

RESIZING

reconfiguring space
to meet the needs
of a growing family

The moment Anna and Brett stepped into this 1860 farmhouse, they knew they found their long-term home. The year was 1995 and their children were just 10 and 4. While the home was far from perfect, they had a vision for what it could become. According to Anna, "Little did we know how busy our life was about to become! Between kids' activities and building a business, there was little time for home projects."

Twenty-two years later, with both children out of college and married, Anna and Brett, finally had some time to think about that vision they had when they first purchased the home. And while they were now technically *empty nesters*, they found that their nest was seldom empty. Says Anna, "our home is the place

where our family gathers on weekends to relax or cook or celebrate special occasions. And with the addition of two sons-in-law and two grandbabies, the empty nest is full to overflowing!"

So unlike most homeowners who are downsizing at this stage of life, Anna and Brett decided that the solution to their *overflowing* situation was to resize their existing space to make family gatherings a little more enjoyable. It also provided them an opportunity to finally address that long-time vision of theirs. According to Anna, "we knew we wanted the kitchen to be the biggest space in our home because, let's face it, who really uses their formal dining room or living room?"

The homeowners also wanted to add a first-floor, full bathroom

and to have a room that could also serve as a bedroom in the event single-floor living was required down the road.

While maintaining the architectural integrity of the home's exterior, the homeowners wanted to seal two exterior doors from the inside. To them, six (6) first floor exterior doors was a bit excessive. (Yes, each room on the first floor had an outside entry.) For a variety of reasons, security, energy-efficiency, and additional wall space, sealing two doors without changing the exterior appearance was to be part of the project.

As an optional component, they also wanted to explore the possibility of converting the old, musty, non-functional cold cellar into a wine cellar.



As seen further in the floor plans on page 27, these *BEFORE* photos show the original eat-in kitchen. For reference, the below photo was taken from roughly the same spot as the larger one to the left. The wall behind the china closet shown below was removed to make room for the kitchen expansion.



Featured Builder

Metzler Home Builders

(see ad page 27)

PROJECT TRADE PARTNERS

Caliber Hardwood Floors Inc. (see ad p. 34)

Conestoga Country Kitchens, Inc. (see ad p. 28)

F&M Painting Co. (see ad p. 34)

G.R. Mitchell, Inc. (see ad p. 36)

HAJOCA Corporation (see ad p. 32)

JMLapp Plumbing & Heating (see HSD listing p. 46)

Martin Appliance (see ad p. 28)

Natural Stoneworks (see ad p. 30)

Way To Go Cleaning Services (see ad p. 36)

“We didn't consider any contractor other than Metzler Home Builders to handle a project of this magnitude. Several friends have homes that were built by Metzler, and they spoke so highly of the quality of Metzler's work – not only at the time of construction but also in follow-up issues that arose – that we knew they were the one we wanted.

Homeowners, Anna & Brett





Abe Metzler worked as a carpenter for over 20 years when, in 1953, he decided it was time to start his own company. Abe started with home and barn remodeling projects for a number of farmers in the area. With help from his oldest son, Roy, they began to take on more work, and were approached to build a new home. The successful father and son team was the genesis of Metzler Home Builders.



Over the span of more than five decades, Metzler Home Builders has designed and built hundreds of new homes, and has completed countless addition and renovation projects. We have built our reputation on crafting quality homes and additions, providing efficient project management, and open communication through the life of the project, and beyond. The numerous awards and recognitions we have received over the years attest to our team's dedication to our craft and to our customers.

Taking a cue from his father, Roy, Dan Metzler would likewise grow up in the family business. He followed his father around watching his every step, adhering to the same qualities Roy learned from his father. Dan has been a partner since 1978, and he and his wife Janet have successfully handled the business affairs since 1988, when his father retired. In the summer of 2011, Dan and Janet's son, Jordan, joined the Metzler team, and is now the 4th generation to be involved in the family business.

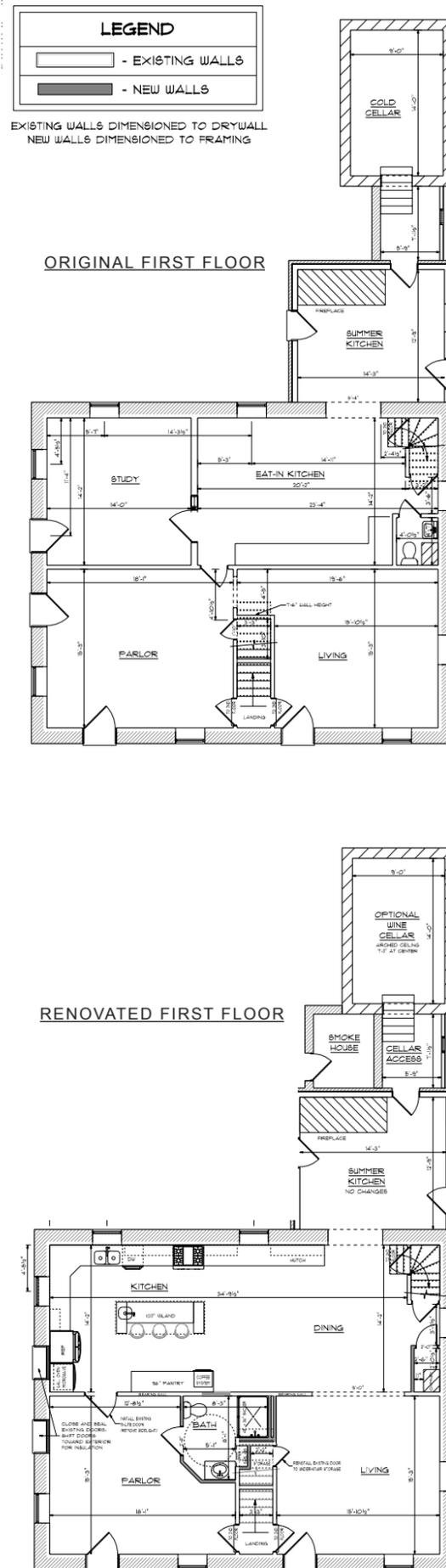
At Metzler Home Builders, we enjoy developing personal relationships with our clients throughout the construction process, with complete customer satisfaction at the heart of every custom home, addition or renovation project we undertake. We take pride in our reputation for high quality and fine craftsmanship, built through years of personal service and attention to detail. That reputation directly reflects the quality of our team.

The Metzler staff listened carefully to us and designed exactly what we told them we wanted. They brought in subcontractors who were top notch, and communication with the designer and project manager was easy and efficient.

Homeowners, Anna & Brett



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We were especially impressed with Conestoga Country Kitchens who designed and installed the kitchen. They were very detail oriented and attentive to our wants and needs. They thought of everything, even suggesting some things we hadn't considered. We purchased our appliances at Martin Appliance and they, too, were excellent to work with – following up several times after our purchase and install to see if we had any questions or concerns. Their built-in coffee machine quickly became the family favorite!

Homeowners, Anna & Brett

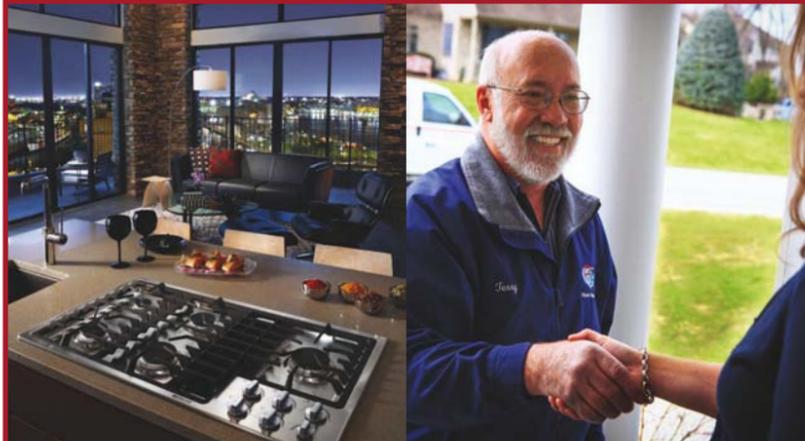


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Reading (Rt. 422 - East of Reading) 610-401-0390



Based on reputation alone, the homeowners called award-winning, Lancaster-based Metzler Home Builders to take on the project. For years, R&A readers have seen the beautiful work completed by the Metzler team and are familiar with the stellar reputation they've earned from happy homeowners. As you'll hear from Anna and Brett, this project was no exception.

To get a feel for the project from the builders perspective, I asked Tim Zehr, Metzler's Addition & Renovation Advisor and Senior Designer for help. Typical of the detail and thoroughness you would expect from a senior space designer, here's what I got.

As depicted in the plans on page 27, the first floor of the home



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consisted of a summer kitchen which serves as the main entry, eat-in kitchen, powder room, office, parlor, and living room.

The kitchen, while small and dated, served the needs of the family over the years but weekly family gatherings with more people helping to prepare food was almost impossible. While the original wood floors had been painted, it was wearing thin. The gaps between the floor boards had been a nightmare to clean and were not a safe place for a toddler's treasure seeking hands.

While the old office space was a hub of activity at one time, it was now only being used for storage. It was essentially unused.

The parlor was being used as the main living space. A sectional sofa was placed in front of one of the many exterior doors, but the cold air flowing through the key hole of the antique lock made one of the best TV viewing locations unpleasant during the winter.

Due to the existing layout which only allowed access to the living room from the parlor, it was the room furthest from the entry and main living spaces. This room was sparsely furnished and was used very infrequently.

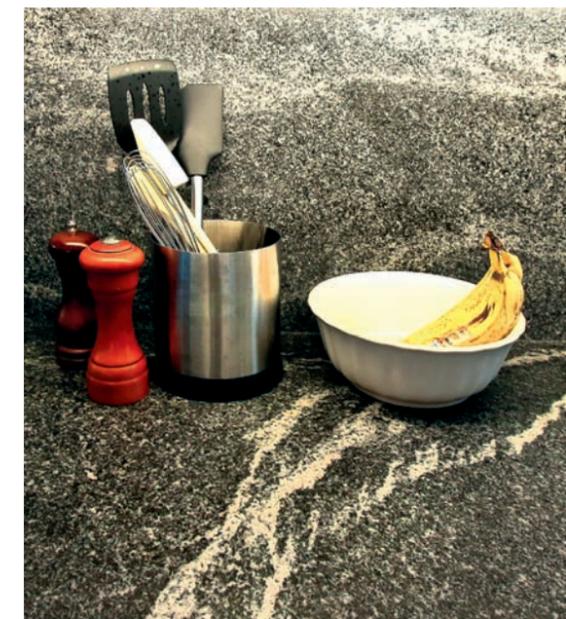
The cold cellar located off the summer kitchen was once used for beverage storage. Since it is completely underground it maintains cooler temperatures and higher humidity—ideal for beverages. It was abandoned when a slithery friend was found among the drinks. Access to the cellar was in rough shape. The wooden door and steps leading down into the cellar were rotted and the area around the stairwell (a storage area for cleaning supplies) had also deteriorated over time.

With 45% of the first floor space being idle or underutilized, major space-enhancing design changes were possible.

To address the homeowners' highest priority which was to create an open floor plan conducive for family gatherings where



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everyone could feel a part of the activity, walls had to be removed. The wall between the existing kitchen and living room was removed to open the site line from the summer kitchen to the front of the house. And just as dramatic, the wall between the kitchen and office was also removed to allow for a major expansion of the kitchen. By extending the kitchen through the office to its exterior wall, additional space was created for a larger dining area on the other end of this expansive area. As an accent feature, the original brick was exposed in the corner of the kitchen which required removal of the plaster followed by blasting the brick with walnut shells (a gentler form of sandblasting), and brick repairs.

The main living space moved from the parlor to the living room which was now opened to the dining and kitchen space.

The parlor now became a more isolated room complete with a full bath. This allows the bathroom to be in a more private location from the main living areas rather than right beside the kitchen as in the original layout. While the

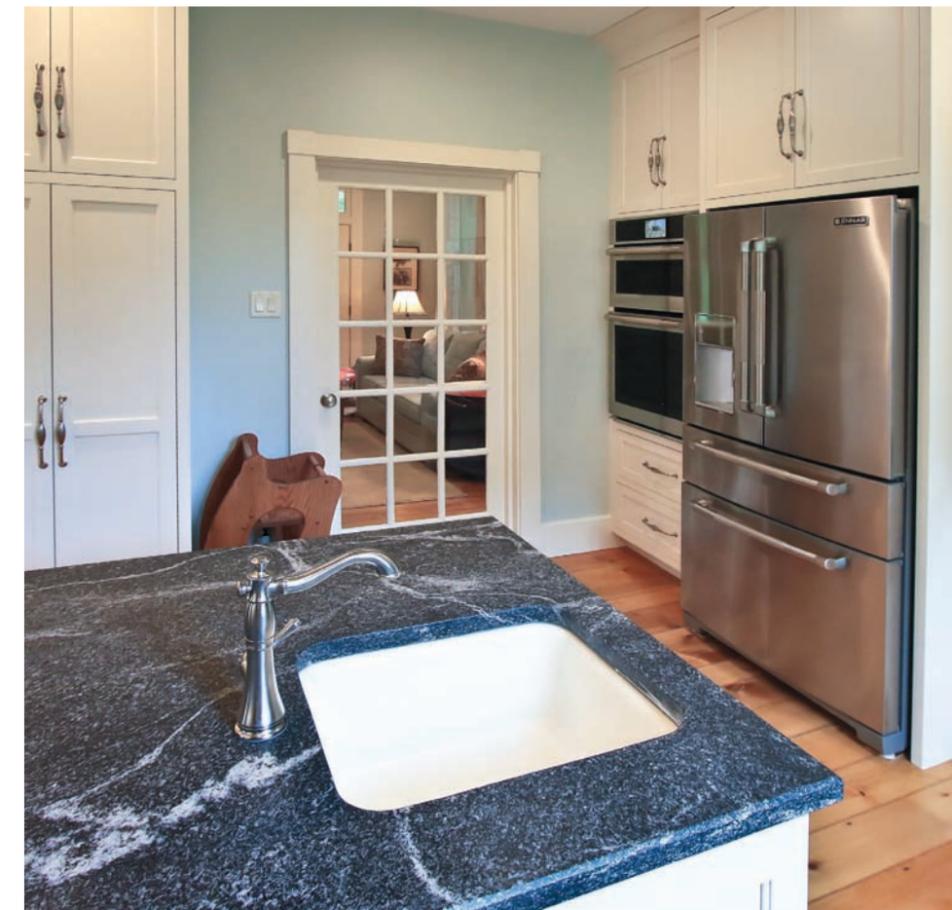


Plumbing Supplies and Fixtures:
HAJOCA CORPORATION
Plumbing and Heating:
JMLAPP PLUMBING & HEATING

Consistent with the period in which the house was built, note the deep window jambs and sills. Although not part of the original decor, the homeowners opted to remove portions of the plaster to expose the brick beneath. These bricks in the corner of the kitchen (previously the study), as well as those in the wine cellar and the stones in the arch above the wine cellar entry (see page 39), were walnut shell blasted and beautifully repaired. For those not familiar, walnut shell blasting is a more delicate (and less messy) form of sand blasting.

parlor allows a quiet space to get away from the bustle of family gathering, it can also serve as a first floor bedroom if/when desired.

The cold cellar and cellar access were refinished to return their functionality and is now used as a wine cellar. Flagstone was installed for the cellar access floor and cellar steps to eliminate the rotting issue. The original stone and brick were also walnut shell blasted and repaired. This included repairing the stone arch above the wine cellar entry.



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Great job Metzler Home Builders! The team at Caliber Hardwood Floors enjoyed being a part of this renovation.



The summer kitchen (above) continues to serve as the main entry and in colder months, with the fireplace insert ablaze, the coziest room in the house. Access to the reclaimed wine cellar (see page 39) is through the door to the right of the fireplace.



The hardwood floors – all of which were original and in very rough shape – turned out absolutely beautiful! The repair and restoration work performed by Caliber Hardwood Floors was awesome and we couldn't believe how little mess they generated given the amount of sanding that was required. Their dust containment system is as good as advertised – it really works!

Homeowners, Anna & Brett

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While not changing the exterior appearance, two exterior doors (above) were sealed in the interior to provide additional wall space. In the parlor photo (right), the sealed doors—now wall space—are to the right of the window and, looking into the kitchen, behind the refrigerator.



Once the family hub, the parlor is now a more "quiet" room that can double as a bedroom, if needed. A private bath located behind the wooden chair, can be seen above. With a walk-in shower, the homeowners now have the option to age in place on a single floor.

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This before photo was taken from a solid wall that separated the dining area from the living room. As you can see in the photo on the far right, by creating a spacious opening, the line of sight now extends from the summer kitchen, through the dining area, and into the living room. For reference, note the brick fireplace in the background of both photos as well as the location of the steps.



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“Another very impressive thing that supported our initial impression of Metzler Home Builders was what all the subcontractors had to say about them. Everyone that we spoke to had nothing but high praise for the Metzler team and told us that we made the right decision in choosing them. We didn't really need to hear that to form our own opinion, but it was good to hear nonetheless.

Homeowners, Anna & Brett

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In comparing the before photo below and the one on the right, note the position of the front door and the step-up doorway that leads to both the parlor as well as a staircase to the second floor. To make room for the new bathroom adjacent to the parlor, the hallway from the living room to the parlor (far right on the before photo) was eliminated. The closed hallway is now a solid wall behind and to the right of the wicker coffee table. The undersized door leads to a new storage area beneath the staircase.





meet the principals...

Dan Metzler
President

Jordan Metzler
Vice President

Janet Metzler
Office Manager

Dan handles land acquisition and new home client relationships.

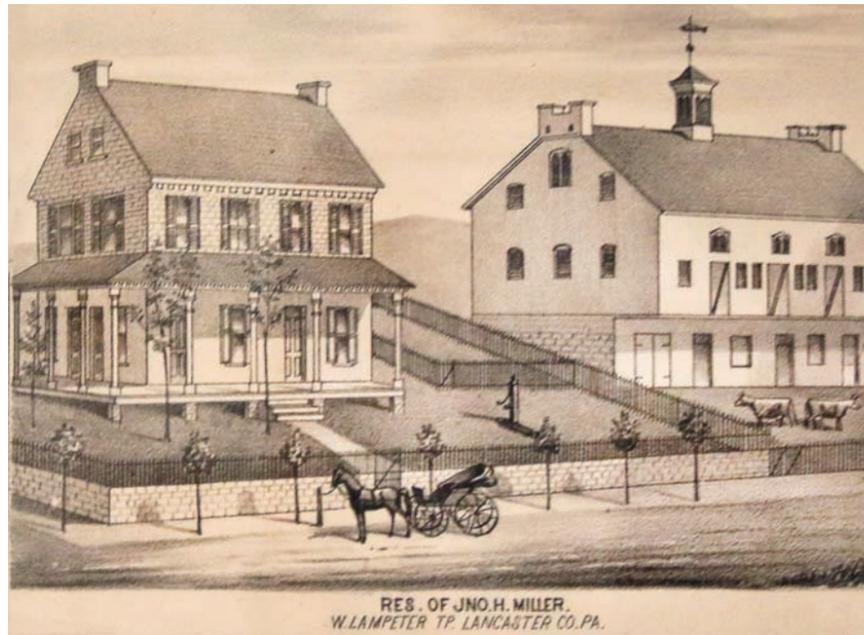
Janet is the Office Manager overseeing daily accounting and general office management. She also assists the homeowner with exterior color selections. The Metzler's have three married children and four grandchildren.

Dan and Janet's son, Jordan, meets with clients interested in building a new home. Other responsibilities include estimating, drafting and permitting. Jordan joined the family business in the summer of 2011 after six years working as a drafter in the civil engineering field. From this experience, he is able to guide our customers through the storm water management process. Jordan and his wife, Anna, live in Strasburg with their children, Jordan Jr. and Evelyn.

Additions & Renovations Advisor

Tim Zehr
Addition and Renovation Advisor, Senior Designer / Estimator

Tim has been employed by Metzler Home Builders since 1988. He guides our customers through the process of determining their needs and wants for their home, then creates an addition or renovation to fulfill those desires. When not working, Tim enjoys volleyball, golf and hiking. He lives in Strasburg with his wife, Sharon, and three children, Ashley, Josiah and Nicole. Tim is a Certified Green Professional, a member of the Lancaster County Career and Technology Center's Advisory Committee for the Architectural CAD Course, and is a member of the Lancaster County Code Association.



The above etching captures the classic looks of this 1860 vintage farmhouse and barn. Nearly 160 years later, with mature trees and lush landscaping, this classic beauty is a bit less conspicuous.



The wood floors were repaired and refinished including the chestnut floor in the parlor. Being a higher quality wood (and considerably more costly), it's speculated that installation of the original chestnut flooring was limited to the room used to greet guests.

In closing, based on the homeowners' testimonials throughout this article, it's clear that their faith in Metzler Home Builders was justified...and richly rewarded. And it's also clear, as evidenced by the results of this project and the design work that went into it, that buying a bigger home or adding on an addition isn't always the only option to increasing livable space. Resizing existing space may be all that's required.

R&A



Our home has become our family hub in ways we never imagined and we are enjoying every single minute we spend here! We thank the Metzler team for their wonderful work in transforming our old farmhouse. We couldn't be more happy with the results!

Homeowners, Anna & Brett

