

HOME & GARDEN

HISTORIC RENOVATION

Remodel turns nightmare property into dream house

By Merlisa Lawrence Corbett
Special to The Washington Examiner

When Tasha McGinn first laid eyes on the deteriorating pale yellow property that her husband envisioned as their new home, she saw a nightmare instead of her dream house.

But she trusted Doug McGinn's judgment, and three years ago they purchased the 1929 farmhouse located in the historic Maywood section of Arlington. They hired architect Michael Sauri of TriVistaUSA, whose designs produced a fairy-tale renovation.

So happy was Tasha McGinn with the outcome that she captured the renovation in a book and presented it to her husband for his birthday.

Inside the cover, under the title "Our Maywood Home," it reads: "This book is dedicated to my loving husband, Doug for your creative vision. I'm so proud of the many ways we worked together to make this house our own. This home is so much more than just a home. In every room there is a decision made together, and more importantly a memory of the fun our family shares daily! I love loving you in our dream home."

The book chronicles the two-year remodeling process. This includes all the drama associated with any good story. They went to battle with the neighborhood's preservation board; survived setbacks in horrific weather; and emerged victorious with a stunning blue beauty that is now the talk of the town.

Sauri played the dragon slayer, taking on the beast: the Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board. "For the amount of influence they have over what you can and cannot do to your house, they should be paying the mortgage," Sauri joked.



BEFORE: Tasha and Doug McGinn purchased a 1929 farmhouse in the historic Maywood section of Arlington three years ago.



ANDREW HARNIK/EXAMINER



AFTER: Tasha McGinn was so happy with their home renovation that she made her husband a book, "Our Maywood Home," that chronicled the two-year remodeling process.

Maywood, one of Arlington's oldest neighborhoods, is considered a "trolley neighborhood," developed

during the early 1900s around commuter railroads.

"The historical board, like many, is tough, and in our case, I felt that they were inconsistent with their desire. You really have to put your pride and construction knowledge aside and let them have their say," Sauri said. "I love that we have these 'guardians of the historic fabric'

but it took a full financial analysis by TriVistaUSA to convince them that requiring the homeowners to remake custom-stamped tin roofing at the cost of \$100,000 was not fair. They conceded, requiring a \$40,000 standing seam metal roof, when they could have had asphalt shingles for \$12,000."

"If it weren't for Michael, I don't

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think we would have gotten through when we did," Doug McGinn said. It took a year to clear the plans with the review board, nearly as long as construction. "Michael was there at every meeting," Tasha McGinn said.

The previous owners attempted renovations but "had the cheapest trim, cabinetry and hardware available," Sauri said. "We added a historically relevant wrap-around porch, and removed a horrible saddleback addition, replacing it with a historically sensitive and complementary three-story addition that tied into the original home as seamlessly as possible."

The couple hired Lauren Sparber of Jodi Macklin Interior Design to decorate. "When I came in to help the McGinns, the family room was mostly wasted space with a sectional in the center of the room. Anchoring the sofa in the corner of the room created space for a whole new seating area," Sparber said. "Since we were working with the existing blue sofa, we changed the wall color and surrounding furniture to give it a second life." Tasha McGinn liked working with Sparber because "she always tries to use what you have and then edit or add to."

Although the tussle with the review board was tough, the McGinns embrace the historical aspect of their neighborhood and love the quaint community, which offers block parties and holiday parades. Tasha McGinn served as Maywood social co-chairwoman in 2009 and 2010.

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