

# QUALIFIED Remodeler

BEST PRACTICES, PRODUCTS & DESIGN IDEAS

## Plan Adds Luxury, Privacy

A bath/bedroom suite that utilizes every inch of space

By Chaya Chang



### FAST FACTS ABOUT THE COMPANY:

- Interior Dimensions, Inc.
- Headquarters: Harrisburg, Pa.
- Established: 1993
- Employees: 2

Last year, Gavriella Fiedler of Interior Dimensions, Inc., Harrisburg, Pa., grabbed the prestigious Best of Show under \$200,000 award in *QR*'s Master Design Awards with a room the judge's called, "the best use of space of any project entered."

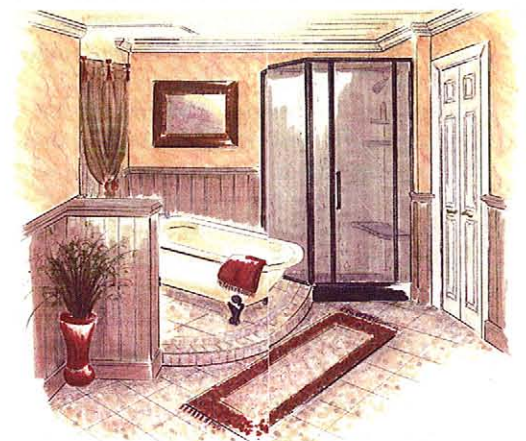
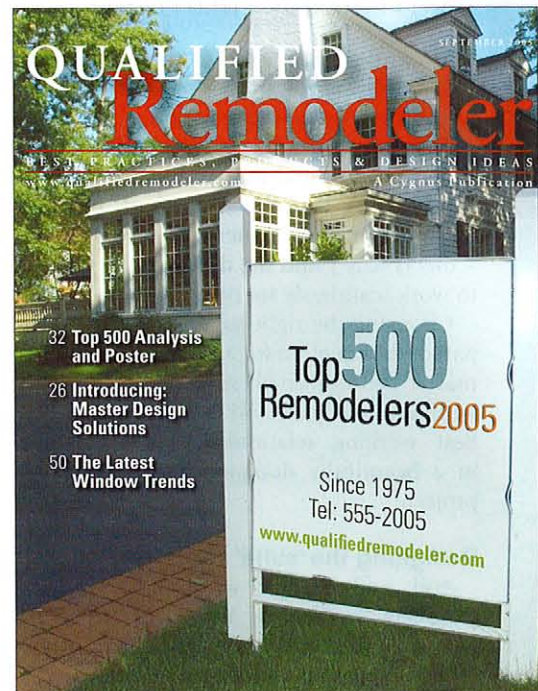
Her forte in space planning was acquired at a very young age as she went straight from high school to the drawing table. "I was fortunate enough to know exactly what I wanted to do in my career," Fiedler says. "After design school, I got a great job with a design firm in New York City. There I was given a lot of responsibility and a good opportunity to get my feet wet. After I left that firm, I worked in a few kitchen & bath showrooms and learned the ins and outs of the kitchen & bath business.

### She's on the move

In '91, Fiedler moved from the Big Apple to Pittsburg where she found more work as a designer and soon after that firm went out of business, she decided it was time to venture out on her own and start her own studio — Interior Dimensions, Inc., which opened its doors in '93.

"I learned a lot from working at the firm in New York and felt confident enough in my designs to become an entrepreneur," she comments. "I also learned that being a woman in a male-dominated industry, sometimes I needed to show a little muscle and really stand my ground — this has proven to be very positive."

As with many in this industry, Fiedler wears many hats: designer, saleswoman, general contractor and businesswoman.



"After design school, I got a great job with a design firm, and then worked at a few kitchen and bath outfits."



Fiedler's vision (shown in these renderings above) were brought to life without many significant changes.

"As the old saying goes, 'too many cooks in the kitchen spoils the soup ...' the same goes for design/builders," she adds. "In my experience, I found that 10 times out of 10, if I design A, B and C and sell my plans to a builder or homeowner I'll get X, Y and Z - this is why I find the design/build process to work seamlessly for me."

Choosing the right subcontractors is also part of the equation for a great project. In this master bedroom/bath suite, Fiedler worked with Matthew Aull and quoted this as "the best working relationship, which ended in a beautifully designed and constructed project."

### Designing the 'suite' spot

Aull and Fiedler were faced with a complete renovation of a master bath/bedroom suite that sat over an existing garage. This entailed demolishing and relocating the walls between the existing bath and bedroom and rerouting plumbing lines to the water closet, shower, tub and sinks. It also included transferring heating outlets and adding heat to what the client referred to as "the coldest room in the house."

Referred to Interior Dimensions by a decorator at a local Harrisburg builder show, the Smiths had an instant connection with Fiedler. "The Smiths were so wonderful to work with - they were my example of the 'perfect' client," Fiedler says. "I've found that when the relationship with the client is good, the project is good - there was a lot of trust between us - they really let me do my job."

Their objective in this award-winning design was to create a warm, private, cozy (and functional) "retreat" for a busy couple with three young children. This included adding a fireplace as the main focal point and a sitting area in which to read and relax.

One of the greatest challenges Fiedler faced was to add just the right amount of



Bathroom before





heat where it was most needed in the space and to avoid the expense of rerouting heating ducts – in addition to providing privacy, adequate storage and comfort.

Tackling each obstacle at a time, Fiedler was able to address the couple's privacy and storage needs simultaneously by dividing the suite into three areas: bathroom, bedroom and dressing area.

"In doing so, a second closet was created to compensate for the old linen closet and linen storage cabinet, both of which were removed from the existing bedroom," adds Fiedler. "This closet and its adjacent wall serve as the divider between the bedroom area and the dressing area, creating a private feel when entering the suite."

The design of the bathroom manages to separate its four functional areas – in a relatively compact space – by aligning them on different axes. Fiedler relocated the shower, and also significantly increased the size of the existing closet. "The existing shower protruded into the master closet, which took up much of the needed space," Fiedler notes. "We immediately squared off the closet and put the shower back in the bathroom where it's supposed to be."

#### Unique space-planning design

The use of angles and curves creates interest and character throughout the entire suite — she adds by saying that, "my designs are anything but plain vanilla." And, she proves that

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The homeowners requested a fireplace to warm up the suite, so Fiedler made that the focal point in the bedroom. The renderings show little change from what was done in the final design.



statement by making functional use of every inch in this room. "There was a lot of 'dead space' in the way the existing room was set up. I eliminated much of it to get the most out of every inch."

Fiedler also included two functional and aesthetically pleasing niches throughout the bath area. "Everything I design is there for a reason; nothing is there just to look pretty," she adds. "These niches contribute greatly to the coziness and aesthetic appeal of the bathroom while they provide practical storage space for toiletries," comments Fiedler. She also used custom obscure glass panels for the shower enclosure to provide privacy in there as well.

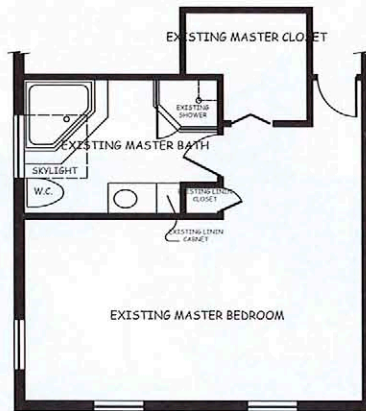
On to one of the largest challenges, Fiedler managed to heat the room up by relocating existing heat outlets to a proper position beneath the window and installed a custom heat mat underneath the ceramic tile floor in the bathroom. "The heat mat created just the right amount of heat to keep the bathroom cozy for those cold, winter days."

**They keep coming back for more**

Since the project was completed, Fiedler went back to remodel many other parts of the Smith residence. "It's very rewarding to hear and see your clients excited about the room you just designed for them."

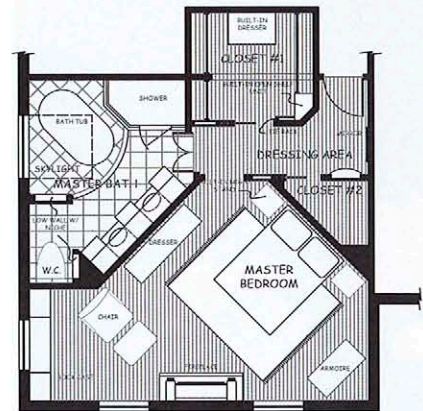
And, after many ecstatic phone calls from the happy homeowners, Mrs. Smith ended with, "It's not like a 5-star hotel, it's a 10-star hotel!" | QR

SMITH RESIDENCE MASTER SUITE  
BEFORE FLOOR PLAN



SCALE : 1/4" = 1'

SMITH RESIDENCE MASTER SUITE  
AFTER FLOOR PLAN



SCALE : 1/4" = 1'



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