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# Moving Fore-ward

A new home on a coveted golf course lot settles in before the homeowners do.

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PHOTOGRAPHY  
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Golf course lots are few and far between, so when one becomes available — whether there's a house on it or not — buyers will snap it up. Evidence of that is appearing all across town, especially in prized older neighborhoods like Mission Hills and Prairie Village. Seventy-first Street has seen a number of rebuilds in recent years, the latest transformation made possible by Dan Andersen of D. Andersen Consulting. His hired crew of artisans, craftsmen and groundskeepers brings an artistic, manicured edge to this home fit for living the links life.

To drive by this house today, you might not realize that it's been there only a short time. That was intentional. "It looks like it's always been here, but it's brand new construction," Dan says.

It's so new, in fact, that the interior isn't quite complete. In an unusual building twist, the exterior was completed first. "The homeowners wanted to begin to maintain the landscape even while construction was still going on," notes Jason Cupp, president and CEO of design/build landscape company Highland Outdoor. Though that decision required exact coordination among the contractors, it ramped up the curb appeal immediately and helped the plants establish themselves.

But before any of this could happen, Jason and Dan had to work together on a meticulous underlying philosophy of the site based on pleasant rises and falls from the street to the golf course. They developed a plan to significantly change the elevation of the formerly flat lot by hauling in truckloads of dirt. "That created a stair-stepped look up to the front of the house and out through the back," Jason explains.

From the street, the reclaimed brick driveway expands into a complete circle drive with a stone fountain topped by a flame at the center; a wagon wheel shape can be detected from overhead. Double stairs



lead to the front entry, welcoming guests through an etched glass door. Just inside is the high point of the home, both literally and figuratively. Glass panels enclose an indoor spa that spills into a pool. The exterior wall also is glass, so views of the golf course are framed from nearly every vantage point in the house. Low-iron glass — the kind used in portions of The Nelson-Atkins Museum’s Bloch Building — reduces glass’ green tint at the edges for a seamless view.

Back outside, the elevation lowers to a koi pond with two powerful fountains that spray up to 14 feet high and a vanishing edge for a waterfall with a catch basin below. There, the lay of the land meets back up with the golf course, just beyond an iron gated fence.

The homeowners never stipulated this kind of deep thought, leaving the ‘big picture’ to the pros. “They were definitely focused on the details — the color schemes and textures,” Dan says. For instance, when the client pointed out that she liked a particular rose, Dan and Jason penciled in a spot for a rose garden. Brent Menghini, the landscape designer, didn’t just choose hybrid, easy-care plants either, but spectacular ones that would require careful maintenance. “The homeowners are committed to the property, and it must look good every day,” Dan adds.

Every single square foot of the property was considered, giving 360 degrees of landscaping to the house. The first step in that direction was to find a complement to a Norway Spruce that borders the property line in a neighbor’s yard. Eric Tow of Instant Shade searched for nine months for the perfect counterpart. On a 110-degree day, he found it in a tall, grassy field. “It was the widest tree I’ve ever moved,” he comments. He planted it on the opposite side of the yard to create balance.

Hand-chipped native stones bend and curve around the drive and landscape beds, giving them shape and depth. “The homeowners didn’t want straight lines,” Jason explains. “It’s a formal house, but they wanted unique bed shapes to soften the look.” Phlox and verbena add color; uprights and topiaries near the house give height and interest, plus year-round color. All the softscape elements — plants, trees and flowers — match what was already existing in the neighborhood to help the new home fit in.

The east side of the house features a brick path to the backyard, where it meets up with terra cotta-colored granite dust that makes a springy floor covering most of the rest of the space. An outdoor kitchen is built into a brick patio, complete with a grill and spit, two burners with a wok attachment, marinade drawers, a sink, a fridge rated for cold weather, a Blue Bahia granite countertop and a unique fireplace design that Dan describes as “round with double arches and squared off at the top.”

Japanese maples, mums, roses and boxwood are planted in back; hydrangea and English ivy to the west (since enough shade is provided by mature trees); and of course, miles of crisp green blades on the golf course to the north.



Dan didn't leave everything to nature, however. Automated technology tames the elements: a weather station that lowers the spray of the fountains when winds get too strong, a timed sprinkler system and a radiant heated driveway that melts snow at the first touch of a flake. All the lighting — including Christmas lights — is hooked up to the system, as well.

The planning and preparation that went into this property have made it blend in yet stand out — the exact look everyone involved hoped to achieve.

"It takes time to figure it all out, but it's not difficult," Dan says. "That's why it was so successful."

*Look for the story on the interior in an upcoming issue.*