The panoramic views to the golf course and wooded lot were opened up throughout the home by the addition of expansive horizontal windows. 20 square feet was also added to extend the vaulted ceilings and rooflines to the front of the house, freeing the atrium from its 1980s shackles. We created a covered front porch to greet guests and added large areas of vertical trapezoidal windows for greater access to the abundant views and bring in more natural light. The convoluted main stair was removed to increase the dining space adjacent to the kitchen, and a new sculptural metal stair with wood slab treads was added to accentuate the experience of the atrium space. Clean lines, simple details, white walls, black window frames, and grey structural elements all combine to transform this from just a place for the owners to stay when visiting to a home they want to live in year round.



## Chris Doehrmann Architect, Inc.

www.doehrmann.com • (651) 639-0469

Design team: Chris Doehrmann, AIA



# Everwood Farmstead

Home of the Month  
Selected Project



PHOTOS: CHAD HOLDER

## Project type: New Construction

Everwood Farmstead is a place of creativity and rural education. Nestled into the rolling countryside of Wisconsin's driftless area, this agrarian arts center celebrates the natural beauty of an 80-acre, historic farmstead.

This arts center's master plan was inspired by its site's rolling landscape, lush forest and surrounding fields. The campus congregates around an 1850s-era barn that has been transformed into a 120-seat performance venue. Guests can meander along trails that connect stone formations, groves of trees, and other contemplative spaces. The first phase is the caretakers' house. This modest little farmhouse is set between the public parking area and the woods. On the public side, its minimally punched, wall façade conveys this is a private residence. All living areas are organized along the opposite façade, where large windows overlook the forest and draw daylight into the interiors.

The clients wanted a new building that was quiet within the landscape and that drew from the historic buildings that made up the campus. This home takes simple barn-like shapes and simplifies them with clean, modern lines. The interiors are a rich contrast of wood sourced from the farm and bright, white walls and large, horizontal glass. Touches of black metal harken back to the functional reality of farms: a black wood-burning stove, hanging utility lights, and simple pulls. Windows frame the beauty of the old barn, rolling forests, and endless fields like art. The design is simple, affordable, and warm for the family that oversees the inspiring art center.



## D/O Architects

[www.do-architects.com](http://www.do-architects.com) • (612) 259-8623

**Design team:** John Dwyer, AIA; Colin Oglesbay, Assoc. AIA; Aaron McCauley-Aburto, AIA; Edward Eichten, AIA





## Back in the Grove



### Project type: Remodel

This traditional, 1990s builder home lacked a graceful floor-plan flow and was stunted by its outmoded style. However, this home held a tremendous amount of potential. Cue the moody dramatic colors, natural materials, and visual layers.

A once-clumsy progression from the living room, through the kitchen, and into the family room is now an unobstructed stroll through the home. Opening up the isolated spaces on the main level and relocating the kitchen to a position that connects the home's main flow encourages folks to gather together in the most used rooms. The exterior of the home is encased in a forest, and now that nature is celebrated by several new windows and spaces. Due to expense, the decision to preserve the standard red oak casing was accepted

and new materials were chosen to enhance the standard grade trim. On the interior, the sightlines throughout the home are alluring and framed by timber headers, creating a beautiful continuation from the outside to the inside.

Once again, daylight comes to the rescue in the remodeled owner's bath. Solar tubes were added to the internalized bathroom. The update to the makeup hall has transformed a once drab and windowless space into a beautifully-lit area to pamper oneself. The horizontal lines introduced into this small inlet expanded the visual size of the vanity and framed the seating area in a way that draws you to stand before it. Overall, this home's new characteristics are delectable. The rooms are full of rich colors, warmth, and natural light that persuades you to come home.



## Kell Architects, LLC

[www.kellarchitects.com](http://www.kellarchitects.com) • (612) 812-5687

**Design team:** Meghan Kell, AIA; Kelly Kraemer, Assoc. AIA



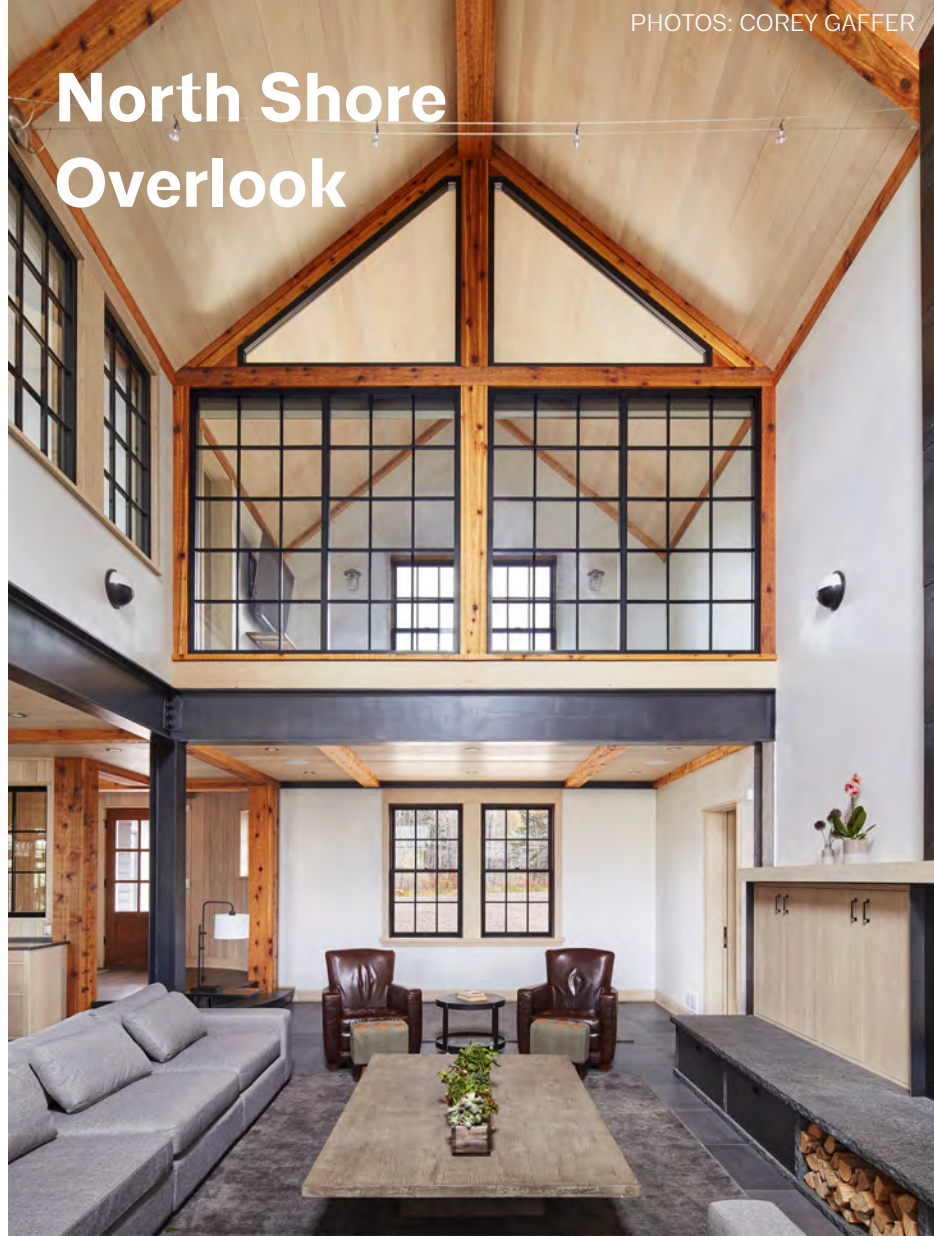


## Project type: New Construction

Before deciding to build a cabin of their own, the owners had enjoyed skiing and biking along the North Shore for many years. When a ridgetop property adjacent to their friends' cabin became available, the couple could not resist and immediately started breaking in what is now a well-worn path between the properties. As it came time to build, the overall goals that drove the project were to prioritize the panoramic view of Lake Superior while staying nestled in the trees and maintaining a deep connection to the surrounding landscape.

The cabin is carefully sited so the main level steps down with the topography of the bedrock; the entry hall is two steps above the main living spaces and primary bedroom suite, while the mudroom and garage are two steps above the entry hall. The upper level is home to bunk rooms and a loft, which is tucked into the main roof form with dormers and feature treetop views. The screened porch and connecting deck are located on the south side of the cabin, closest to their friends' property, so that they can easily walk the path to meet for bonfires. With the owners' desire for the screened porch to directly expand onto the deck, a 9'x13' screened sliding door was designed to function as both a door and the fourth wall of the porch.

Inspired by the owners' European industrial aesthetic and the nearby Lutsen Resort designed by Edwin Lundie, the overscale, traditional divided lite windows engage a unique sense of scale. While the seven-foot-tall windows seem small from afar, the larger-than-life views of the trees and lake beyond become more expansive as one moves closer. Exposed steel and dark window sashes contrast the more traditional wood tones throughout the cabin, creating a timeless blend of modern and rustic cabin materials.



## Albertsson Hansen Architecture, Ltd.

[www.aharchitecture.com](http://www.aharchitecture.com) • (612) 823-0223

**Design team:** Todd Hansen, AIA, CID; Ian McLellan, AIA; Abbie Seba, AIA; Sarah Hughes, Assoc. AIA





# GreenHouse



PHOTOS: ALYSSA LEE

### Project type: New Construction

As owners Kirsten and Michael watched the Vikings playoff game known as the “Minneapolis Miracle” at a neighbor’s house, their garage sparked an electrical fire and was soon engulfed in flames. Although no one was hurt in the fire, the garage was destroyed. The homeowners sensed that this was an opportunity to build what they had long been considering: an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). It would provide space for their aging parents as well as a sewing space for Kirsten. In addition, the owners wanted their ADU to be a model of sustainability.



The resulting 660 square-foot ADU hosts a full kitchen, living room, bedroom, and small deck, as well as solar panels and numerous sustainable features. To visually expand the small space, the architect focused on maximizing the number of windows and sky lights.

As the architect describes, designing an ADU is “a game of inches, not feet.” This ADU is no exception. It is packed full of amenities, including in-floor heating, a stacked washer and dryer, and even an elevator for the homeowner’s aging parents. However, due to the clients’ desire for a modern aesthetic, these layers of amenities were elegantly hidden to avoid visual clutter. The architect states, “The challenge was getting all of the electrical and plumbing tucked into the walls. Every single void in the ADU is filled.” The many large windows only added to this challenge by taking up precious wall space.

This is the “greenest” project to date for Christopher Strom Architects. As Michael stated, “In my family, one parent worked in photo-voltaics in the early days. Kirsten’s work has been with climate change. So why wouldn’t we take a sustainable approach to the ADU? That’s what it comes down to: why would you build something today that ignored the challenges we already have and the ones we know are coming?” Solar panels, continuous exterior zip-insulation, and automated rolling shades work to create a sustainable living space. The solar panels provide about half the electricity that the client’s primary home uses, as well as powering the ADU. Because both the sky lights and the solar panels required roof space, careful consideration was made by the architect to create a layout which would maximize both.

## Christopher Strom Architects

[www.christopherstrom.com](http://www.christopherstrom.com) • (612) 961-9093

**Design team:** Christopher Strom, AIA; Elizabeth Akkerman, Assoc. AIA; Eric Johnson, AIA







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# School House Box

Home of the Month  
Selected Project



**Project type:** Remodel, Addition

Believed to be the oldest building in Excelsior, Minnesota, this humble brick structure has transformed, been moved, and housed countless people over its 162 years. Affectionately known as “The Beehive,” it was built in 1857 and began as the original Excelsior schoolhouse. It was moved to its current location in the 1880s and became a 23-room dormitory for Northwestern Christian College, followed by a boarding house, and finally apartments (in addition to the rumors of more sordid activities in the early Twentieth century!).

After being in the same family for several decades, the owner wanted to transform the building one more time to make it her own home. Citydeskstudio worked closely with her and the Excelsior Historic Preservation Commission on the design. She now occupies the main floor, with additional units above and below for rental and for family.

The design celebrates the stout and blocky character of the building with a new modern expansion off the back. There, the building steps and expands outwards in glassy boxes of charred cedar. Inside, the original structure was repaired and uncovered where possible, and previous poorly done modifications were corrected. The center piece of this more open and light-filled home is a rich modern kitchen in walnut, travertine, and steel. The old character remains ever-present and is essential to the spirit of The Beehive’s latest transformation.

This multigenerational home’s design honors the legacy of the property, marrying the original Excelsior schoolhouse with a beautiful, modern, contextually sensitive remodel and addition.



## CityDeskStudio

www.citydeskstudio.com • (651) 644-1106

**Design team:** Ben Awes, AIA; Chris Bach; Nate Dodge





# Browndale Renovation



**Project type:** Remodel

This 1940s Colonial in Edina’s Country Club neighborhood was full of potential but in need of refinement. Previous renovations had converted exterior rooms to interior spaces and filled the home with awkward level changes, hard surfaces and disjointed rooms. The kitchen stood behind a brick wall, and the sunroom and family room were divided by a thick brick indoor grill.

Rooms were opened up, circulation paths widened, and the kitchen became the hub of the house. Tongue and groove paneling tie the rooms together and built-ins capture empty space where wall thickness needed to remain. Off the garage, a new mudroom, larger powder room, and side entry cubby maximize storage and functionality.

## Rehkamp Larson Architects

www.rehkamlarson.com • (612) 285-7275

**Design team:** Jean Rehkamp Larson, AIA; Angela Taffe Wingate







## Rural Eclectic

**Project type:** New Construction

This new home is carefully situated on a 2.5-acre rural site in Grant Township with views to a nearby marsh. The clients wanted to take full advantage of the rural setting and find a home for their self-described quirky collection of contemporary and antique furnishings.

Goals of the project included minimizing the impact to the natural setting and surrounding vegetation; maximizing views to a nearby marsh; and a design aesthetic that embodied a rustic, lived-in vibe. Natural materials were utilized and sustainable features such as roof-mounted solar panels and energy-efficient windows were included.

The architects utilized corrugated metal and cedar siding for a modern, rustic aesthetic on the exterior. The upper band of steel mirrors the sky while the earthen color of the cedar anchors the home to the land, tying it to the landscape into which it is nestled. Inside, the design allowed for a clear delineation between open-concept public spaces and private spaces.

Aging in place was a consideration for the homeowners, so first-floor spaces were designed such that the owners can live completely on the main level. A second level includes bedroom, bath, and loft for guests.



## McMonigal Architects

[www.mcmonigal.com](http://www.mcmonigal.com) • (612) 331-1244

**Design team:** Rosemary McMonigal, FAIA, CID; Kyle Thrapp, AIA; Nick Dellwo; Phil Hofstad





# Golf Terrace Residence

## Project type: New Construction

When a young, design-savvy family moved home to Minnesota after living overseas for many years, they found a lot in an established suburban neighborhood. The neighborhood was built in the 1920s with a myriad of beautifully executed architectural styles including Tudor Revival, Mediterranean Revival, and Colonial Revival, so the couple commissioned the architect to design a modern home with traditional European sensibilities that would make a strong design statement while integrating into the character and fabric of the neighborhood.

Deftly balancing modernity and classicism, the architecture firm designed a timeless white stucco home that recalls Belgian modern country houses. Designed to serve the many needs of a busy family, the highly functional open plan includes an integrated kitchen, spacious butler pantry, dining room, family room, a large mud room, a casual indoor-outdoor room, two home offices, and a lower-level game room. The luxurious materials palette of Carrara marble, white oak, granite and Georgian paneling creates a stunning backdrop for the clients' collection of art, photography, furniture, and antiques acquired on their travels.

Designed with a keen eye to scale, proportion, and materiality, this new modern home brings a fresh yet appropriate spirit to the neighborhood.



## PKA Architecture

www.pkarch.com • (612) 353-4920

Design team: Carl Olson, AIA; Gabriel Keller, Assoc. AIA





# Washburn Ave Renovation

**Project type:** Remodel

This interior renovation of a Craftsman-era, 1915 two-story home nestled in the Fulton neighborhood of Minneapolis gave the active family of four a new way to use the entire space. The main level redesign incorporated a dining nook, meditation room, mudroom, and a modern kitchen with waterfall-edged countertops, while opening the home for better traffic flow and views to the outdoors. The basement is now a new and playful zone that supports family movie nights, game storage, a home office, a bike collection, laundry, and a new 3/4 bath with unique finishes. The upper level gained a full owners' suite, a redesigned bright and cheery kids' bath, and two refreshed kid bedrooms.

Maximizing the existing square footage, this home exemplifies the qualities of the "The Not So Big House" by living large in the space it has. The very efficient interpretation of the traditional South Minneapolis floor plan is highlighted by the addition of the new owners' suite 3/4 bath with edgy-dramatic finishes and ample storage. Unique spaces in the home are incorporated to create special, semi-private moments.

The dining nook is designed to evolve with growing children, the reading nook on the second floor creates that "third" space that is important for families: not in the middle of the open concept living space and not isolated in private bedrooms. The home office and bike room in the basement create separate spaces for each parent that are still somewhat connected to the lower-level family room where creative activities and entertainment are focused.

Sustainable measures were taken with regard to insulation, energy testing, and space planning. Working with the home's existing footprint allowed for the maximization of green space on the exterior. The presence of natural light was improved in the home by strategically adding new windows. And the home has been pre-wired for a photovoltaic array on the roof. The architect-homeowner is also a hobby gardener and, over the years, has built a wildflower and shade garden with native landscape that is pollinator-friendly.



PHOTOS: ERIC MUELLER

## Joy Martin Architecture

[www.joyarchitecture.com](http://www.joyarchitecture.com) • (612) 616-9472

**Design team:** Joy Martin, AIA





# The Zen Box

**Project type:** Remodel

“The Zen Box” was originally a traditional split-level home with mid-century undertones, a solid structure, and open plan. After living in the house for five years the owner/architect couple began the process of reformation. Three key factors played into the resulting design: sustainability, scale, and biophilic design.

Their strong ideals regarding sustainability, principles of reuse, reduce, and recycle drove design decisions. New material and waste would be reduced by using the existing foundation. Many items, such as appliances, water heaters, wood, kitchen and bath cabinets, and fixtures were either upcycled, donated, or sold. Included in the remodel are ultra-efficient windows, toilets, mechanical units, appliances, and doors. The flat roof is protected with TPO, a sustainable white membrane roofing material, which reflects the sun’s heat in the summer and also holds the snow in the winter to create even more insulating power.

Watching homes in Edina be torn down one after the next, the architects were inspired to show a different approach. In keeping with the spirit of the original split level, the architects used the neighborhood scale of story-and-a-half homes and ramblers to drive design decisions. One of the big moves included tearing off the hip roof and making it flat, allowing for the scale to remain the same while being able to add a bedroom suite above the garage. The addition in the back only affected one neighbor. The last big move was recladding the house using a large format cement board and replacing all of the windows. In many cases, glazing was added to capture more views of nature and allow for more daylighting.

Situated on a busy corner lot, The Zen Box was designed to embrace biophilic design while also maximizing privacy in order to create a sense of respite. “Biophilic design incorporates natural materials, natural light, vegetation, nature views and other experiences of the natural world into the modern built environment”. The home is designed such that the journey provides a connection with nature at each turn. The approach to the house showcases a warm backdrop of natural Douglas fir. The eight-foot entry is recessed to provide protection from the elements and the busy street. As you progress from the entryway, you are drawn, with a pique of light, to the main living area called the “sanctuary.” Here the room opens to 11-foot ceilings and is flooded with daylight from the large picture windows. A span of accordion glass doors fully open when the weather allows. The kitchen in this space was coordinated with Tricia Bayer at Belle Kitchens to create a seamless design, including windows that fit perfectly into the Miele appliances and Leicht cabinet design. The windows frame greenery and bird feeders.

“The nest,” (owner’s bedroom suite) added above the existing garage, feels like it is nestled in the sugar maple tree that transforms with the seasons. Elsewhere in the house, to assist with creating privacy and reduce noise pollution on the busy street, what once was a living room with a large picture window facing the street is now a home gym with a row of transom glass that captures the same beautiful maple tree as the nest. Also, new floor-to-ceiling windows were added to the existing bedrooms, creating a shotgun effect where each window frames a tree and distributes ample daylight. “The dugout,” once an awkward, unused space with dark wood paneling and one window, is now lined with glass and has become a game room with a wine cellar. There is also a private guest suite on this level that allows for a respite for the many friends and family that gather at “the Zen Box.”



## Rachel and Jonathan Bartling

rhhbartling@gmail.com • (612) 868-0686

**Design team:** Rachel L.H. Bartling, AIA; Jonathan Bartling, AIA





# Mission on France Avenue



PHOTOS: HALF ACRE HOUSE

## Project type: Addition

A collector of unique beautiful things, this homeowner found the perfect home to display his collections. This rare Mission Craftsman-style house in the heart of Minneapolis was due for a refresh and expansion.

The project took a phased approach to construction. In the first phase, the homeowner refurbished the existing bath, replaced windows, and fixed up the existing exterior shell. Phase two added an owner's bedroom with en suite bath, a gracious kitchen, and mudroom. Creative engineering allowed for both vaulted ceilings and better roof eave insulation in the new kitchen and owner's bedroom.

From the moment you walk in the front door, complete with original round window, the new kitchen draws you through the house. The space is a curated juxtaposition of art and antiques set within a modern floorplan. The styling of the fixtures and cabinets feel both historic and updated. The focal point of the room includes the wall of art and collected objects on display above a built-in buffet. Other visual treats include vintage-style cabinet door venting, reclaimed light fixtures, Spanish revival style range hood, stained wood shelving and beams, and base cabinets painted in a fresh mint color. These details are a delight for the many guests who enjoy the home via Airbnb.



A miniature mudroom off the kitchen features the home's address in a hand-laid mosaic floor tile welcoming you as you enter from the backyard. The mint painted door and pop of patterned wallpaper bring cheer to all who enter and exit the home.

The primary suite is both efficient as well as luxurious. A double sink in the primary bath allows for two wall-mounted faucets yet maximizes counter space. The primary bedroom has just the right amount of space to feel grand, with architectural features like the vaulted ceiling and the double doors spilling out into the backyard.

The master plan will be complete in phase three, when the added full basement is finished to include a guest room, family room,  $\frac{3}{4}$  bath, and laundry space.



## Mitlyng Design + Architecture

[www.mitlyngdesign.com](http://www.mitlyngdesign.com) • (612) 267-5413

**Design team:** Ashley Mitlyng, AIA



# Metal-Lark

Home of the Month  
Selected Project



**Project type:**  
New Construction

Situated on 140 acres of rolling woodlands and prairie, Metal-Lark is a pared-down, rural retreat intended to connect inhabitants to the natural surroundings. The owners are a multi-generational family who hope to share their retreat and property with the greater public as an Airbnb-style rental. The family's intent is for the struc-



ture and land to be a restorative getaway, particularly for those who may need wellness recuperation. A second cabin is currently being constructed nearby that will provide ADA accessibility.

Metal-Lark sits within former farm fields that have been replanted with native prairie grasses by the owners. A line of trees anchors the building to its location, where it takes shelter in their windbreak. The architect and family walked the land together over the course of several visits to find the optimal location for the building. The specific site was selected for its overlook to a small lake, as well as for its shade provided by a mature line of trees at the crest of the hill. By setting the building just downslope from the tree line, the building is partially concealed and has privacy from the drive.



The structure is approached from the northwest via a gravel drive that winds through the prairie hillside. Parking sits back from the tree line. From there a pathway leads between trees to where the land falls away, and a footbridge carries across to the entry of Metal Lark. A raw, uncoated, corrugated steel wall envelops the uphill side of the building. The façade's thick, super-insulated wall structure buffers the retreat from prevailing northwest winter storms while also hiding views to the lake beyond – saving the big reveal for when one enters. Inside Metal Lark, the line of the bridge continues out the other end where windows and door open to the landscape and an elevated deck cantilevers over the hillside.

Living space is accommodated on two levels, each with an efficient footprint of 20' x 20'. The entry level contains a mudroom, bathroom, and bedroom. A wood-lined stairway winds upward to the glass-walled living room, where dramatic views are revealed. A small, but well-appointed kitchen is contained within the wooden cabinet wall adjoining the stair. A writing desk is tucked into the cabinet wall at the far end, and its back panel conceals a pull-down murphy bed to add an additional sleeping location. A small storage room and mechanical space on the ground level are accessed from outside underneath the cantilevered floor.

The owners asked for a modern building, durable materials, and a small footprint. They were interested in accentuating a verticality of form while providing expansive views to the landscape. The owners also wished to minimize the ecological footprint of the building, leading the design team to conduct comprehensive energy modeling and develop numerous sustainable strategies, including stack ventilation, triple-paned windows, and solar panels located in the prairie behind the home.

## SALA Architects, Inc.

www.salaarc.com • (612) 379-3037

**Design team:** David O'Brien Wagner, AIA; Roderick Vahr



PHOTOS: COREY GAFFER





## Gull's Rest

### Project type: New Construction

The owners of this East Gull Lake property had a small guest house on the site and wanted to add a larger main house built in the spirit of the original structure—a new cabin inspired by the old one. Many details of the new building mirror that of the guest house, such as the arched openings and window patterns on the lake side, roof and bracket details at the gables, and the rolled canvas that protects the screen porches.

The floorplan for the house is splayed, with two primary sections. One side holds the more private spaces: the master suite, guest quarters, plus a screen porch. The other side is more public: kitchen, dining room, and a loft space. The gap between the two sides forms the main entry on the compressed side and a library and a guest bedroom above on the expanded lake side. The angled design, with its balanced asymmetry, allows the cabin to be more open toward the water and more compact on the entry side.

The design creates a balance of modern and traditional elements and materials. For example, the traditional stone fireplace is tapered along one side with bisecting mantel, black bay windows are bumped out to frame views at the dining room and master suite, and warm wood interiors are paired with brightly colored cabinetry.

Specific spaces were designed around client priorities with key locations for artwork, a centrally placed library with bookshelves framing the view to the lake, and a screen porch integrated into one of the cabin's primary gables. The result provides a fresh expression for the classic Minnesota family cabin.

## Rehkamp Larson Architects

[www.rehkaamlarson.com](http://www.rehkaamlarson.com) • (612) 285-7275

**Design team:** Mark Larson, AIA; John Kirk





# River Rock



## Project type: New Construction

Having grown up on the banks of the Mississippi in southern Minnesota, the river was deeply embedded in our client's lives. Our own drives along the river valley from the Twin Cities reminded us of the juxtaposition of the expansive and powerful river flowing and carving its way through the always present rocky bluffs, leaving an in-between space, always moving, always sided. The house could reflect this experience, in form, material, and space along the riverside.

Situated on the edge between the rock bluffs and the river, the house took the form of two fractured boulders, tumbled down off the bluff. Up river, a garage for car and boat storage, and down river, the aptly named "warehouse" wing for children's rooms and wide-open play. In the void between is the age-in-place living with entry, kitchen, dining, sunken living room, and master suite. Naturally aging materials of concrete, corten steel, and charred cedar were used, echoing the texture, tones, and aging presence of the rocky bluffs.



The house flows left to right and front to back. The entry is beneath a wide and heavy "outcropping" between the large flanking stones. Inside, the house opens towards the river across layers of shoreline. Left to right the house moves from the tranquil stream of the spa-like master suite, through the rapids of a modern and minimal main living space, to the wide-open estuary of the industrial warehouse with exposed bar joists, waxed steel railings, and end grain laser cut plywood stair.

While under construction local residents commented that the house might stick out like a sore thumb in this lazy stretch of the river, but now built and lived in, they have a hard time distinguishing it from the surrounding landscape. It's like it's always been here, part of the bluff itself.

## CityDeskStudio

[www.citydeskstudio.com](http://www.citydeskstudio.com) • (651) 644-1106

**Design team:** Ben Awes, AIA; Chris Bach; Nate Dodge





# Five Frequently Asked Questions About Searching for an Architect

PHOTO: RYAN SIEMERS

Experience tells us that successful projects result from informed clients working with skilled architects to form professional, business and often personal relationships. These relationships are formed early on and are nourished by clear communication, mutually understood expectations, and a willingness of both client and architect to understand and accept their responsibilities for realizing a successful project.

Building in today's marketplace is a complex undertaking requiring many different products and skills. Your architect understands the complexities and works with you to design an appropriate response to your requirements. In turn, your architect works in your interest within the building industry and can help you greatly to transform the design into a wonderful home. Below are some frequently asked questions from homeowners considering an architect for their building project:

1. **At what point in the project should I bring an architect into the picture?**

As early as possible. Architects can help you define the scope of the project and may also do site studies, help apply for zoning and planning approvals, help locate sources of financing, and a variety of other pre-design services.

2. **Should I consider more than one architect or firm?**

Usually, yes. One obvious exception is when you already have a good relationship with an architect and it makes little sense to change.

3. **How many firms should I interview?**

Most advice suggests interviewing three to five firms—enough to see the range of possibilities, but not so many that an already tough decision will be further complicated. Make sure to give them equal time and access to your site and existing facilities.

4. **What should I be on the lookout for when interviewing a firm?**

During your interview with a firm, learn about their team and how they will approach your project. Ask what the firm sees as the important issues for consideration in the project. Evaluate the firm's style, personality, priorities, and approach: are they compatible with yours?

5. **What factors should I consider in making my decision about who to hire?**

Ask each firm for references and follow up with those individuals to learn more about others' experiences. You may also want to visit existing projects to see them in use. Evaluate the feeling of trust and rapport you felt with each firm. Trust and communication can make or break a project. Ultimately, personal confidence in your architect is paramount.

In the end, selection is a mutual process. The most thoughtful architects are as careful in selecting their clients as owners are in selecting architects. They are as interested in a successful project as you are, and they know that good architecture results from fruitful collaboration between architects and clients.







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