

# Local builder aims for “wow factor” with remodeled home at International Builders’ Show



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When builder [Phil Kean](#) got the call about doing one last home for the International Builders’ Show, he hesitated at first, then jumped at the chance.

“It’s fun to get to play and showcase our talents and show off a little bit,” he said with a laugh.

Kean is working on a 3,341-square-foot home on Palmer Avenue in Winter Park. It will be The New American Remodel (TNAR) show home at February’s [NAHB International Builders’ Show](#).

“This house was built in the 50s, had an addition done maybe 20 plus years later, and then another addition done another 20 plus years later,” Kean said. “It was a well-loved home, but it had a collective style. It had a style from the 50s, from the 80s, from the 2000s, so it had a mishmash of styles.”

When the project is finished in October, the three-bedroom home will look very different, both inside and out.

“I think the big wow will be the exterior façade, to go from what it was to what it is going to be, I think is really going to be memorable.”

The inside will also have a better flow.

“What we tried to do is to take all the different pieces and parts from over the years and try to make it feel more cohesive,” he said. “We took all these styles and we made it sort of a 1940s Miami Coconut Grove kind of cottage, and it has sort of that tropical flair to it.”

Before the renovation, the home had corner windows, a distinctive feature of mid-century homes, and a carved wood door.(Courtesy of Phil Kean Design Group)

It’s what the industry calls a “soft remodel” and will have a more open floor plan, making the kitchen and other living spaces more a part of the rest of the house.

“It’s the type of remodel that most people do. They’re not going to tear a house down all the way down to the studs and start from scratch,” he explained. “The styles that were popular 25 years ago seem dated today, so it’s updating the styles, updating the story.”

But even that soft remodel has a hefty price tag of about \$1.25 to \$1.5 million, partly because of some of the cutting-edge products Kean gets to use.

“There’s a group of vendors called the leading suppliers council through, and it is suppliers for builders in the industry,” he told GrowthSpotter. “These vendors like to showcase things that aren’t even available in the market, and it might be the first time anybody sees it will be at The New American [Remodel] home, so that’s always fun.”

The home sits on a large lot, surrounded by larger and pricier homes, but Kean chose not to add on.

“It didn’t need to be bigger. There’s certainly enough room in the lot. It could have had an addition done to it, or multiple additions, but it was a good size for most people,” he said. “We chose just to give it a freshening up of aesthetics, and also bringing it up to today’s energy codes and making it as energy efficient as possible.”

Kean had purchased the home for \$1.65 million, not knowing what he would do with it, when opportunity knocked in the form of a phone call from the organizer of TNAR.

“He said that he wanted somebody to do The New American Remodel home and [asked if] I had anything available. I had just purchased the house, and I said, ‘well, I have a house that I just purchased that needs a soft remodel.’ He took a look at it and said it would be perfect.”

The pre-renovation living room had traditional crown moulding, a textured ceiling and no access to the backyard. (Courtesy of Phil Kean Design Group)

The updated home will have an outdoor accessory Kean thought was necessary.

“For a show house in Florida, we felt we needed to have a pool.”

After the show in February, Kean said he might put it on the market or keep it for the local Parade of Homes for the Greater Orlando Builders Association.

“I think it’ll appeal to maybe an empty nester. I think it’ll appeal to people that maybe have a child or two children at home still,” he said. “In my mind, it would appeal to somebody that wants a little style. They’re in it for the details, not the big box. It has some history to it. It has a story to tell.”

The [last home](#) Kean did for the IBS sold for \$3.75 million back in 2021. That was a remodel that nearly doubled the home’s living space.

“This is my seventh New American Remodel that I’ve been associated with, so I have fun doing it. The people that run the program through the NAHB are pretty special.”

But even though he has fun with projects like this, he didn't say yes right away.

"I had sort of said [after the last project], I don't think I want to do another one, but it is the last [IBS show] in Orlando, at least the next 17 years," he said.

The International Builders' Show is moving to Las Vegas.

"I don't know if I'll still be building in 17 years. That would put me pretty old, so I just figured that this is the last time I get to play."