



A terraced outdoor space leads to a pool and lounge.



# FRAMING YORK SH

A young, growing family takes on the renovation of a historic property in Brookline.

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Photographed by  
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The living room features a sofa from Eilersen (eilersen.eu) and coffee tables from Muuto (muuto.com).





## THE CLIENT

A couple with three young children living in the Fisher Hill neighborhood of Brookline, Mass.

## THE PROJECT

The couple embarked on a complete renovation of the property, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Originally constructed as a stable for a larger estate, it was relocated and converted into a home in the 1920s. Later additions and renovations further transformed the home from its original form and aesthetic. The home had undergone piecemeal renovations over the preceding decades with minimal ongoing maintenance. Though there was a deck structure off the rear of the home, the majority of the large yard was inaccessible and unusable.

## THE TEAM

Boston-based ZeroEnergy Design ([zeroenergy.com](http://zeroenergy.com)) was tapped to take on the project. “We draw inspiration for our designs from the site and a collaboration with the client, tailoring decisions to both their aesthetic preferences and ideologies,” says Stephanie Horowitz, managing director at ZeroEnergy. “Many of our clients desire a modern home with ties to a traditional, recognizable architecture—and we enjoy the challenge of balancing often competing aesthetics into a cohesive whole. While energy efficiency, health and comfort are the baseline on all of our projects, thoughtful design comes first. This means responding to the site conditions, considering orientation, form, layout and glazing before getting into the more technical areas of our practice.”

## THE GOALS

The family was living large—literally—after moving from a downtown Boston loft. “They wanted to make sure the new home had plenty of natural light, room to grow and recreational space inside and out,” says Horowitz. “Our challenge was to create a space with a distinctly modern aesthetic within an existing historic shell.”

## THE CHALLENGES

John Mucciarone, a senior project manager at ZeroEnergy, says one of the biggest hurdles was weaving together traditional and modern aesthetics at the front and rear of the home. “[We also needed to] design

functional outdoor spaces that terraced down the steep slope, connecting the house to the meadow below the new pool,” he says.

## OPEN SPACE

Mucciarone notes the ground level of the home was reimagined from a web of rooms, with two stairwells and two front entrances, to an open concept with a single front entry and central stair. A clean and simple entry area, outfitted with casework by Henrybuilt ([henrybuilt.com](http://henrybuilt.com)), serves both as a modern mudroom and formal entrance.

In the back portion of the property, the living, dining and cooking areas span the width of the home and overlook the south-facing terraced property. “The kitchen was designed with a family in mind, allowing multiple people to cook, eat, recline and do homework,” says Horowitz. “Also featuring Henrybuilt cabinets, the kitchen offers ample counter and circulation space for multiple cooks and includes a walk-in pantry. Seating is located at two sides of the island—at the window seat overlooking the rear yard and at the work bar that looks onto the living space.”

## LIVING SPACE

The home’s other first-floor spaces include a den with an entertainment center and a home office—each located on opposite sides of the home and acoustically buffered from the rest of the living space. The primary suite, guest and children’s bedrooms and playroom are all located on the second level. A play loft above can be accessed from a stair in the playroom or via a climbing wall in a children’s bedroom. The lower level houses a home gym, a guest suite with an exterior entrance, wine room and a laundry room that connects to the second floor via a laundry chute in the



Tom Dixon ([tomdixon.net](http://tomdixon.net)) pendants add abundant flair to the dining room. Opposite page, from top: An office has plenty of natural light but is given stylish lumens from a Cecile Manz ([ceciliemanz.com](http://ceciliemanz.com)) pendant; Cle tile ([cletile.com](http://cletile.com)) adds vibrancy to the kitchen.



playroom. “Small moments are designed around the family’s needs, from nooks to cuddle up with a book to a cork board to display family artwork that’s just public enough,” says Mucciarone.

### OUTDOOR SPACE

ZeroEnergy Design’s blueprint for outdoor fun was straightforward, as it drew the family outside with a gorgeous terraced landscape. Collaborating with Soren Deniord Design Studio ([sorendeniord.com](http://sorendeniord.com)), the team created a series of outdoor rooms that cascade down to the lower lawn. “The uppermost terrace abutting the living space hosts a grill for easy access to the kitchen and outdoor living and dining spaces below,” says Horowitz. “It also connects to a paved sport court abutting the garage that serves as a blank slate for children’s play.”

Heading down the site, the dining terrace accommodates a large table and fire pit, and the living terrace with outdoor seating by RH ([rh.com](http://rh.com)) overlooks the pool below. “With convenience and safety in mind, the pool deck incorporates a retractable automatic cover to help keep children and pets out. Finally, a landscape stair leads from the pool deck to the shaded meadow at the bottom of the property,” says Horowitz.

### COMFORT AND CARBON FOOTPRINT

The completely renovated home is now an insulated airtight enclosure; triple-pane windows afford optimal thermal comfort with a minimal carbon footprint. “When paired with all-electric, right-sized mechanical systems, the result is exceptionally low energy consumption—steps ahead of Brookline’s proposed ban on fossil fuels,” says Horowitz. “The completed home delivers modern, low-carbon living, plus the benefits of light and ample recreational space, all while respecting the town’s historic requirements.” ■

The master bedroom and expansive bath flow together seamlessly. Opposite page: A large soaking tub creates a spa-like sanctuary in the master bath.





# DESIGN DETAILS

## LOCATION

Brookline, Mass.

## ARCHITECTURE

ZeroEnergy Design  
zeroenergy.com

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Soren Deniord  
sorendeniord.com

## RESOURCES

### BELLINI

Chairs, dining room  
bellinimodernliving.com

### CECILIE MANZ

Caravaggio pendant light, office  
ceciliemanz.com

### CLE

Tile, kitchen  
cletile.com

### EAS

Makrowin windows throughout  
the home  
easternarchitectural.com

### EILERSEN

Sofa, living room  
eilersen.eu

### HANSGROHE

Showerhead, sink faucet  
hansgrohe-usa.com

### HENRYBUILT

Cabinets, kitchen  
henrybuilt.com

### MUUTO

Coffee tables, living room; bar  
stools, kitchen  
muuto.com

### REALSTONE

Fireplace stone veneer, living room  
realstonesystems.com

### RICH BRILLIANT WILLING

Monocle wall sconces, master  
bedroom  
rbw.com

### TOM DIXON

Pendant lighting, dining room  
tomdixon.net

### VERMONT PLANK FLOORING

Flooring throughout the home  
vermontplankflooring.com