

Fantastic Finish

The serene finished product you see here doesn't even hint at the legwork that went into correcting site issues and updating failing structures—and that's just as it should be

By Ingrid Bush, Content Manager

In the spirit of “measure twice, cut once,” this project required close attention to scheduling, project-management, and site prep. But, viewers looking out across the patio to the pool cabana and the pond beyond are blissfully unaware of just how much preparation went into creating this relaxed outdoor space, thanks to the project's designer and project manager, Colleen Moran.

Moran systematically addressed each of the site's issues, from drainage to structural to aesthetic, enlisting the help of trusted subcontractors to create a project that would delight the client.

The homeowners enjoy entertaining, and Moran sought to ensure that the design provides spaces that suit all of the family's outdoor needs: sun/shade, open/enclosed, relaxed/active. The design's key elements include: repurposing the upper deck; providing a dedicated space for outdoor food prep; relocating and rebuilding the cabana to make it more comfortable and better integrated into the outdoor space; converting the existing tennis court into a

sports court; replacing the pool coping and liner and upgrading the pool components; creating a lower shaded patio under the secondary deck that drains properly; and upgrading all the patio surfaces.

COMPANY SNAPSHOT

COMPANY: Southview Design, St. Paul, Minn.

PROJECT LOCATION: Wayzata, Minn.

DESIGNER: Colleen Moran

WEBSITE: southviewdesign.com

PROJECT COST: \$250,000–\$500,000



BEFORE

Staying on Track

With subcontractors for electrical, plumbing, and carpentry, as well as for the fence, sport court, and concrete, Moran created a spreadsheet early in the project that detailed exactly when and where each crew would be working.

“Since we live in a snow state, and we started the project after Labor Day, one struggle was the installation schedule,” Moran says. “We had to finish by Thanksgiving, so we had to maximize every day. And with so many elements to be installed, there were many crews to mobilize. We successfully finished before the snow—even with the additions via change orders, unforeseen weather, and hidden obstacles.”



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SOUTHVIEW DESIGN

Site Surprises

“The existing elements were more than 10 years old,” Moran says, “so none could be salvaged. ... Only the pool stayed in the same place.”

Given the extent of the sitework, the team had to protect the parts of the site and house that they weren’t working on. “Erosion logs and blankets were used in case materials decided to run during rain,” Moran says. “We also used 6 mil poly liner to cover open/unfinished elements and to protect newly installed elements, such as the stonework.” The public utilities were marked, but when the crew broke ground to remove the tennis court surface, they unexpectedly found several live gas and electrical lines, none of them buried at the proper depth. Moran brought in a licensed plumber and an electrician to find, fix, relocate, and document all of the existing utilities.

In another unexpected turn, patio removal by the pool unearthed sinkholes, buried timber walls, and 13 frost footings that no one could account for. “We removed the debris and filled with struc-

tural and planting soil,” Moran says. All of these unforeseen site conditions pushed the project’s completion date back by about two weeks.

Land o’ Lakes

“Drainage is always one of my first concerns, and that’s figured out before we step on site,” Moran says. There is a pond about 100 feet from the house, and in Minnesota, Land of 10,000 Lakes, Moran is always intent on making sure there is a filtering distance—in this case a minimum of 20 feet—of lawn or planting where the drain tile can exit, filter, and then, if necessary, flow into the pond.

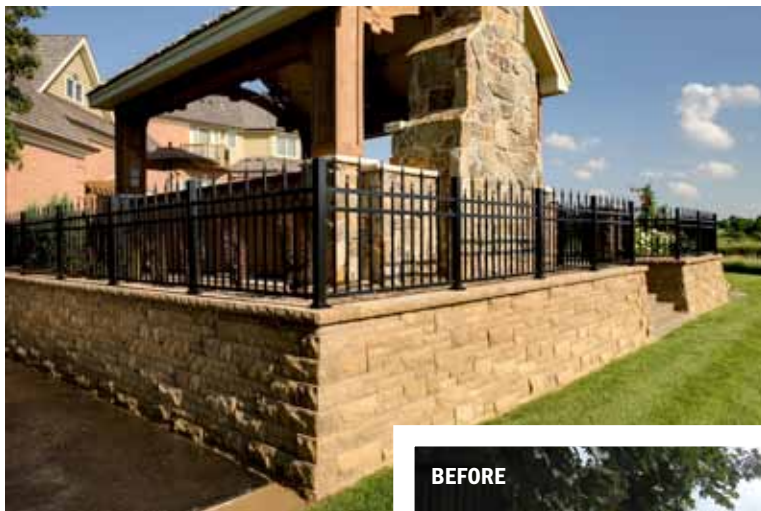
All of the patio area is properly sloped so that runoff either enters into a planting bed or a surface drain box that’s connected to drain tile in the lawn area. To handle any water that’s directed into the planting area held up by the retaining wall, Moran installed drain tile within the wall to collect excess water and divert it to the lawn below.

A Way With Walls

The original timber walls that surrounded and supported the entire pool environment were failing, and the client wanted the walls to have a more artisan look. The crew installed 1,300 square feet of segmental retaining wall, at a height of about 4 feet throughout, without any misalignment, Moran says with pride.

A solid base and good drainage is essential for proper wall design. Segmental retaining walls need a 6-inch-deep by 18-inch-wide compacted aggregate base, and this wall has a class 5 base to mitigate frost heaving. To minimize the hydrostatic pressure that excess trapped water exerts on the wall, a 12-to-18-inch vertical layer of drainage rock was also installed behind it, along with drain tile.

"Whether you're laying a brick patio, pouring concrete, building a retaining wall, or installing a fireplace, kitchen, or cabana, soil stabilization plays a role," Moran says. "Careful excavation—and temporary shoring-up, if needed—an aggregate base and a frost footing, if necessary, as well as drainage rock are essential." Frost footings were needed for the weightier items such as the fireplace, kitchen, pergola posts, and the deck and cabana pillars. "In our section of the state," Moran says, "frost footings need to reach a minimum of 42 inches."



Parts of a Whole

Coordinating the color and surface texture of the brick pavers, concrete, stone, and the retaining walls creates a cohesive aesthetic. The choice of paving for the pool deck, outdoor kitchen, and cabana area intentionally designates distinct spaces, Moran says, similar to what area rugs do in your home. "Over the years, I've honed my design

style, and one of my strong suits is the coordination of materials to create a unified project," she says. Stone veneer similar to that used inside the house comes into play on the outdoor fireplace, pillars, and kitchen. The patio is a combination of stone textured/colored concrete and Cambry Tan Tumbled Charleston Pavers by Anchor Block.



In the Swim of Things

The existing pool's vinyl liner, drains, coping, lights, diving board, electrical, and plumbing were all replaced. The new concrete coping for the pool was poured continuously using Stegmeier Styrofoam coping forms to create a pool deck that comes right up and over the edge of the pool. Moran's landscape, pool, and concrete crews worked closely to complete this detail, she says.

Then, when the pool was ready to be filled, "we trucked in filtered water," Moran says, "since iron-laden water is prevalent in this area and would have caused rust stains on the new liner."

It's Sports, of Courts

For the sport court, rubber sports flooring sits atop a 4-inch-thick concrete slab that has a 3- to 4-inch compacted aggregate base to mitigate frost heaving. No winter cover is necessary for the court, and lighting allows for extended play. Moran says that the court gets extensive use in the evenings whenever the weather allows.



Outdoor Eats

The homeowners requested a grilling area, which, Moran says, quickly mushroomed into a full-fledged outdoor kitchen with a refrigerator, sink, ice maker, trash bin, counters, and storage.

Due to the location of the home's dormer, windows, and AC units, the kitchen required thoughtful design for a limited space. The lit, covered grill area is positioned under the dormer, and cedar screening dissipates the noise from the air conditioner. A full frost footing—42 inches deep—was needed for the kitchen, and most of the excavation was done by hand due to the kitchen's proximity to the house and pool.

The details of the outdoor kitchen roof tie in with those of the pergola and the cabana.



Cabana Comforts

The client wanted to reimagine the original cabana and upgrade its features, adding a fireplace and AV equipment. Moran sought to make the structure both larger and to give it a more substantial feel, as well as better integrating it into the outdoor living spaces. The cabana is more enclosed on the two sides that are on the site's periphery, while the other two sides open up to the pool and engage that space.

Moran designed the cabana to reflect the style and materials of the main house—its dormer, rooflines, and shingles, while the choice of stone for the fireplace was inspired by stone used inside the home. The hand-crafted beams, which were scribed, cut, and fit together using 32 cedar components, mimic the arched window that overlooks the secondary deck. The wood was sanded and stained to bring out its rich color, and heavy black iron bolts provide a rustic accent. **PR**

PRODUCT LIST

Pool surfacing: vinyl

Pool deck: Mesa Beige stamped, textured concrete; integral concrete color additive provided by Scofield System

Paving: Cambry Tan Tumbled Charleston Pavers by Anchor Block

Retaining wall structure: Gold Creek Artisan Retaining Wall by Anchor Block; Indiana limestone column cap

Fireplace/cabana/kitchen countertop stone facing: Indian Creek Fieldstone—Indiana limestone caps/hearth/mantle

Pergola structure: rough cedar

Cabana structure/roof: rough cedar frame; cedar shake roof; tongue-and-groove knotty pine ceiling, sanded with polyurethane seal coat

Sport court surface: concrete base with rubber sports flooring provided by Sports Court North

Fence: Alumi-Guard aluminum bronze

Landscape & low-voltage lighting: Kichler architectural bronze