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WELFORD COTTAGE

WELFORD COTTAGE SIMULTANEOUSLY OFFERS COMFORT AND PRIVACY combined with ample space for entertaining. It is so named because the design borrows from English cottage traditions and emphasizes a natural setting. Johnny Williams Construction, Shapiro & Company Architects Inc., and Graham Reese Design Group formed the core group of creative professionals who designed this home for versatile living.

Privacy is introduced with the surrounding landscape and carried through with the design of the home. Along with Echo Systems Landscape Services Inc., the team preserved as many trees as possible. "By carefully reviewing the adjacent neighbors' homes, we were able to successfully arrange the interior and exterior rooms so that they had access to a great amount of natural light, yet also maintain privacy for our homeowner," says Brad Shapiro, AIA.

To maintain cottage comfort and flexibility, rooms have a visual connection to each other. "Most folks like rooms that are defined, yet they don't want isolated spaces that are rarely used," explains Shapiro. "So we designed the home with clearly defined spaces but not defined uses. For example, the dining room was combined with a library that can accommodate intimate dining along with a sitting area, or the sitting area can be removed to allow [for a] larger dining room."

Williams confirms that building a "family entertaining-style home" with an emphasis on flexibility was one of the major goals when developing Welford Cottage. He points out that while the exterior is classic overall, interior spaces seamlessly express a less traditional feel.

A few features that exemplify this contemporary cottage atmosphere are: exterior textures of brick and copper; 14-foot ceilings; large reclaimed wood beams inside; and an interior brick wall that drew much attention and positive feedback from VESTA Showcase guests. Also, three fireplaces were included, two inside and one outdoors, to attract small and large gatherings. A grand-sized back porch with an outdoor kitchen and grill extends the homeowners' options.

Interior designer Graham Reese says the not-so-traditional interior has clean lines for understated elegance. "The plan is very open and has good movement as you flow through the house," Reese adds. "Exterior patios at the kitchen and dining rooms help create a natural progression from inside to outside."

Of the 2010 VESTA event, Reese says, "The homes sold quickly, and the layouts and designs were clever." Shapiro adds, "I could tell that the design seemed to be really working when I personally said 'I would love to live here.'" Williams says the show's success was a result of cooperation, calling the project "a true team effort."

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