



ARCHITECTURAL NARRATIVE FOR 325 KEITH STREET, NORMAN

A Home Rooted in Norman's History and Future

The Miller family has a deep-rooted love for Norman, cherishing its historic charm and strong community. Their home at 325 Keith Street is where they are raising their two children, with plans to grow their family. Rather than relocating, they are committed to preserving and enhancing their home to honor Norman's architectural heritage. Active in the community, they support local initiatives and historic preservation efforts. This renovation reflects their dedication—not just to their family's future, but to the legacy of Norman's historic neighborhoods.

Key Considerations & Design Solutions

Maximizing Limited Space: With no available backyard for expansion, a variance was approved for a 5-foot rear setback encroachment to address safety concerns in the laundry room and basement entrance. This ensures the home remains both functional and compliant with Historic District guidelines.

Site Constraints & Expansion Challenges: Side yard expansion was not feasible due to an immovable electrical pole on one side and the need to preserve the largest remaining yard area on the other, aligning with Historic District standards. Instead, the design utilizes an existing underutilized structure, which extends 36 inches above ground from the basement, allowing for a kitchen expansion without disrupting the home's historic footprint.

Balanced Scale & Massing: The square footage of the second-floor addition was carefully determined to maintain proportionality with the existing home. This ensures the addition feels cohesive rather than overpowering, preserving the home's historic integrity while meeting modern living needs.

Respecting Historic Rooflines: The second-floor addition follows the original roof pitch and maintains historic eave details, allowing the home's character to remain intact while discreetly expanding its footprint.

Enhanced Safety & Functionality: The renovation resolves hazardous conditions by introducing a properly designed staircase that meets modern safety standards while maintaining architectural continuity. Additionally, the master suite expansion improves livability by adding a water closet and double-sink vanity, bringing it up to modern standards while also reinforcing the home's structure to support the second-floor addition.

New Functional Space: The second-floor addition includes two new bedrooms and a Jack-and-Jill bathroom, providing much-needed additional space for the Millers' growing family while ensuring the expansion feels natural within the historic setting.

Energy-Efficient Yet Historically Appropriate: The renovation incorporates Low-E, double-pane aluminum-clad wood windows that meet IRC 2021 energy standards, balancing sustainability with a historically accurate aesthetic. The roof structure includes radiant barrier OSB, improving energy efficiency while maintaining the home's period-appropriate appearance.

Seamless Architectural Integration: The additions are constructed with 2x4 and 2x6 wood stud framing, finished in brick veneer and wood siding to match and restore the original materials. Every detail is carefully designed to blend organically with the existing home, ensuring the new spaces feel like a natural part of the original structure rather than modern additions.

1. First Floor Addition | Expanding Within Historic constraints

The first-floor addition is thoughtfully designed to provide additional living space while maintaining the home's historic integrity. Given the site's limitations, the design solution had to be both functional and sensitive to the existing structure. Additionally, it was engineered to support the second-floor addition, ensuring structural integrity while seamlessly integrating with the home's original framework.

3.1 Addition Breakdown:

3.1.1 Addition A - Enhancing Safety & Functionality: The existing laundry and basement stairs pose a safety hazard due to their non-compliant design. The renovation resolves these issues by incorporating a properly designed staircase that meets modern safety standards while maintaining architectural continuity. Additionally, the redesign provides the home with a dedicated laundry room and safe, accessible entrances, improving both functionality and livability.

3.1.2 Addition B - Master Suite Expansion & Structural Support: The renovation enhances the master suite's layout and functionality by adding a water closet and a double-sink vanity, providing the homeowners with modern comforts that align with typical master suites. This thoughtful redesign not only improves daily convenience but also optimizes space utilization. Additionally, the structural modifications made for this expansion reinforce the home's framework, ensuring it can adequately support the new second-floor addition while maintaining architectural continuity.

3.1.3 Addition C - Justification for Kitchen Expansion: The kitchen expansion is designed to provide a more functional and modern living space that meets the needs of a growing family while remaining consistent with contemporary home comforts. This addition is justified by the existing structure, which protrudes 36 inches above ground from the basement but serves no practical purpose. By utilizing this otherwise underutilized space, the expansion improves both the efficiency and livability of the home without compromising its historic character.

3.1.4 Addition D - Dining Expansion: This expansion is essential not only to enhance the functionality of the dining area but also to reinforce the home's structural framework, ensuring it can adequately support the new second-floor addition. By seamlessly integrating with the existing architecture, this modification maintains the home's historic continuity while improving its overall structural integrity and livability.

2. Second Floor Addition: Thoughtfully Designed to Belong

A key objective of this project was to design the second-floor addition so that it feels like a natural extension of the original home. This was achieved through careful attention to massing, proportions, and roofline integration, ensuring historical continuity while enhancing functionality.

2.1 Balanced Scale & Massing: The second-floor square footage was strategically planned to maintain proper proportions with the existing home, creating a cohesive rather than overpowering addition. While slightly exceeding the technically allowed area by just over 200 sq. ft., this was mitigated by incorporating 5' knee walls rather than a full second-story plate height. This design choice reduces visual massing, maintaining the home's original scale while maximizing usable space.



2.2 Respecting Historic Rooflines: The addition is carefully designed to follow the original roof pitch, seamlessly connecting to the existing structure while maintaining historic eave details. By matching the existing roof slopes, the new construction integrates effortlessly, ensuring a uniform and historically consistent form that blends harmoniously with the home's original design.

2.3 Functional & Family-Oriented Space: This expansion introduces two new bedrooms and a Jack-and-Jill bathroom, providing much-needed additional space for the Millers' growing family while maintaining the character and functionality of the home.

2.4 Energy Efficiency with Historic Sensitivity: To ensure modern performance while preserving historic aesthetics, the addition incorporates Low-E, double-pane aluminum-clad wood windows that meet IRC 2021 energy standards. The roof structure features radiant barrier OSB, enhancing energy efficiency without compromising the home's period-appropriate appearance.

3. Exterior Elevation Renovation: Preserving and Enhancing Historic Character

In addition to expanding the home, the Millers are dedicated to preserving its historic character. The exterior renovations focus on restoring key architectural elements while updating materials for durability and longevity, ensuring the home remains true to its original design.

3.1 Roofing & Ventilation Enhancements: The roof is updated with architectural asphalt shingles, carefully selected to match the existing material and maintain visual continuity. The existing gable vents are removed and replaced with new roof vents, improving attic ventilation while preserving a discreet, historically accurate appearance—subject to prior approval.

3.2 Windows & Doors: New aluminum-clad wood windows in black or deep bronze are installed in accordance with Historic District standards, ensuring both efficiency and authenticity. The solid-core wood entry door preserves the home's classic aesthetic, reinforcing its historic character.

3.3 Restoration of Decorative Features: All brackets, corbels, and wood trim are carefully restored or, when necessary, replaced with hand-crafted replicas that match the original design. No additional decorative elements are introduced, maintaining the home's historic authenticity.

3.4 Historic Color Palette & Finishes: The exterior finishes are carefully selected to align with historic preservation guidelines.

- Siding: Wood clapboard, painted in a muted historic beige.
- Trim & Fascia: Painted off-white to create a refined contrast.
- Brick: Existing red brick is repointed and cleaned using historically appropriate mortar techniques.
- Entry Door & Columns: Wood-finished with glass panel details, preserving the home's classic Norman aesthetic.



Conclusion

The Miller family's renovation and addition at 325 Keith Street are driven by a deep commitment to historic preservation and modern livability. This project is not just about expanding their home it is about honoring its history while adapting it for the future. Every design decision has been carefully made to ensure that the home remains an integral part of Norman's historic fabric while meeting the evolving needs of the growing family.

Through thoughtful planning and architectural sensitivity, the design successfully overcomes site constraints while maintaining structural integrity and historic continuity. The first-floor additions address safety concerns, optimize underutilized space, and reinforce the framework for the second floor, while the new upper level is proportionally designed to blend seamlessly with the existing home. The exterior renovations preserve original materials and craftsmanship, ensuring that every detail remains authentic to the home's character.

This project serves as a model for balancing historic preservation with functional enhancement, demonstrating how a home can evolve with its owners while remaining true to its past. By navigating challenges such as lot constraints, zoning requirements, and architectural integration, this renovation allows the Millers to continue growing their family in the home they love without sacrificing its historical significance. Their dedication to Norman's architectural heritage and community is evident in every carefully considered element of this design.



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