



Large unbroken expanses of glass seems to bring the outdoors into the McDonough home as in the dining room, above, which formerly had little light. In the inset, upper left, Nancy and Tim McDonough are shown in front of the Southfield home whose interior they gutted rather than leave their neighborhood.

# Architectural touch helps renew home from the inside out

By Shirlee Iden staff writer

**R**USTY, THE CAT at Nancy and Tim McDonough's house in Southfield, hasn't adjusted to the new front entrance. But the family is reveling in their new space.

After 15 years of living in their Southfield ranch, the couple decided some changes should be made. "I wanted a place to grow plants, first-floor utilities, and a place for hobbies and activities," says Mrs. McDonough.

Today the McDonoughs have all of those amenities, and much more. What they approached as a happy renovation turned into a complete gutting of their first-floor living area, mov-

lot," she says. "So we decided we'd change a few things and add a greenhouse. But then we found Walter Reddig."

An architect, Reddig lives and works in Farmington. He came to Detroit and subsequently his present locale from Germany in 1963. "I'm a master cabinetmaker and have a degree in interior architecture, but that was an unheard-of field when I first came here," he says. "So I became a registered architect."

"Now, interior architects are coming into their own."

BOTH THE McDONOUGH family and their interior architect found their relationship very personal and gratifying. Though she asked only for plant, hobby and utility space, Reddig envisioned more comprehensive changes when he saw the house.

"I thought the McDonoughs realized their life style had changed and they'd outgrown the home as it was," Reddig says. "We analyzed it and reassessed it."

Reddig presented about eight different approaches, and accomplished a re-organization of the existing space. "All the present furnishings when we start-

ed were supposed to be used," he says. The architect has a rather contemporary outlook, while the homeowners' possessions were more traditional. In the finished interior, a spare architectural look is complemented and warmed by the couple's own furnishings.

Mrs. McDonough admits they upped their budget quite a bit, "but we got much more than we started out to do." Reddig contends people shouldn't abandon houses and neighborhoods they like before looking into redoing the homes. "In today's economy especially, it's always feasible."

REDDIG supervised the entire renovation and hired local contractors that he was accustomed to dealing with. "We started April 1 and were promised we'd be in on June 1," Mrs. McDonough says. "We moved in on May 30."

Walter kept talking about the demolition phase and I worried about dynamite. But on April 1 when the fellas arrived, I found there certainly was a demolition phase.

Reddig says every phase of the demolition is plotted carefully on a drawing. He said most partitions were placed not for structural reasons.

Every step along the way, the McDonoughs were kept aware of the progress. Reddig made drawings and models to help the family visualize the changes such as moving the front entrance that Rusty the cat was so accustomed to.

Actual dimensions of the remodeled area add up to about 1,400 square feet. The floor is covered with a commercial application of lightly stained acrylic-impregnated wood that is pressure treated and reinforced. "It's definitely worth it to invest more for a finish that will almost never show wear," Reddig said.

"We've had a lot of people on this floor and its maintenance is just a damp wipe," Mrs. McDonough says.

LIGHTING in the house is all functional and indirect. "Lighting is not decorative but is directed onto focal surfaces and objects like art or plants," Reddig says. "After all, you don't look at light, you use it."

Reddig did a landscape plan for the exterior and put in a brick walk in front. The McDonoughs have two daughters — Julie, 20, a student at Michigan

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**'Before a house or neighborhood is abandoned, people should look into redoing their home, in today's economy, especially. Economically, it's always feasible.'**  
—Walter Reddig architect



Living room furnishings the McDonough's already had warms the contemporary expanse of wooden floor. Indirect lighting and light walls, above. The clean, architectural look of the living area is shown from enclosed foyer, to the length of the living room. The fireplace was left unchanged.

Staff photos by Dick Kelley