

# HOME & GARDEN

## Sustainable and stylish: The CharityWorks' GreenHouse

By Merlisa Lawrence Corbett  
Special to The Examiner

With a goal of making green gorgeous, a dream team of 19 area interior designers achieved sustainability with style in the nonprofit CharityWorks' GreenHouse — the first carbon-neutral designer show house on the East Coast.

Built just off a thriving business district on Chain Bridge Road, the Arts and Crafts exterior of the house blends nicely with others in the McLean neighborhood

Replete with every energy-efficient technology available — including a geothermal heating and cooling system, rain capture, solar hot water panels, fluorescent and LED lighting — the allure of this home lies in the design.

"We want people to fall in love with the interior and then realize its green," said internationally acclaimed designer Barry Dixon, chairman of the Design Committee. "It's like tasting diet food, loving it and later finding out 'you mean this has no carbs and zero calories? I can eat this every day.'"

Although nearly 4,000 square feet, the interior feels cozy. Spaces



are elegant without "greenwashing," a term used to describe products promoted as environmentally friendly when in fact they fail to meet strict environmental standards.

"Part of reducing the carbon footprint is maximizing space," said Annette Hannon, who designed the 115-square-foot bedroom. Hannon began with a built-in bed alcove, complete with drawers and bookcases and Forest Stewardship Council-certified sustainable birch around the one window in the bedroom. She draped the alcove with natural vegetable-dyed cotton fabric and used milk paint over paint to create a crackled effect on the pastel green walls.

Dixon designed the kitchen and great room. A combined cooking, dining, entertaining and study area filed with natural light, the

### BEFORE

A team of 19 area interior designers worked to take this house and make it into the first carbon-neutral designer show house on the East Coast.



great room has luxurious yellow and cream upholstered pieces from Dixon's own line. A soaring custom-riveted metal fireplace provides the focal point. A large metal mesh screen fronted with a custom high-backed banquette separates the kitchen from the great room, giving privacy while maintaining an airy feel.

The kitchen, modest for a home this size, provides ample storage with large drawers. The counter material, also used in guest bathrooms, is Eco by Cosentino, sleek heat-resistant tops molded from recycled glass and rubble.

A resort-style spa retreat, parked behind the garage, goes for the wow factor. Designed by Ernesto M. Santalla of Studio Santalla Inc., it features a thick, towering cedar-framed shower with a recirculating waterfall. A comfy day bed flanks a deep soaking tub encased in cedar. Just outside the spa is a luxuri-

ous space with views of the garden, saline swimming pool and terrace. Elegant enough for a formal living room, this veranda was designed to create a seamless transition from indoor to outdoor living. Designer Dee Thornton of House Works Interiors in Alexandria, combined traditional outdoor furnishings, non-treated teak chairs, with bold upholstery made of naturally weather-resistant fabric. A rug, made from easily replenished abaca, was woven by hand and finished without the use of dyes or chemicals.

Tucked away between the kitchen and study is a quaint dining room, gracefully engaging with a simple distressed white round table, two bamboo chairs and a settee. The room was inspired by the nearby garden, said designer Victoria Neale, who chose sunny lemon and lime hues and a softer sage green made from hemp.

### Check it out

All proceeds from the McLean home tour will benefit charities supported by CharityWorks.

- » Tickets for the tour are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door.
- » The home is open Oct. 10 to 30; Tuesday to Friday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday noon to 5 p.m.
- » For more information, visit [charityworksgreenhouse.com](http://charityworksgreenhouse.com) or call 703-286-0758.

Each designer found creative ways to introduce repurposed materials into their designs. In the master bathroom, a mosaic on the shower wall called "pick up sticks" was created from scraps that fall to the floor from other stone jobs. Cynthia Sayers, owner of Creative Design Solutions, worked at the Environmental Protection Agency for 20 years and is thrilled with the solid surface countertop made from recycled laundry detergent and milk packaging.

"I think it's important for people to see that when they haul those recyclables out to the street every week, what they are being used for," Sayers said.

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**AFTER:** The home now includes every-energy efficient technology available, such as geothermal heating and cooling, rain capture and solar hot water panels. The nearly 4,000 square feet feels cozy, yet elegant, while staying completely green.

