



Project Category: Kitchen \$100,000 - \$150,000

Location: Midvale Heights Neighborhood

Madison, WI

This 1950's ranch had its garage converted to living space in the 1960's, but it's finally maximizing its potential. The kitchen, dining area and family room are now connected, and there is an inviting procession from front door to living areas. The kitchen includes a banquette-style semi-formal dining area, perfect for entertaining family and friends.

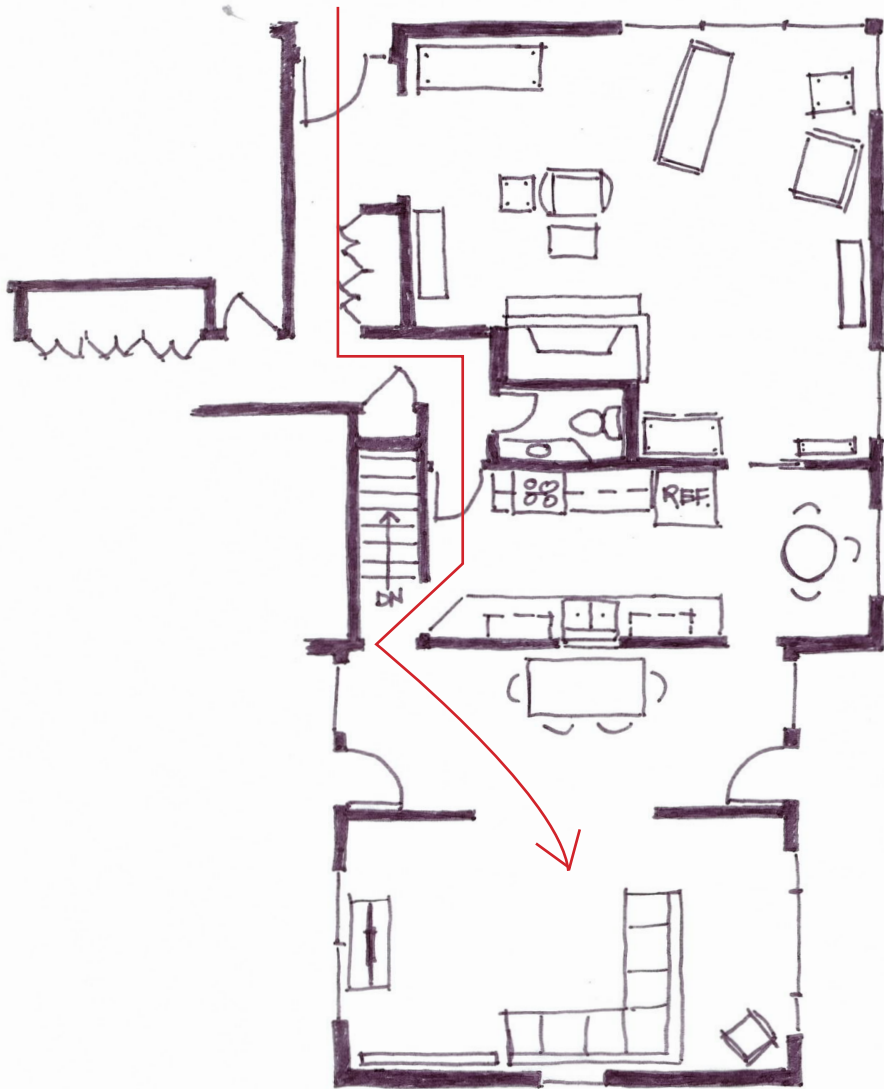


BEFORE: VIEW FROM EXISTING ENTRYWAY, KITCHEN IS LOCATED TO THE LEFT BEHIND THE FIREPLACE

In the existing home, in order to get to the kitchen and living room, there is an extremely winding path that you would need to take.

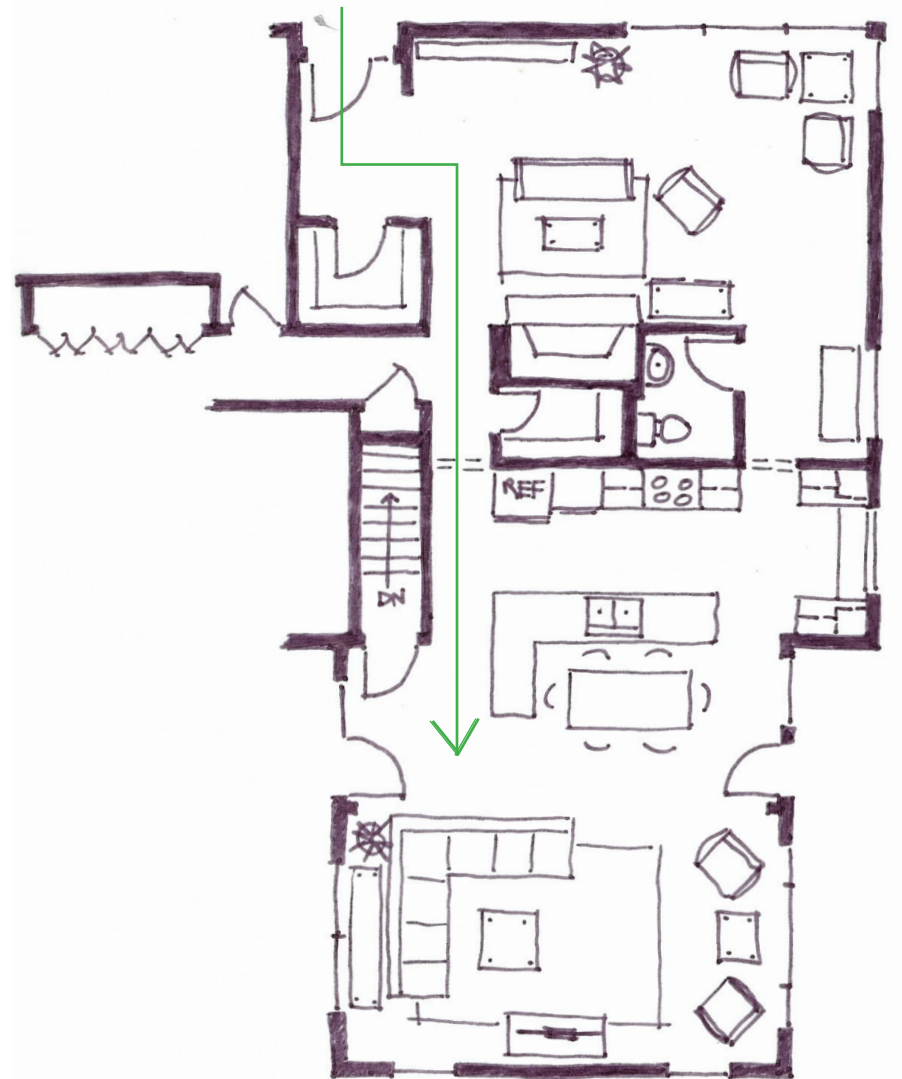
DRAWING OF **EXISTING** PATH THROUGH HOME

4 turns with dead-end views



DRAWING OF **NEW** PATH THROUGH HOME

only 2 turns with beautiful connection to the rooms



In the new design, upon entering the home (coming from the foyer), there is a wonderfully linear path.

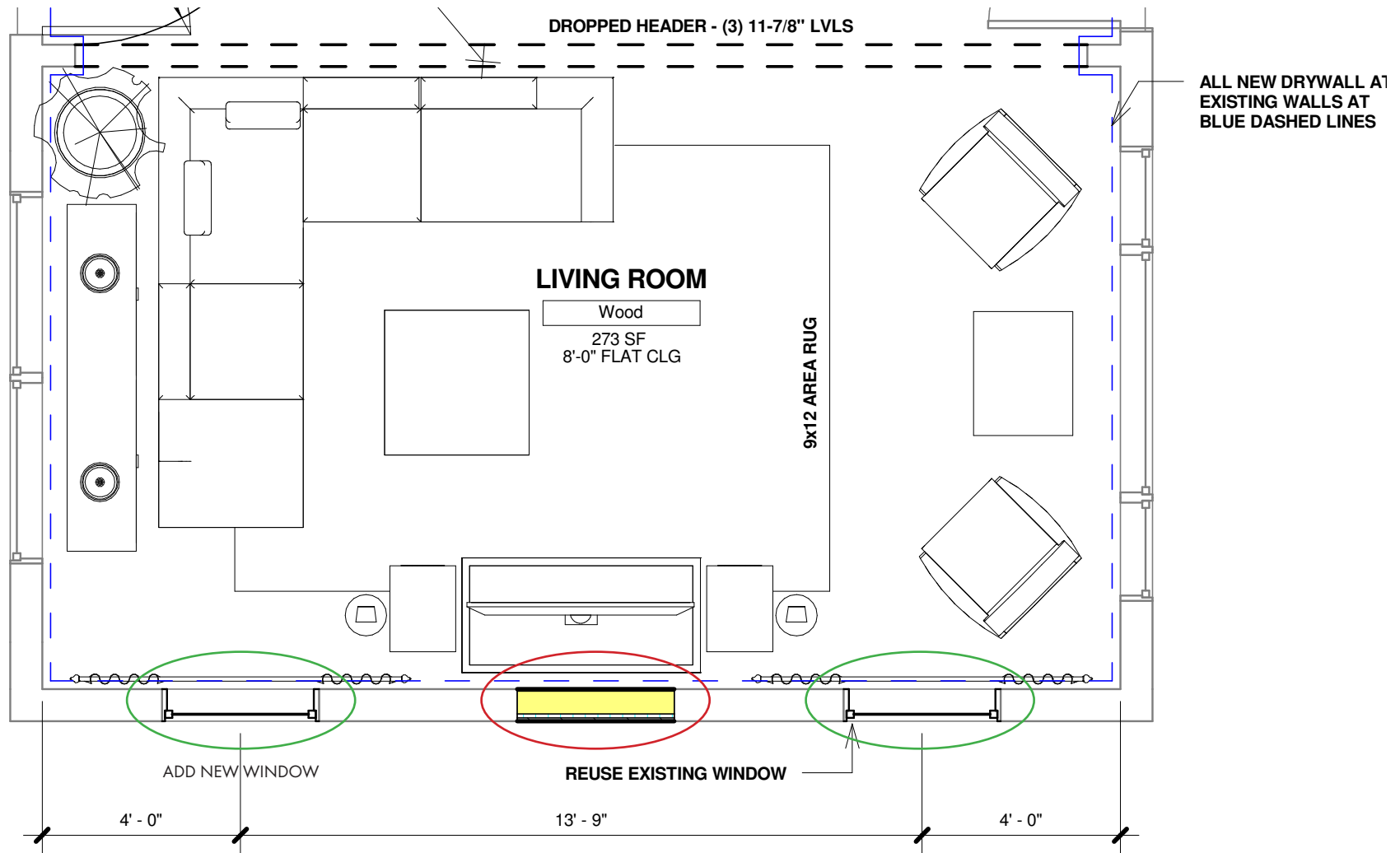


AFTER: THE ENTRANCE NOW ALLOWS A STRAIGHT WALK IN TO THE KITCHEN WITH A VIEW ALL THE WAY TO THE FAMILY ROOM



BEFORE: EXISTING VIEW FROM THE KITCHEN FACING THE LIVING ROOM

When facing the living room from the kitchen, a small window was centered on the far wall. The placement of the window threw off the balance of the newly opened up room.



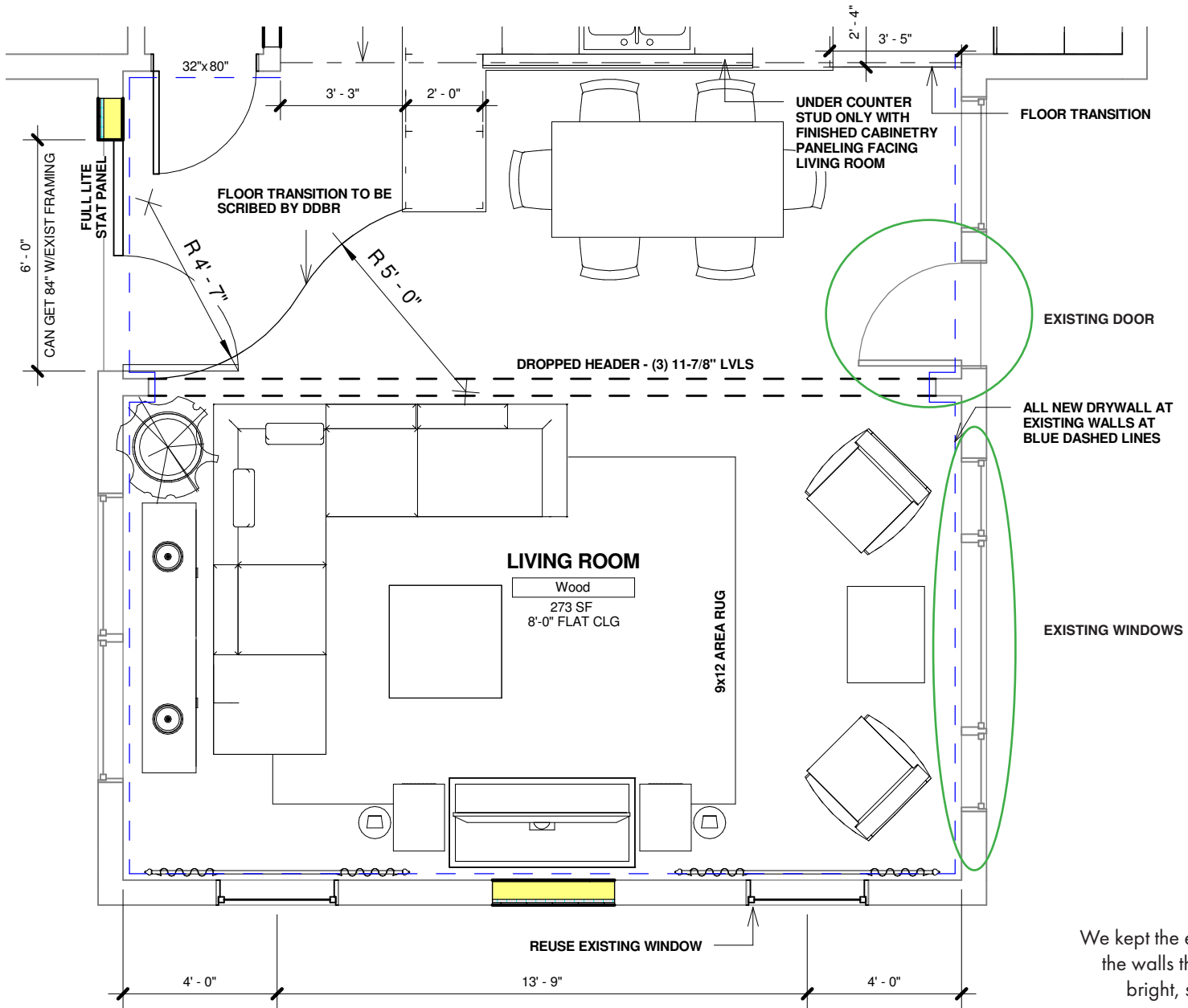
We proposed moving the existing window and adding a matching one in order to reorient the space. The goal was to center the TV on the long wall across from the kitchen and dining area.



AFTER: THE WINDOWS ON EACH SIDE OF THE TV, ONE EXISTING AND ONE NEW, BRING BALANCE TO THE LIVING ROOM



BEFORE: THE EXISTING DINING AREA WAS CLOSED IN, AND DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE AROUND



We kept the existing door and windows, and removed the walls that were blocking in the space to create a bright, spacious and completely open floor plan.



AFTER: WALLS WERE REMOVED TO CREATE A BRIGHT AND SPACIOUS KITCHEN OPEN TO THE LIVING ROOM



AFTER: THE L-SHAPED ISLAND ENVELOPES A DINING TABLE. IT IS ALSO ABSOLUTELY UNIQUE AND ONCE AGAIN SUGGESTS A LINEAR CIRCULATION

BEFORE: SMALL EAT-IN DINING AREA



The kitchen design incorporated a small space where the eat-in dining used to be.



AFTER: THE NEW WINDOW SEAT PROVIDED A COST-EFFECTIVE WAY OF ADDING MORE STORAGE WHILE NOT DISRUPTING THE WINDOW IN A BRICK EXTERIOR WALL

In order to not touch the existing window, we created a bench seat beneath the window to provide more casual seating in the kitchen and a lot of storage.

AFTER: WINDOW SEAT AREA STILL PROVIDES DIRECT ACCESS TO THE LIVING ROOM



AFTER: THE WINDOW SEAT AREA ALSO OFFERS EXTRA STORAGE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE KITCHEN



AFTER: THE COMBINATION OF THE STAINLESS REFRIGERATOR AND STAINLESS HOOD MAKE A MODERN STATEMENT PIECE



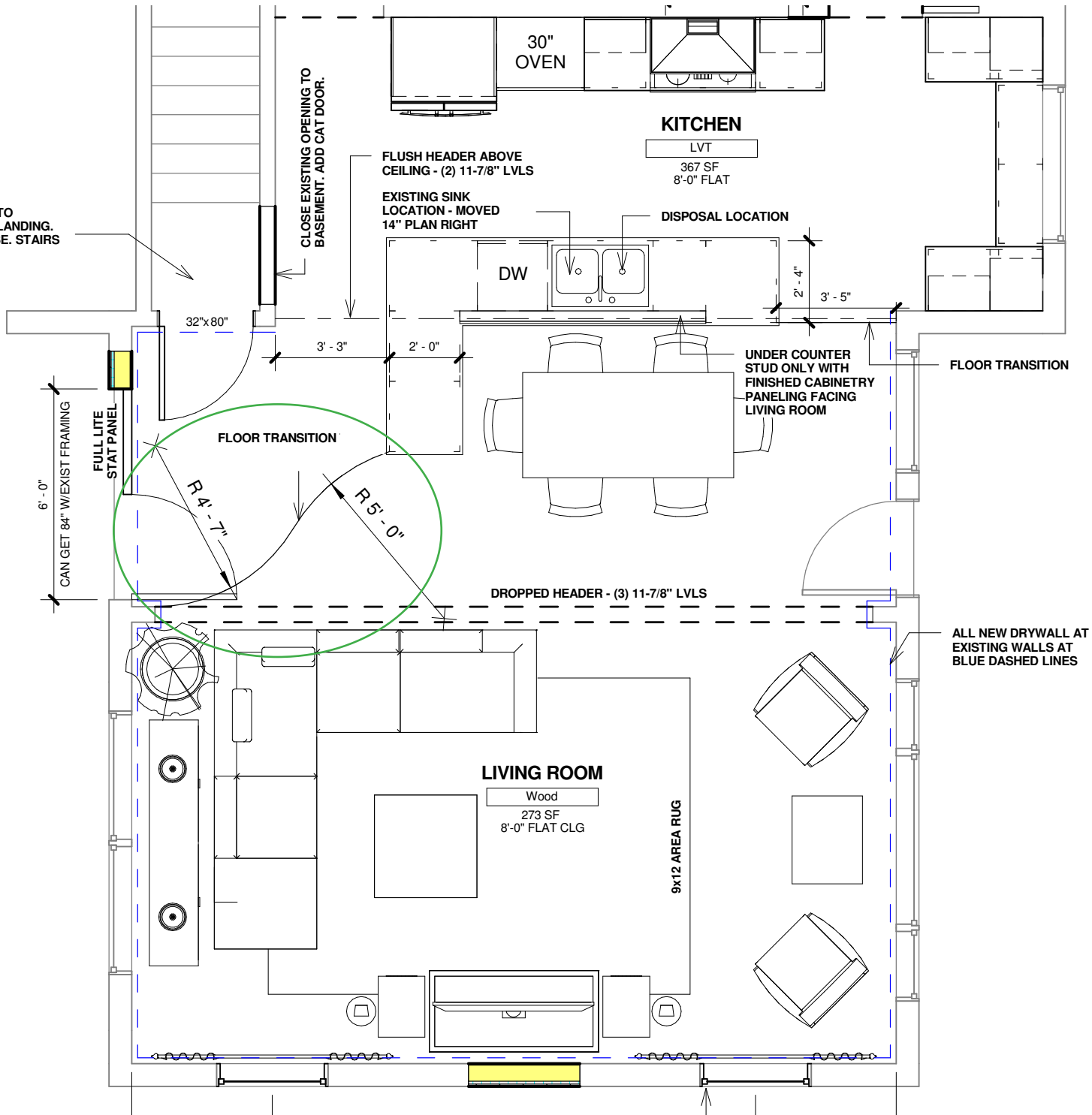
We were able to bump back the wall at the new location of the refrigerator. New refrigerators are very deep, and this allows for a few extra inches of walkway and a more "built-in" feel.



AFTER: WE ACCENTED THE KITCHEN WITH A MODERN LINEAR TILE THAT EXTENDS ALL THE WAY TO THE CEILING

Rather than the typical offset pattern of subway tile, we chose the linear installation. This speaks to the new modern theme and direct circulation of the home.

LVT TO EXTEND INTO BASEMENT STAIR LANDING. INCLUDE BULLNOSE. STAIRS TO REMAIN AS IS.





To add a little pizzazz, we added in a curved transition from wood floor to Luxury Vinyl Tile. The transition made sense because there was no obvious delineation between rooms.

AFTER: THE CURVED TRANSITION ADDS THE PERFECT FINISHING TOUCH



CRITERIA RESPONSES

To what degree were the expressed needs of the client met?

The needs of the clients included a full kitchen remodel, opening the spaces from the kitchen through the dining and to the family room, and updating all finishes in the area. We were able to remove two load-bearing walls, replacing one with a concealed beam and the other with an exposed header. The concealed beam unifies the kitchen and dining area, while the exposed header helps create the sense of space that helps the family room feel cozy rather than cavernous. The kitchen now functions as an island-based kitchen with a semi-formal dining table nestled into a banquette position. The space is opened all the way from the kitchen to the family room TV area, serving the everyday needs of the couple and prepared for them to entertain their friends. They also requested a walk-in pantry, and this was accomplished through relocation of the powder room, and converting the former space into a long, narrow pantry.

To what degree does the project enhance the existing structures functionally?

There are several functional improvements to the home.

First, they requested to create functional circulation throughout the space. Specifically, to deal with the connection from the front door through the kitchen and into the family room. It was a zig-zag hallway that felt dark and convoluted, requiring 4 turns to reach the family room. By relocating a reach-in closet and transforming it into a functional walk-in closet off the foyer area, guests now are able to enter the living room, and just make one turn to the right and see the hallway on axis leading them to the bright kitchen and family room.

Second, the original kitchen was a modified galley, and while it had a window opening to connect to other rooms, was functionally isolated and dark. The new kitchen is an island, with the dining table nestled into a banquette seating arrangement.

To what degree does the project enhance the existing structure aesthetically?

The old kitchen was dark and drab. It now has clean lines, a beautiful glass backsplash, and a premium, rare granite countertop.

The dining and family room formerly had tack-up ceiling tile and paneled walls. They are now bright, cheery, and finished in a way that matches the rest of the house: hardwood flooring, beautiful paint colors, balanced window design, and smooth walls.

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Is there evidence of superior craftsmanship?

The superior craftsmanship in this job is, in many ways, hidden. It exists in several ways.

First, the home had two layers of siding, so that when the new windows and French door were installed, flashing had to be integrated properly and carefully, especially where the French door meets the deck.

Second, the house is framed with 2 x 6 rafters. We had to complete a good amount of building code and span table research before we even started installing the new beams, and careful framing work was necessary where rafters and ceiling joists were cut and hung from the new beam.

Furthermore, we discovered that a portion of the foundation was built using hollow concrete block as opposed to a poured concrete foundation. We had to fill the block cavities in order to carry the point load of the bearing posts.

Finally, care was taken to align surfaces and so that drywall and plaster blended together in a visually seamless manner. We accomplished all of these successfully, in a zip code with a building inspector renowned for his difficult interpretations of the code.

These are all commonplace carpentry activities for a skilled professional, but as remodelers, we see where others have failed at similar tasks. Our everyday work, in this case, is in itself superior!

Were innovative uses of material and/or methods of construction used in the project?

Again, sometimes things that seem commonplace actually require innovation. During demolition and framing, we discovered that a portion of the building that was originally a garage, had no wall sheathing. Instead, the siding was installed directly on the studs which is uncommon in our part of the country. Old let-in angle bracing was installed where our new windows were to be placed. The solution was to install new metal T-bracing on the interior (so as not to disturb the exterior of the home where the windows were being installed) in an asymmetrical criss-cross pattern.

Additionally, since this space was converted from garage to living space, we discovered that the floor was installed balloon-frame style, with the wall sill plate below the joists. We had to open the floor and fasten the T-bracing all the way down the sill.

Finally, additional steps for insulation and air sealing were needed. Under the wood framed floor, fiberglass batts had been laid on the old concrete garage floor rather than placed in the joists. This contaminated fiberglass was removed, and spray foam was installed on the concrete floor and stem wall up over the mudsill, to provide air sealing and a thermal break. Fiberglass was properly hung in the joists below the subfloor. And, sheet foam was used to seal up where the stud bays were open to the soffit. The room is significantly more airtight, energy efficient, comfortable, and durable thanks to these steps.

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Did the contractor overcome difficult obstacles?

As remodelers, we know we don't have X-ray vision. But thanks to our experience, we often predict many of the problems that could arise during construction. For as much research as we did, and as many predictions that we successfully made, the items mentioned above were obstacles not commonly found in our area. We took them all in stride and the project was completed on time.