



PICTURE 1 - AFTER – HIGH BAR AREA

Unusual Challenges/Constraints and Creative Solutions

The essential needs of the client included opening up the space to combine the kitchen, dining room and living room areas. The high bar area was designed to conceal the kitchen clutter (*See picture 1 - upper left corner*). The finished side and end panels have a furniture quality, making the kitchen blend in artfully. Also important was that he needed to stay within the budget he had set. We were conscientious of the customer’s budget through the entire design/build process.

Explanation of the Scope of Work

This client contacted us after his unlicensed, uninsured contractor disappeared with the homeowner’s generous deposit. The contractor had completed most of the demolition but left the work areas a real mess. There were not even any drawings or other construction documents when we took over (*See picture below*). For this entry our scope was the eat-in kitchen area. However, we did a good deal of work in the rest of the house as well.



BEFORE PICTURE – View of exposed steel beam, joists & plumbing lines left unfinished by previous contractor.



BEFORE PICTURE – Existing kitchen conditions after demolition by previous contractor.

The previous contractor left us with structural challenges. He had installed a steel beam in order to remove an existing bearing wall between

the living room and kitchen (*See before previous page*).

However, he left it precariously supported on a couple of temporary columns. An adjacent girder had also been compromised when it was notched with a reciprocating saw. We found it supported by a single bowed 2"x4". After much discussion, we determined that we needed to install a mid span column to ensure the structural integrity of the house.

We laid out the kitchen in a galley format to maximize the living space. Given the open nature of the kitchen design, cabinet space was maximized by using three full height pantries. There are four distinct counter areas including a desk. Bulkheads above the cabinets and one column conceal plumbing, ductwork and structural steel. We softened the look of the bulkheads by using crown molding on all ceilings. New oak wood floors were feathered into existing ones and the entire area refinished (*See after picture right*).



AFTER PICTURE – View of full height pantries & wood flooring.

Overall Results

This homeowner is very happy with the final results of the entire project and has shared the lessons of his experience with others. We are happy he is referring us to his family & others in the area.