

Cherry Hill Home Owners Complete a Unique Addition

News Release

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Release Date: Open

Outward appearances can be deceiving

Cherry Hill, New Jersey, October 4, 2001

A spin down Cardinal Lake Drive in Cherry Hill reveals nothing out of the ordinary. Its a familiar scene, nicely tended homes and yards; it could be a street anywhere. But at the home of Gail and Richard Donner there is something a bit out of the ordinary behind the scenes. A unique deck and screened porch makes a graceful and comfortable transition from house to yard.

Is there a backyard out there?

The Donner's backyard was nowhere. From inside the house you could not get there from here, and if you did there was no "there" there. There was a concrete patio outside of the sliding door in the family room, much as it was built thirty years ago, and little used today. The split level design of the house placed the living room a half story above the ground. Mature shrubs below the living room windows put up another barrier. The weak connection between the house and the yard created a separation that prevented them from bringing their life outdoors during fair weather. Gail Donner decided that something needed to be done - a deck or a porch, or both?

Owner brings in help

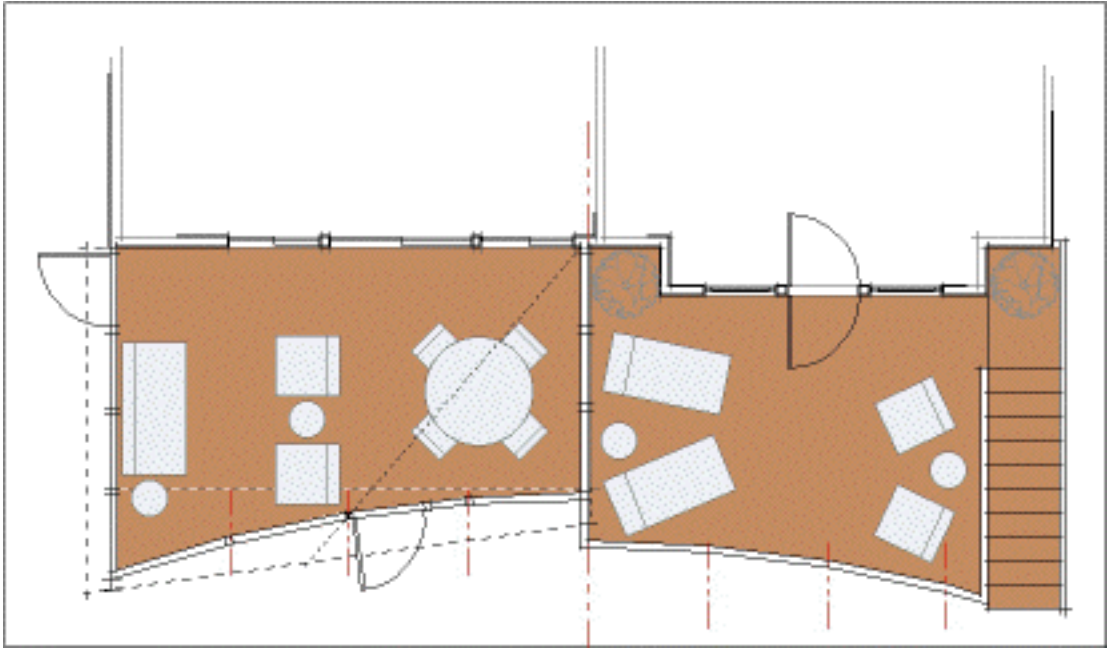
A friend of the Donner's had just completed an extensive renovation and addition to their home in Mount Laurel, New Jersey. They were very pleased with it and at a Super Bowl party they hosted in January 1999 Gail Donner saw it in person. She came away with the architects name and contacted him to work on the project. "It was Gail's project from the start" said architect Greg La Vardera whose office is in Merchantville, New Jersey. "A deck and a porch, it sounds pretty ordinary, but Gail said she wanted ideas, she wanted it to be something more."

A Contemporary solution

After melding the best qualities of several sketches a scheme was born. The deck and porch form a gentle curve that serves to create a sense of enclosure in the yard by subtly closing off the views out to the front yard and street. The ceiling of the screened porch follows the slope of the roof to create space and height. Still the low side of a simple shed roof would cut off views and daylight. To overcome this the slope of the roof line is reversed towards the center of the addition, opening the porch to daylight and views out to the heights of the treetops. The raised roof also creates a strong connection between the deck and the screened porch although they are on different levels. All these specific details come together to create an composition that is unusual in appearance, but makes complete sense when it is experienced. **Images of the project can be viewed at: www.lamidesign.com/pages/work/0090_1.html**

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(images follow)



Floor Plan of the Donner Residence Deck and Screened Porch



View of the rear of the Donner Residence with
the new Screened Porch and Deck



View of the rear of the new Deck, Screened Porch beyond



View of the rear of the new Screened Porch, Deck beyond