



Layers of history

Because the exterior of this landmark home could not be altered, the interior layout had to be reshuffled around the existing windows

In many remodeling projects,

when the internal layout of the home needs to be completely reorganized, changes can also be made to the exterior facade.

However, when a landmark home in a historic neighborhood has an exterior that can't be changed, the project is likely to be a challenge. Architect Claudia Skylar faced this to restore a home originally

Chicago architect William Le Baron Jenney (1832-1907).

"The property had been run as a boarding house for many years and was in a very dilapidated condition," says the architect.

"Restoring it was an interesting puzzle. State bylaws meant that we had to retain issue when she was called on the exterior exactly as it was, without moving or adding

designed in 1886 by respected windows, or altering the roofline. So, to create an environment better suited to a modern family lifestyle, we had to reorganize the interior layout of the house around the existing exterior," says Skylar.

A few minor changes to the outside were permitted, allowing the architect to add extra windows to the back corner and side wall not visible from the street.

Facing page: This landmark home was originally designed by William Le Baron Jenney, founder of the Chicago School of Architecture, and a pioneer in the design of skyscrapers such as the Home Insurance Building.

Above: Architect Claudia Skylar was asked to restore the ex-boarding house and remodel the interior to create a family home. As very few alterations to the exterior were allowed, the interior had to be planned around existing windows.







Reorganizing the interior to create a contemporary family home in a Victorian building – without losing the original flavor – was the first stage of the project, says Skylar.

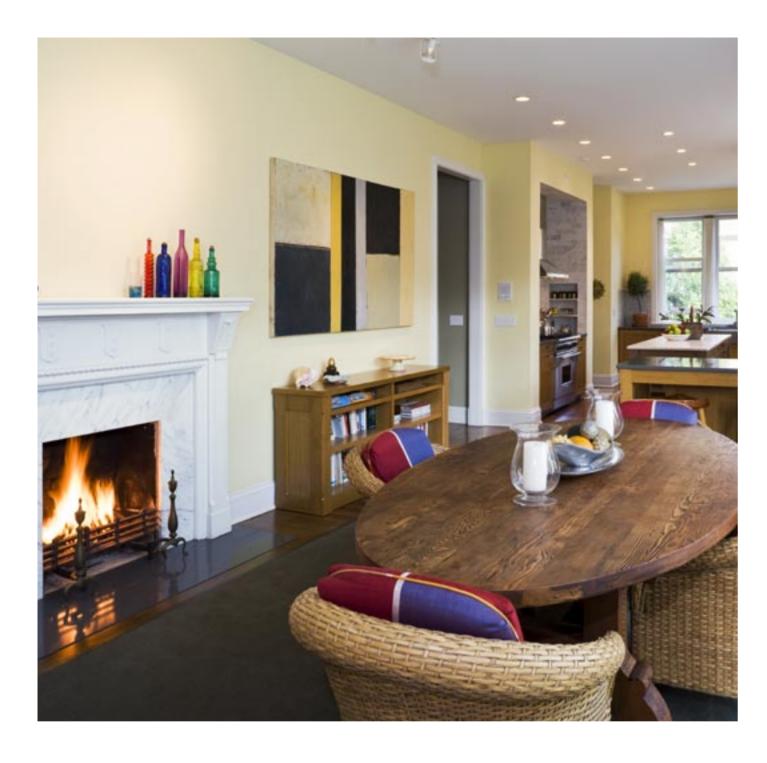
"Our design had to take account of the owners' collection of modern British art:

lection of modern British art; they also wanted to be able to include some antique furniture pieces that were family heirlooms. Our aim was to create antiques.

Facing page: Large bay windows and doors connect this living area to

Top: A series of comfortable living spaces flows through the ground floor. Cased openings provide some separation between areas, without obstructing the visual connections through the spaces.

Above: The subdued wall colors



Above: An informal dining area is adjacent to the kitchen. A hallway close to the kitchen leads to the formal dining room and to a small scullery or catering kitchen.

Facing page: Rift-sawn white oak cabinetry on the island is stained gray to match the Carrara marble countertop. Cabinetry around the perimeter of the kitchen has a natural finish, and CaesarStone countertops in a concrete color provide a practical surface.

bridge between the Victorian era of the house, the modern art and the needs of a family with teens," says the architect.

Skylar describes the result as a minimalist Victorian decor. Original doors, architraves and Mozer worked with the owners wanted," says Mozer. scotias were retained or replicated, but most are painted for a more subtle effect. Only the doors, joinery and decorative 20th century. paneling in the entrance hall

an interior that provided a and on the original staircase were stained.

really pieces of sculpture in their own right," she says.

to select colors that were a subdued version of a classic the artworks to be the primary Chicago decor from the early focus of the decor," says one of

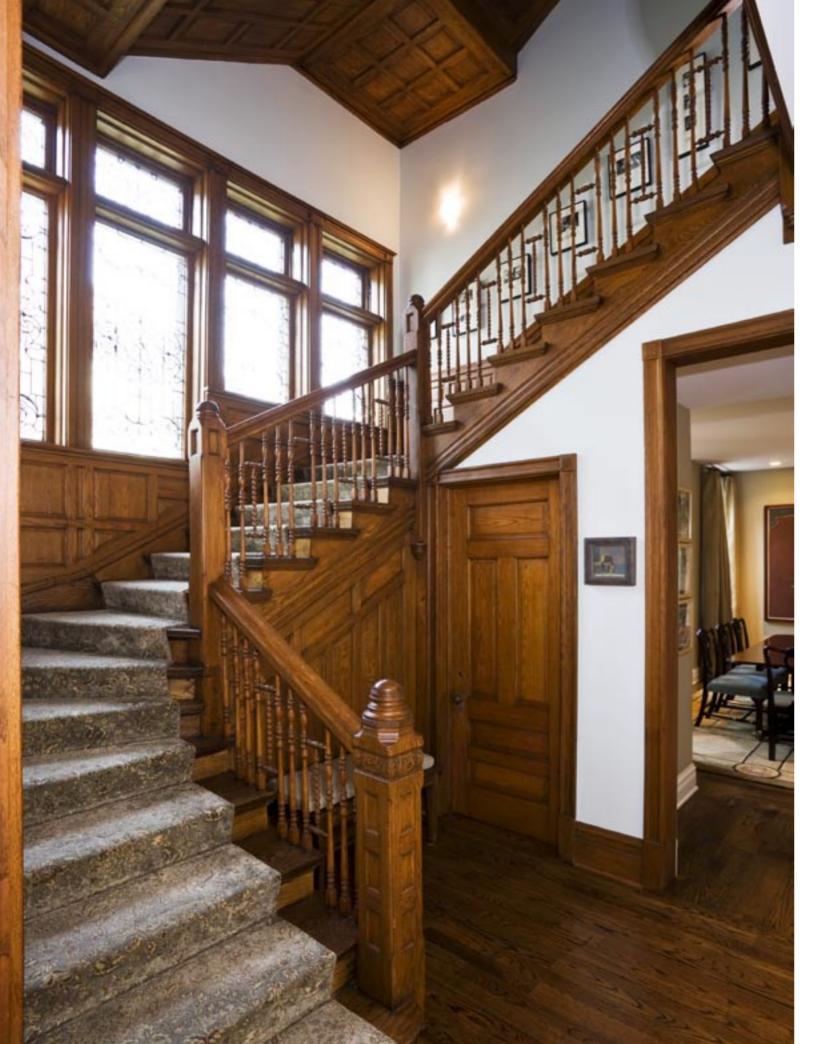
"The pale blues, yellows,

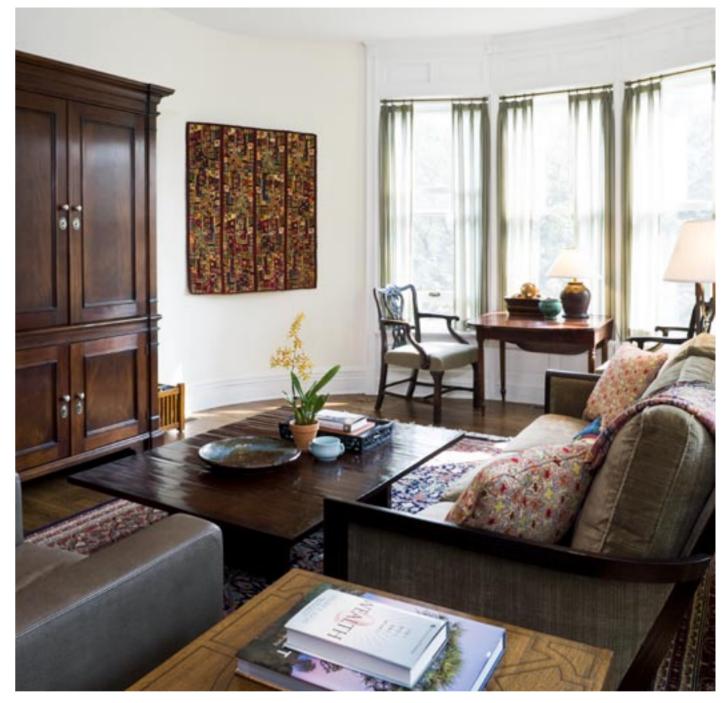
greens, ochers and rusts are airy and ethereal. They high-"These particular features light the beautiful windows are so beautiful that they are and the architecture of the home, and create the comfortable, informal and relaxed Interior designer Karen atmosphere that the owners

"These soft colors allow the owners.

To modernize the layout







of the interior, the ground floor was opened up to create a series of living spaces. These extend from the entrance hall at the front of the house to the kitchen at the back, and all flow smoothly into each other. Cased openings between these areas hint at separate spaces, but without creating visual interference.

device to establish a connection home office were tucked under

between the original Victorian the eaves of the old attic. The house and the contemporary lifestyle of the owners," says the architect.

bathrooms and a guest suite a large tub as a centerpiece. To are on the middle level, as well as a casual family room and a bers to use this room, it can be separate homework space for accessed from both the master the children.

At the top of the house, "These openings are a a master bedroom suite and

turret on the same level had only one small dormer window, which could not be altered, so Children's bedrooms and it has become a bathroom, with enable guests and family memsuite and hall.

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Facing page: Lead glass windows, turned balustrades and decorative paneling in the entrance hall and staircase were all restored when this 120-year-old home was remodeled. The formal dining room opens off the entrance hall.

Above: A small family living room was added to the middle level of the house. Decorative trim around windows was retained, but painted for a more subtle look.



Above: In line with state bylaws, the exterior of the house could not be altered, so the turret, with low eaves and only one small dormer window, became a bathroom. Soft green mosaic tiles on the floor and pale green walls create a calm and relaxing ambiance.

Facing page: The rest of the attic level was turned into a master suite and home office. Photographs of the family line the walls of the hallway leading to the master bedroom.

Architect: James Mastro, Claudia Skylar, Mastro & Skylar Architects (Chicago, IL)

Interior designer: Karen Mozer Kitchen design: Mastro & Skylar Architects

Builder: Joseph Delich

Siding: Existing; cedar shingles from Bradco Supply

Doors and windows: Clad double-hung from Marvin Windows

Flooring: Oak
Liahtina: Recessed an

Lighting: Recessed and track from Juno; sconces from Lightology

Paints and varnishes: Benjamin Moore Kitchen manufacturer: Wettengel Woodworking

Cabinetry: Rift-sawn white oak with custom stain

Perimeter countertop: CaesarStone Concrete Polished

Island countertop: Dal Statuary Marble **Backsplash:** Pillowed Carrara from Century Supply

Sink: Elkay Manufacturing in stainless steel from Community Home Supply Faucets: Grohe Ladylux from Community Home Supply Range, oven, ventilation: Wolf Microwave: GE

Refrigeration: Sub-Zero Dishwasher: Bosch Waste disposal: KitchenAid Landscaping: Maria Smithburg

Story by Mary Webb Photography by Jamie Cobeldick

