



The Alexander Group

GAZETTE

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President
Alex Dean, CR, CGR

Production Mgr.
Michael Colman

Lead Carpenters
Steve Mayberry
Gregory Burdette
Jacob Kirk

Administration
Kathy Poland

Members of:
NARI DC Chapter
Montgomery Co.
Builders Association

Awards:
2001 Montgomery
Co. Builders Assoc.
Awards (4)

2001 NARI
CotY Awards (2)

2000 NARI
CotY Awards (4)

2000 NARI
Residential Interior

2000 Montgomery
Co. Builders
Awards (2)

1999 NARI
CotY Awards (2)

1999 Montgomery
Co. Builders Assoc.
Awards (4)

1999 Innovation in
Construction Awards

Other Awards:
1997, 1996, 1995,
1994, 1993



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A Rockville retrofit

When architect Scott Knudson was called in to work the magic that only an architect can on what had been a conventional, suburban 1950s home, he found exactly what he likes in a project—a challenge. The structure had gone from a single family dwelling, to a duplex, which is not all that unusual, but now he, and The Alexander Group, were charged to return it to a single family dwelling. In the process, the original kitchen was expanded and reconfigured, while the smaller kitchen was converted to a first floor laundry room. The new kitchen and entryway were bumped out six feet to make these spaces more inviting. The second floor was reconnected in a fashion that turned chaos into living space and gave the homeowners a master suite with all the

amenities one would expect in this older, but well heeled, park-like neighborhood.

And if all of that wasn't enough, the project ultimately became an award winner for The Alexander Group! Alex Dean, president and owner of The Alexander Group, proudly accepted two awards for the project. This Rockville remodel is the recipient of a 2001 COTY Award from the National Association of the Remodeling Industry, Metro DC chapter for "Best Residential Bath Over \$25,000," and the 2001 Award of Excellence for "Best Bath Remodeling Project Over \$50,000" from the Montgomery County Builders Association.

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▲ Master bath



▲ Master bath before

What was to be the award-winning master bathroom began as a leftover from the 1970s and the owners yearned for a true master bathroom with deluxe options. They wanted the dull and unremarkable replaced with the dazzle of today and convenience of a bathroom from tomorrow. Out with the gray countertops. Be gone plain vanity lights, and off to the dump with the dull brown carpeting.

Because the bath was a part of a larger project, Knudson's design utilized existing space more efficiently to give the bath its unique feel and personality. An adjoining bedroom provided the space for the large shower, and the design concept included a curved maple vanity with "touch" latches, marble countertop with under-mounted sinks, a diagonal corner whirlpool tub with radius marble surround, and a dramatic circular recessed cove ceiling with concealed fluorescent lighting.

Other lighting includes pendent lights for design accent, and recessed lighting cans to add just the right touch of the dramatic. All HVAC vents and exhaust fan are cleverly hidden and selected to reduce fan noise.

The frameless shower enclosure occupies space from an adjoining little used bedroom, and sports marble trim, threshold, and built-in seat. Marble is also used on the vanity and tub deck. All fixtures for the shower, vanity and tub, are brushed nickel.

Architect Scott Knudson is quick to point out, "We—The Alexander Group, the homeowners, and myself—worked as a team and the results are nothing less than stunning. And it's easy to see why The Alexander Group is in demand for these high-end, complicated projects. The quality and care provided by Alex and his team was nothing less than first rate."



▲ Children's bath

Photography ©2001 James Oesch Photography

Times are ripe to remodel or renovate

Home appreciation is at a post World War II high, and interest rates are at a low not seen since returning GI's with new families were hell-bent to own a piece of the American dream—a family home. Low interest rates and government loan guarantee programs made money available, and homes sprung up across the national landscape. His GI Bill benefits in hand, the veteran, Mr. Middle America was, for the first time in history, king of his own domain.

Now these homes, new in the 50s and 60s, are aging. Their sea-foam green dinettes, shag carpets and gold refrigerators are museum pieces. The homes, which have raised several families and perhaps have been bought and sold, are more than ready for a new life.

Never has the question, move or renovate, been so important. For many reasons, like the expansion of mass transit systems and technology, housing has skyrocketed in value from 30 to 70 percent, and in some areas—Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Northwest DC—even higher. This is great if you're selling, but if you're looking to simply enlarge, improve, or change your current home in anticipation of retiring in place, the excitement pales.

For those building a new home from the ground up, or buying an existing home, they must contend with not only higher prices for raw, undeveloped land, but consider that the plumbers gave themselves a 15 to 20 percent raise two years ago, and electrician prices have risen markedly in the past year. Insulation had three price increases last year alone, not to mention windows and doors go up every spring, and cabinetry is not far behind.

On the other hand, remodeling prices haven't gone up at anywhere near this rate, and have become a means to improve the lifestyle of homeowners while increasing the value of the current home. A recent Cost vs. Value study, conducted by *Remodeling Magazine*, indicated there are many renovations that actually return a profit for the homeowner. In the same report, it was illustrated that a new home can cost as much as \$250 to \$300 a square foot, where an addition may only cost \$200 per square foot. This amounts to "instant equity" as one researcher put it.

Paying for a remodel is easier than most homeowners think. Banks will lend homeowners the money to renovate based on the *value of the home after the renovation*. The Alexander Group has done numerous projects in this way, and are willing to help other homeowners who want to know more about these programs.

Here's the way it works: An Alexander Group client wanted to extend his living room out into a side porch and add a new master bath suite on top of the expansion. The homeowner also wanted to add a new entryway to the home. The project investment was about \$200,000. The home had appreciated two-fold since purchased 10 years earlier and the homeowner could borrow most of what was needed without any problem. The homeowner looked around to see what could have been purchased in the same convenient neighborhood that already had the additional space. The purchase price was more than the renovation cost. This kind of math makes renovation really attractive.

Now let's say a homeowner decides to sell and move instead of remodeling to stay in place. What advantages can the Alexander Group bring to these homeowners? A National Association of Realtors membership survey indicated that a dated bathroom or kitchen keeps a home on the market longer, as many as 45 days. Homes with updated bathrooms and kitchens brought a greater profit to the selling homeowner.

The Cost vs. Value Report, published by *Remodeling Magazine*, reflects very attractive percentages of "recouped cost" for the DC Metropolitan area:

Project	Cost Recouped
Major Kitchen Remodel	128%
Minor Kitchen Remodel	120%
Bathroom Addition	124%
Bathroom Remodel	125%
Two-story Addition	135%
Family Room Addition	131%
Deck Addition	111%
Master Suite	127%
Home Office	91%
Sunroom	91%
Attic Bedroom	108%
Basement Refinishing	94%

▲ Log on to www2.remodeling.hw.net/specialfeatures/cvv/default.asp to read the full report.

▲ To remodel or move is a real question in today's booming housing market. With more than 20 years of experience as a Certified Remodeler and Certified Graduate Remodeler, Alex Dean is also a registered real estate agent. Alex can offer the services of Multiple Listing Services and offer his opinion based on properties in your area. Don't make an uninformed decision—call us first.

HGTV features project

In a recent HGTV "New Spaces" program, a portion of a major remodel by The Alexander Group was highlighted. This new master bedroom suite includes a large walk in closet and luxury bathroom.



Photography ©2001 James Oesch Photography



Before



New employee adds to family

The newest Alexander Group employee, Jacob Kirk, lead carpenter, has more than just a new job to celebrate. In March, he and his wife, Erin, added Chloe to their growing family that includes (from left) Tatum, Kyle and Bailey.

Jacob has more than 10 years of experience in the remodeling industry and is a welcome addition the The Alexander Group team.

Welcome Jacob and family!

▼ Visit our Web site: AlexanderGroup.net

▼ Excellence in architectural craftsmanship and remodeling