



Before & After:

An Airy Loft Opens Up a 1920 Bungalow in Atlanta

BY MELISSA DALTON

A clever reconfiguration expands a Craftsman home by 780 square feet without changing its footprint.

When Carie Davis, a former industrial designer and now investor in the circular economy, bought this 1920 bungalow in Atlanta's Grant Park neighborhood, it had its share of problems. The foundation was in bad shape and needed to be shored up. At some point, the home had suffered both a fire and water damage, so the roof was wrecked.

But after Carie consulted her friend from college, architect Adam Ruffin, the wart became a win. "The genesis of the design started with the replacement of the roof," says Ruffin, who's a partner at the New York City- and Virginia-based Architecture firm.

BEFORE EXTERIOR: Carie Davis, an industrial designer-turned-investor in the circular economy, bought a Craftsman bungalow in the Grant Park neighborhood of Atlanta. Grant Park is a 131-acre park and home to the city zoo, and the neighborhood surrounding it is one of Atlanta's oldest and a designated historic district.





After: Exterior

A deep gray paint coats the exterior, from the concrete steps to the railing and the facade, for a modern monochrome effect..

Rebuilding a roof is expensive, but since it needed to be done to make the home livable, the pair started brainstorming how they could take advantage of the situation. “Her initial response was, ‘All right, maybe we can change the roof line,’” recalls Ruffin.

The home’s location in a historic district, however, meant no substantial alterations were allowed to be visible from the street. Says Ruffin, “So then [the question] became, ‘If you don’t expand the floor plan or the roof volume, what can we do within that envelope?’”



BEFORE FRONT PORCH: The project retained the door and window openings in deference to guidelines for historic homes in the area.



After: Front Porch

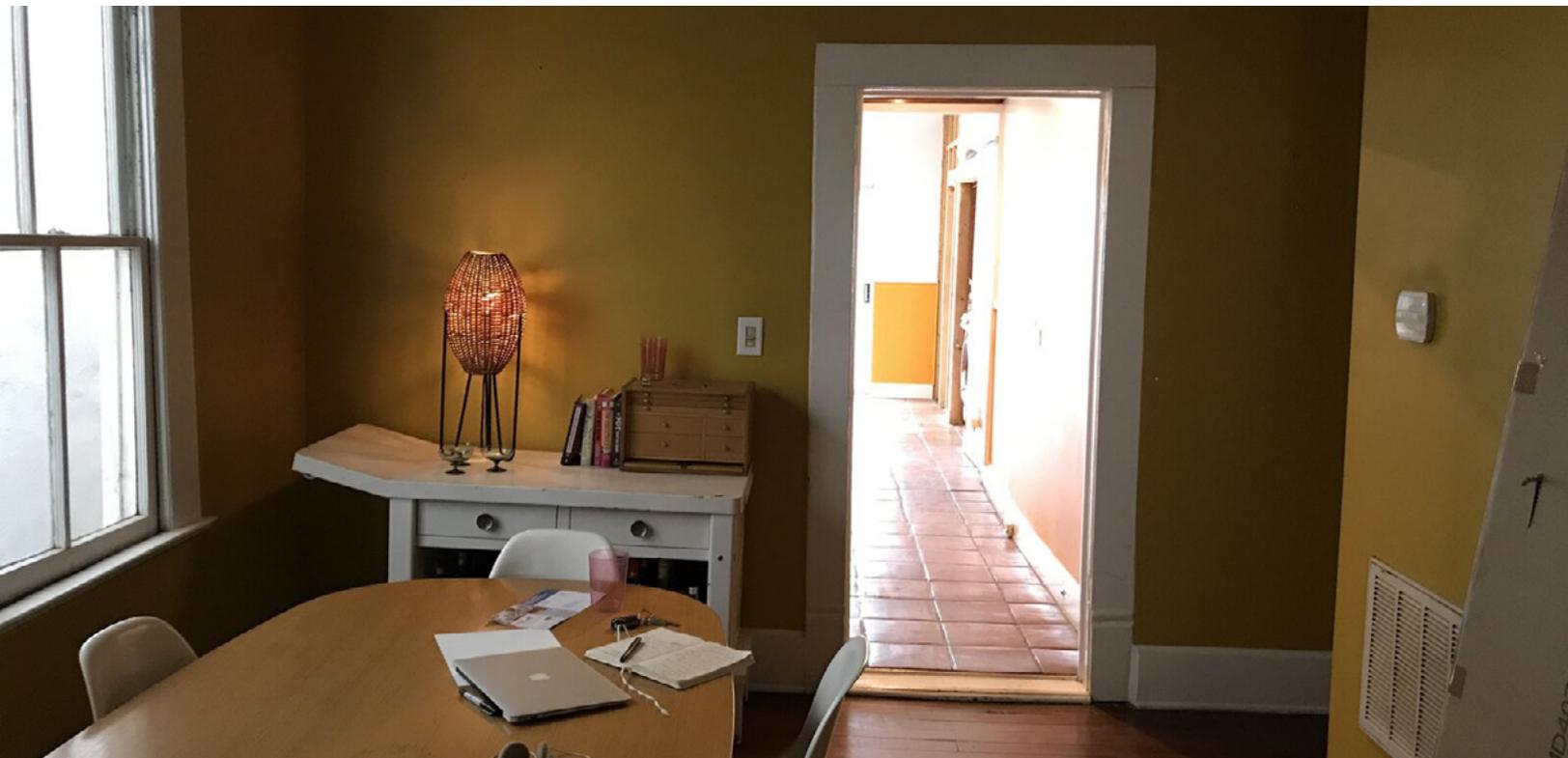
A new wood-framed, full-lite door allows more light into the living room and better sight lines to the front porch.

The bungalow had a standard layout: It was essentially split down the middle with living spaces on one side of the home, and three bedrooms and two baths on the other. The design solution was to retain that layout, but give it a twist by vaulting the ceiling and creating a loft space above the bedroom core.

Non-load-bearing walls were then removed between the living spaces to open things up even more. Now, 10 skylights flood the loft and living spaces with natural light, and Carie has even more living space in what was formerly an unused attic.



BEFORE LIVING AND DINING ROOM: The pair removed the finish work on the fireplace. The chimney was structurally unsound and not in working order.



BEFORE LIVING AND DINING ROOM: Carie did not like the low ceilings and how the living spaces felt segmented.



After: Living and Dining Room

Now, a loft overlooks the combined living areas. Carie patched and refinished the original wood floors to anchor the predominantly white interior.



BEFORE KITCHEN: The floors in the kitchen were uneven and needed to be shored up.

Once the shell was structurally sound, Carie completed much of the finish work herself, from tiling the bathrooms to building the loft ladder. The pair kept the existing floors, repairing and patching them, and pulled off the cladding on the fireplace, which was unstable and had to be removed, to reveal the original brick. Its presence is a nod to the home's past.

Similarly, while the palette was kept simple—white walls and trim, for the most part—Ruffin's design specified sections of the new ceiling framework to be exposed. "It was an interesting thing to express some of what had been done, so you didn't come into this plastic white space," says Ruffin, noting how the beams create texture.



After: Kitchen

The new loft runs the entire expanse of the house. Ruffin wanted the cross braces at the ceiling peak visible. "We left all the stamps on the lumber to just let it be really honest," he says.



BEFORE MAIN SUITE: The windows were replaced in the main suite so that they would have a simpler and consistent muntin pattern.



After: Main Suite

Blue Verner Pantan Flowerpot pendants flank the bed.



After: Bedroom

The strip of ceiling framework above the bookshelf in the dining room earmarks where the designers removed a bit of a bedroom's closet space, as it was encroaching on the flow between the living and dining rooms. The fireplace brick is framed in the adjacent bedroom as well.





After: Hall Bathroom

The hall bathroom was given glossy black tile, a departure from the predominant scheme.

After: Loft

The loft railing is expanded metal mesh, and the floor is white-painted fin ply. "The movement of light through the space" has transformed the interior, says Ruffin.



After: Rear Exterior

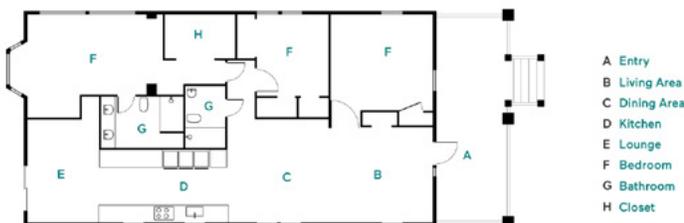
From the exterior, the bungalow looks to be its original size, which was 1,560 square feet—with the new loft in place, however, it now measures 2,340 square feet.



Grant Park House

DESIGNER [Architecturefirm](#)
LOCATION Atlanta, Georgia

N



It's a transformation belied by the house's traditional exterior. "These Craftsman bungalows are everywhere in Atlanta," says Ruffin. "So to have this complete reimagining of the interiors is really surprising. It's bright and big, which is not how most of those houses ever feel."

Project Credits

ARCHITECTURE: [ARCHITECTUREFIRM / @ARCHITECTUREFIRM](#)

BUILDER: [GREENEHEAD CONSTRUCTION](#)

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING: [ERUDITE ENGINEERING](#)

METALWORK: [FRED MARTIN WELDING](#)

MARBLE COUNTERS: [ASSOCIATED IMPORTS](#)