

## Restoring a diamond in the rough



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*Home of local architect Randolph Evans transformed; on the market for \$1,995,000.*



*(Photo: Bronxville Real Estate)*

Tim Baxter relishes a challenge, which is clearly evident by the before photos of his home, a sophisticated, brick Georgian Colonial currently on the market for \$1,995,000. "When we saw it, I sort of said, 'Wow, there's a diamond in the rough back there.' You literally could not see the house from the road," says Baxter of the house he bought in 2011.

Notice the stately brick wall out front? The neatly trimmed boxwood hedge? "You couldn't see it," says Baxter, "The entire property was overgrown. No one had been living there. The house was vacant and had just been neglected."

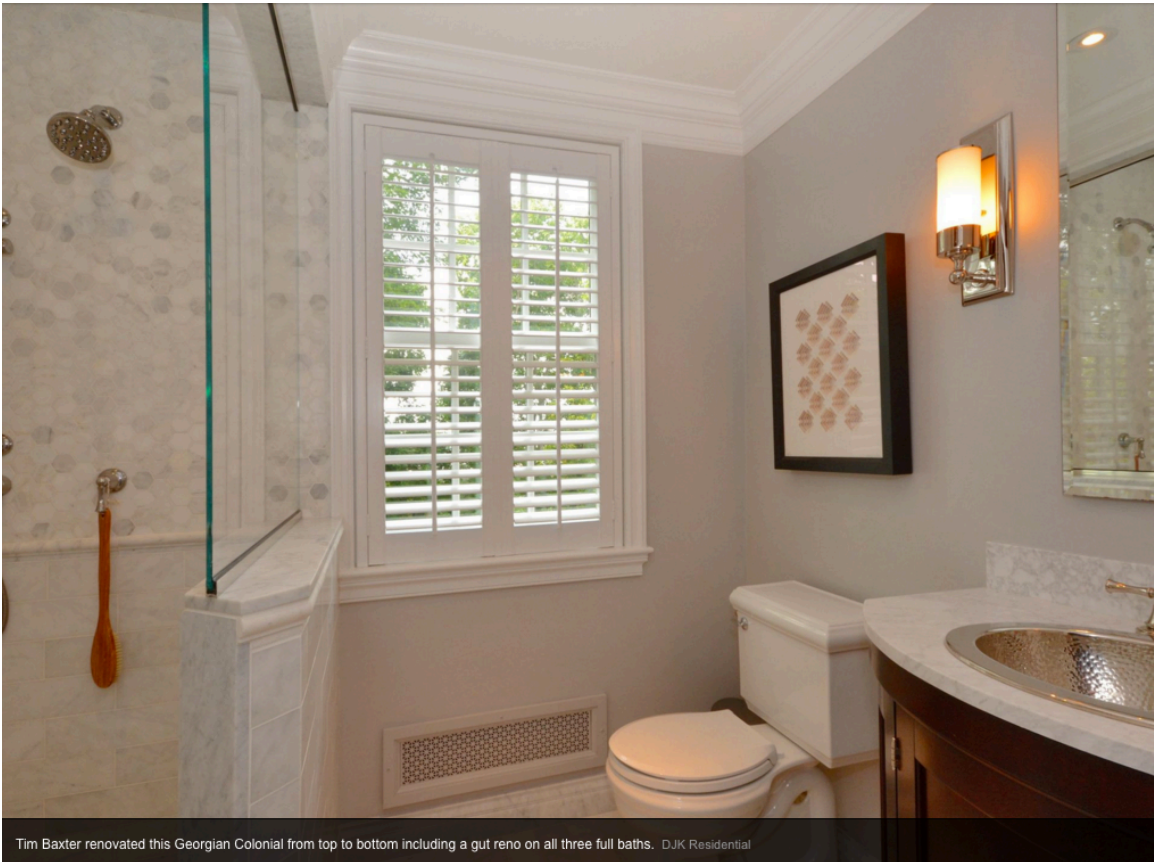
Even Baxter, who calls himself an architecture buff and lover of old houses, wasn't quite convinced of the merits of the place — which had been in the hands of the same owner for 45 years — until he walked through the gate and into an interior courtyard.

"It was a shambles; the shutters were falling off. Not quite Grey Gardens, but it had a magical quality about it," he says. "I am somewhat of an architecture buff and the fact that the home was built by Randolph Evans, (Evans was the architect of the Bronxville Village Hall and Brooklyn College) as his private residence in 1937 sold it for me. His name is inscribed on the side of the house, in one of the stones."

The home at 11 Leonard Road is in Tuckahoe with a Bronxville postal address.



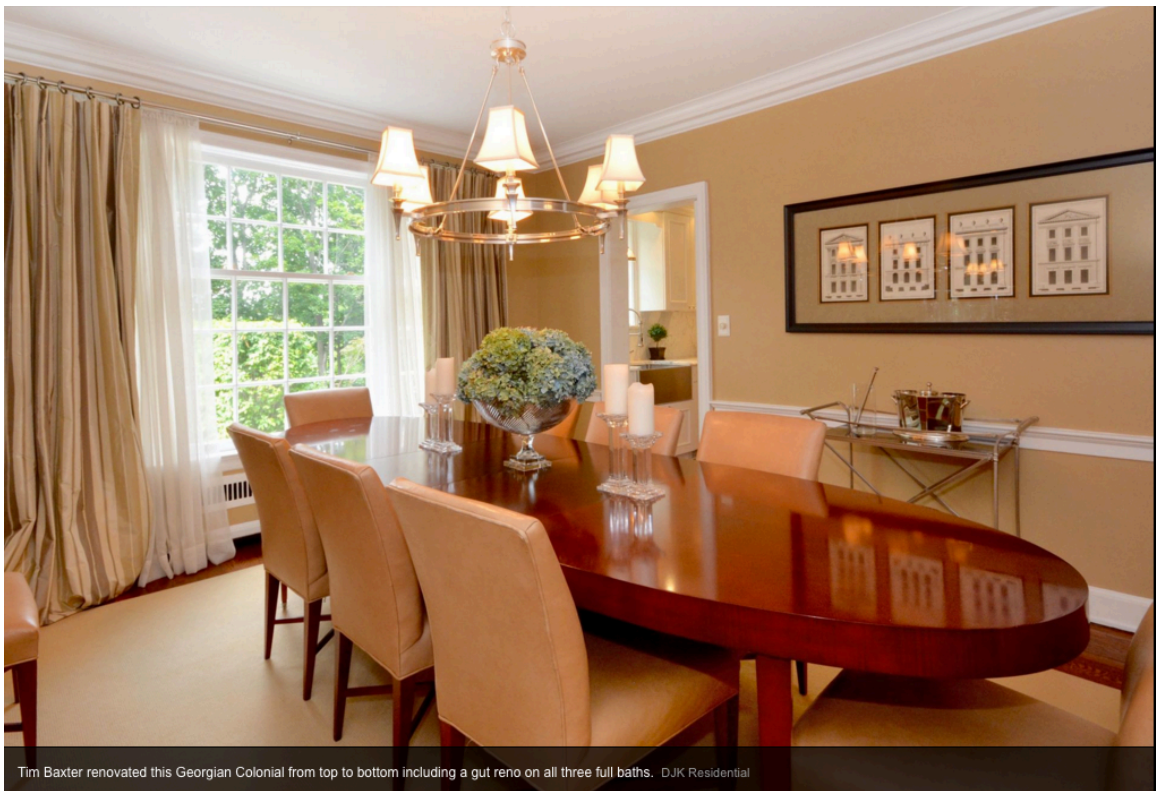
Tim Baxter renovated this Georgian Colonial from top to bottom including a gut reno on all three full baths. DJK Residential



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One of the few exceptions to the tonal color palette in the home is this bedroom. "My daughter was not going for my colors," says Tim Baxter. DJK Residential



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Baxter says his wife, Shannon, took a little convincing, yet the couple could see the potential of the home, which has four bedrooms, three full baths and a large private backyard. "The interior layout was very similar to our home in St. Louis; it seemed like a home to us."

The couple, working with Bronxville contractor Arthur Lange Inc., gutted the house, inside and out, tackling the interior first. Uncovering a set of original plans, Baxter set out to remedy the somewhat awkward layout. "There were hallways next to hallways for no apparent reason," he says. "Essentially, we returned the configuration to the original plan. In the intervening years, it had been redone and it was just awful. Horrible. It was bad!"



The kitchen before Tim and Shannon Baxter undertook a gut renovation. (Photo: Bronxville Real Estate)



The original kitchen was a dark, galley kitchen with a dropped ceiling. Baxter opened the space by two feet by utilizing two large closets in the hallway behind it. (Photo: DJK Residential)

A dark, narrow galley kitchen was expanded into a light, airy space by going back 2 feet into large closets and removing a dropped ceiling; every bathroom was gutted and all the major systems were upgraded.

The former owner kept a photo album of how the home had once looked. "The the oldest picture was from 1964, so there were pictures of all the rooms and of the property. Originally, there had been a pool," Baxter says.

In terms of the interior design aesthetic, Baxter, the chief merchandising officer of a major corporate retailer, says he and his wife have similar tastes. "I would say we went for a sophisticated, modern look with nods to tradition. I really am into tonal palettes, and strong accents in black. My daughter's bedroom is an exception. She just would not go with my tonal choices!" Thus the bright blue accent wall.



"It's a comfortable home," says homeowner Tim Baxter. "My dining room chairs are padded leather and they are comfortable. You sit there and you do not want to get up." (Photo: DJK Residential)

Baxter's favorite spot is the sunroom. "The architect was strategic in its placement, built on the south side of the house; the size and the scale of the room is just perfect. It gets extraordinary light. I find it happy and peaceful.

Outdoors, the couple literally bulldozed the lot but saved every mature tree, except for one. Overgrown landscape, including eight huge hydrangeas, was saved and transplanted elsewhere on the property. Baxter worked with Joseph Pajonas Studio, based out of Greenwich, Connecticut. on the landscape design.

Now that overgrown shambles of a entry courtyard is a serene brick-lined formal boxwood and rose garden. The backyard has been tamed and features several private seating areas and a playspace for the couple's children. "I am every bit as love with the exterior as I am with the interior," he says.

"What makes the transformation of this house so remarkable is that the owners not only maintained the integrity of its architectural details, but were also able to completely enhance all of the details. The home remains classic on the outside and is nothing short of elegant on the inside, particularly in the kitchen and the backyard," said Lynda Lee, associate broker at DJK Residential, who is representing the seller of the home.

And while the house is everything and more the family wanted, Baxter says it's time to move on. "We love this house, everything about it: the scale of the rooms, the ceiling height is almost perfect. It's just large enough without feeling very grand. It's a comfortable house."

Where are they headed? "To another project," Baxter says, a larger home that needs restoring.

### **Like This House?**

**Address:** 11 Leonard Road, Bronxville, NY 10708

**ListingPrice:** \$1,995,000

**Schools:** Tuckahoe

**Bedrooms:** 4

**Bathrooms:** 3.5

**Listing Agent:** Lynda Lee (DJK Residential)

**Link to Listing:** <http://www.trulia.com/property/1031057365-11-Leonard-Rd-Bronxville-NY-10708>