

2023 AIAIDC Washingtonian Awards

Project Title: Garden Portal ~ a glass kitchen in a historic bungalow
Location: Takoma Park, Maryland
Date of Completion: April, 2023

Project Statement (150 words max):

A couple purchased a dilapidated 1920's bungalow in Takoma Park, Maryland- a town adjacent to DC known for its diverse and inclusive community. Despite the house's poor condition, they fell in love with its expansive yard in which to grow a vegetable garden - a dream while living in NYC previously.

To create a flow from harvest to table, an open kitchen with direct access to the vegetable garden was built in the rear of the house. Designated as a historic resource, however, the new construction could not be visible from the front street. This restriction along with the intention not to overexpand the house's footprint minimized the size of the addition to only 4 feet deeper than the original structure. Even though modest in scale, with the band of windows and a corner skylight, the design of the kitchen successfully brings light and airiness into the whole house.

Design Narrative: How does this project address Design for Integration, Wellbeing, and Discovery? (150 words max):

In their new kitchen, the homeowners enjoy cooking fresh homegrown vegetables, relaxing on the daybed with a favorite book, viewing various activities in the yard both of humans and critters, watching the rain pour on the glass roof during a storm and observing the stars on a clear night. From the kitchen windows, the view of the garden and the sunbeams filtered through trees reach the adjacent dining area and illuminate the rest of the house. The kitchen not only serves as the functional center for creating and sharing family meals, but also as the tranquil heart of the home to fully connect with nature, to rejuvenate, and to celebrate the art of everyday living.

Community Engagement: How does this project address Design for Equitable Communities and Economy? (150 words max)

By creating a modern, bright and open home they yearned for out of a nearly dilapidated structure, our clients were able to live in a desirable town, to bring back a neglected historic house to life, and to invest in a neighborhood community while living within their means. The contracting company hired for the construction is minority-owned, an important consideration during the builder selection process.

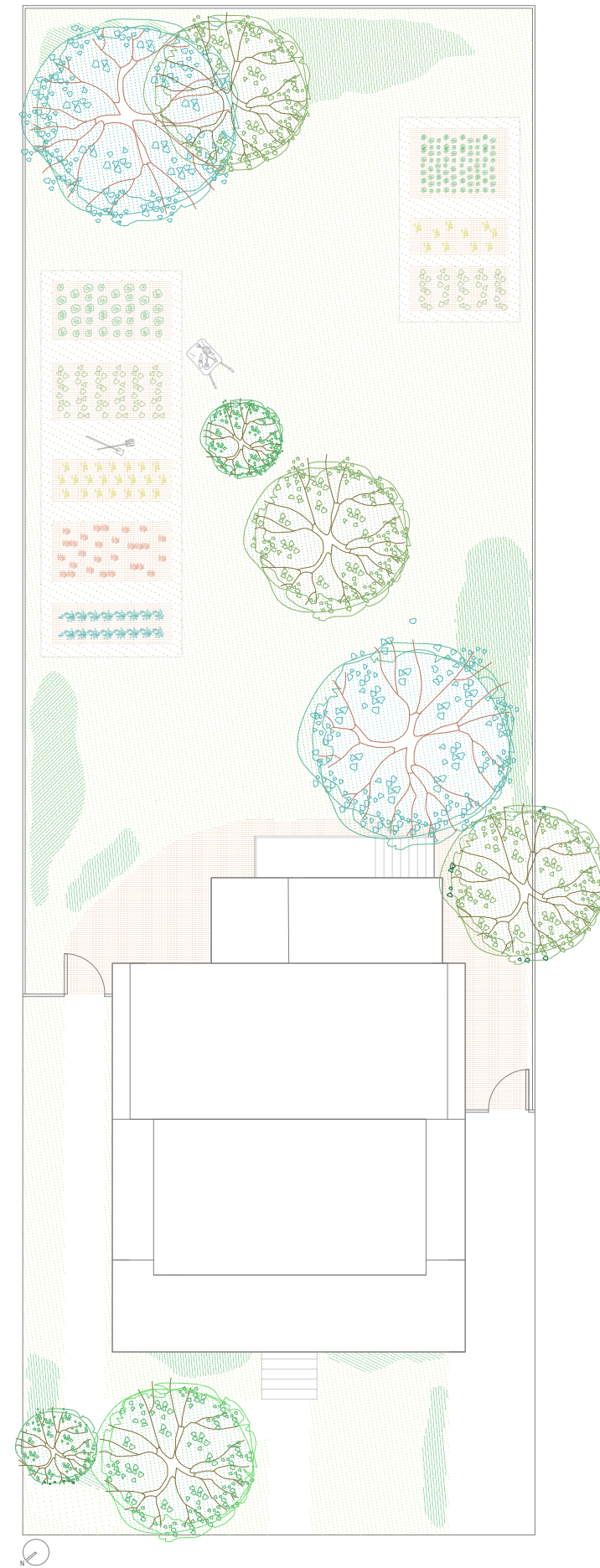
Sustainability and Resilience: How does this project address Design for Ecosystems, Water, Energy, Resources, and Change? (150 words max)

The soil amendment using organic materials and methods for the vegetable garden improves the water run-off and enhances garden irrigation. The low maintenance native plants planted throughout the property provide food and shelter for wildlife and reduce heat transmitted to the surrounding atmosphere. Local pollinators in the garden attract birds, bees and butterflies. The new insulation and fenestration were strategically designed to conserve energy, while the overall building footprint was kept to a minimum. By purchasing and renovating a home close to town, they can access schools, libraries, clinics, shops, restaurants and markets on foot or by public transits. The finish materials and fabrications were carefully selected to be as natural and locally sourced as possible, such as the poplar panels and oak flooring from Pennsylvania and the metal components fabricated right here in town. Durability was also a drive through the design and finish selection process to assure project longevity, well above the code requirements in order to increase thermal comfort and to reduce the energy consumption.

GARDEN PORTAL

A glass kitchen in a historic bungalow





GARDEN PORTAL 3

