



Above: the family's former family room, as a backhoe razes the house in February.

Below: the family's new family room, replete with lots of glass and stone.



BEFORE PHOTOS COURTESY KDR DESIGN BUILDERS

NEW HOME PHOTOS BY WAYNE GLOWACKI / WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

Starting over

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Just in case you think building new on an existing lot is a simple process, think again. Domenica Vassallo says the process was quite time consuming.

"Well, we went into production in early February to tear down the home," she says. "It then took some time to get variances and clear up some other details. So overall, the project took about eight months to complete, and that includes landscaping."

A walk-through of the 30,000-square-foot bungalow — which has another 3,000 sq. ft. of fully developed space beneath in its lower level — reveals that the wait was well worth it. Features such as 12-foot ceilings, a spherical dining room, segmented master bedroom with luxurious ensuite with tiled steam shower and one of the largest walk-in closets on the planet (or so it seems) and a walk-out basement with exercise area, games area and tons of storage — as well as a walk-out entrance/exit — make for one very livable home.

Meanwhile, finishing materials such as dark maple hardwoods, maple cabinetry, beige granite counter tops, etched glass set in doors (and in curved walls, as in the dining room) add warmth and style. An abundance of windows (especially in the great room, with its cultured stone rear wall), many of the floor-to-ceiling variety, ensures that natural light will never be a scarce commodity.

All these features were made possible by building new, and not renovating.

"If you have the ability to build a new home on an existing lot, that really is the way to go — you get so much more from doing that compared to renovating. The owners here got exactly what they wanted — an open-concept home with lots of windows, grand ceilings, and something they always dreamed of, a spherical dining room with double (spherical) recessed ceiling," she says.

"Other features, like the curved maple bannister (with burnished metal spindles) that takes you down the maple steps to the lower level really add class to the home. All the features here are a reflection of the owners' personalities."

Diego Vassallo says that both he and his clients are very pleased with the results.

"I think everyone is extremely happy with how everything turned out," he says. "The feedback on the home (it will be a KDR show home until Oct. 1) has been just tremendous — it shows what you can do if you have a great existing lot in a great location, as is the case here," he says.

"More people are choosing to stay where they are, and invest in rebuilding, rather than renovating. It just makes more sense if you can afford to do it. You not only get a new home, but new services, and other great features such as underground hydro. As time goes on, expect to see more people building new on lots they own in established areas."

The home is featured in the Parade of Homes and is located at 305 Shaftesbury Blvd.

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The staircase to the lower level is a signature piece for the home.



Inside the master bedroom ensuite.



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