

A Spa-like Master Bathroom

By Linda Barrett

Professional photography by Greg Hadley



Turning your master bathroom into a functional and welcoming space could be as simple as adding special features, or as dramatic as this full remodel.

Mary and Vince Williams hired Schroeder Design/Build to remodel their two-level master bathroom into a spa-like retreat in their Herndon home. “When we built the home in 1991, we opted for a big master bathroom. And although I like the fact that it is a big space, it wasn’t very functional for our current needs,” Mary said. For example, they did not like having the commode area on a different level than the sinks, the shower was too small, and the dormer cabinet had no use at all. They also dreamed of adding an upstairs laundry.

In conjunction with the Schroeder design team, the Williamses carefully considered each element in their bathroom design, right down to where the towel bars were placed. They relocated the existing vanity to the upper level to create a “dry” area and located the tub and expanded glass-enclosed shower in the lower, or “wet” level. They also added three locations for extra heat when needed, improved the lighting, increased functionality with the European laundry, and included extras like a timed

vent fan near the shower. Countertops were made deeper and the electric fireplace was relocated near the freestanding tub to create a warm and spa-like retreat. Their award-winning project was completed in 2020.

Mary Williams, a residential Realtor with Sampson Properties, looked at the resale value too when determining the new design. “Things need to make sense in how the space functions, and potential buyers need to immediately see how the space can work for them on a day-to-day basis.”

“If you know what you want and are rebuilding in place, you can use a contractor or a skilled tradesperson. When you need design guidance or functionality help, look for a remodeler with the word ‘design’ in its name. Working with our professional design/build firm also helped us stay within our budget.”

Determine the Goals and Budget

“Figure out what your goal is,” advised Andrew Schroeder, CEO of Schroeder Design/Build, Inc. “Is the home going up for resale? Is the bathroom falling apart? Do you want to create a pleasant area to spend



time? Some people are bath people, and want a beautiful space to linger in, while others want to shower and get in and out as quickly as possible. Know your intent before designing your master bathroom.”

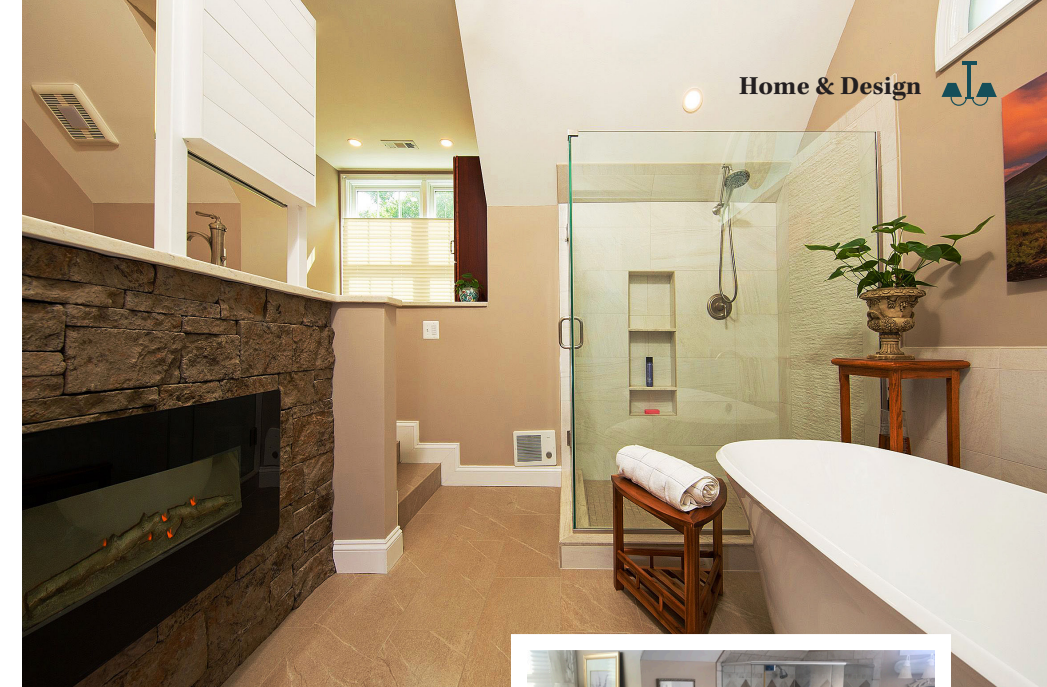
Budgets also come into play. “On almost every project we work on, the clients’ desired don’t align with their appetite,” he continued. “The most successful route we’ve found is to show the clients the most economical solution for the budget they want to spend, and also show them the budget for the design and layout they really want. To reach those goals and aspirations, what does that budget take? It’s really an educational process. By far, the number one key to success is to create a relationship between creativity and budgets. The evolution of design needs to go hand in hand with budgeting.”

Prioritize Shoulds and Coulds

A design/build team will help prioritize what should be done and what could be done within the budget—the “must haves”

vs. the “nice to haves.” Then you can start adding on the niceties that enhance the room. Determine the thought process behind each item and work with the design team to help make appropriate decisions. In the Williams case, the couple wanted medicine cabinets in the vanity mirrors. This posed a design challenge of how to physically support the cabinets since they were not wall mounted, while keeping views open. Schroeder’s competent design team devised a custom solution.

“Think the project through to its day-to-day functionality and usage,” Williams advised. “We put the materials selections inside the space where they are going to be installed and observed them at different times of day. Keep in mind that after 10 years, you have to look at those selections and ask ‘does that still work for me?’ You don’t want them to go out of date style-wise. If the remodeler has the word ‘design’ in its name, trust that they will give you some design guidance.” The Williamses worked closely with the Schroeder architectural and interior design teams to create the master bath of their dreams that will provide them with comfort and beauty for many years to come. ♦



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Enhanced Features:

- ✓ Freestanding soaking tub
- ✓ Frameless glass-enclosed shower with accent wall & rainfall showerhead
- ✓ Fireplace with stone surround
- ✓ Shower vent fan with timer
- ✓ Toe kick heaters
- ✓ Matte-finished tile flooring
- ✓ Suspended medicine cabinets with built-in lighting
- ✓ Repurposed cabinets with Quartz countertops
- ✓ Two pendant lights
- ✓ Floor lighting on treads
- ✓ European laundry
- ✓ Stained glass accent in half-circle window
- ✓ Open, airy views
- ✓ Cathedral ceiling