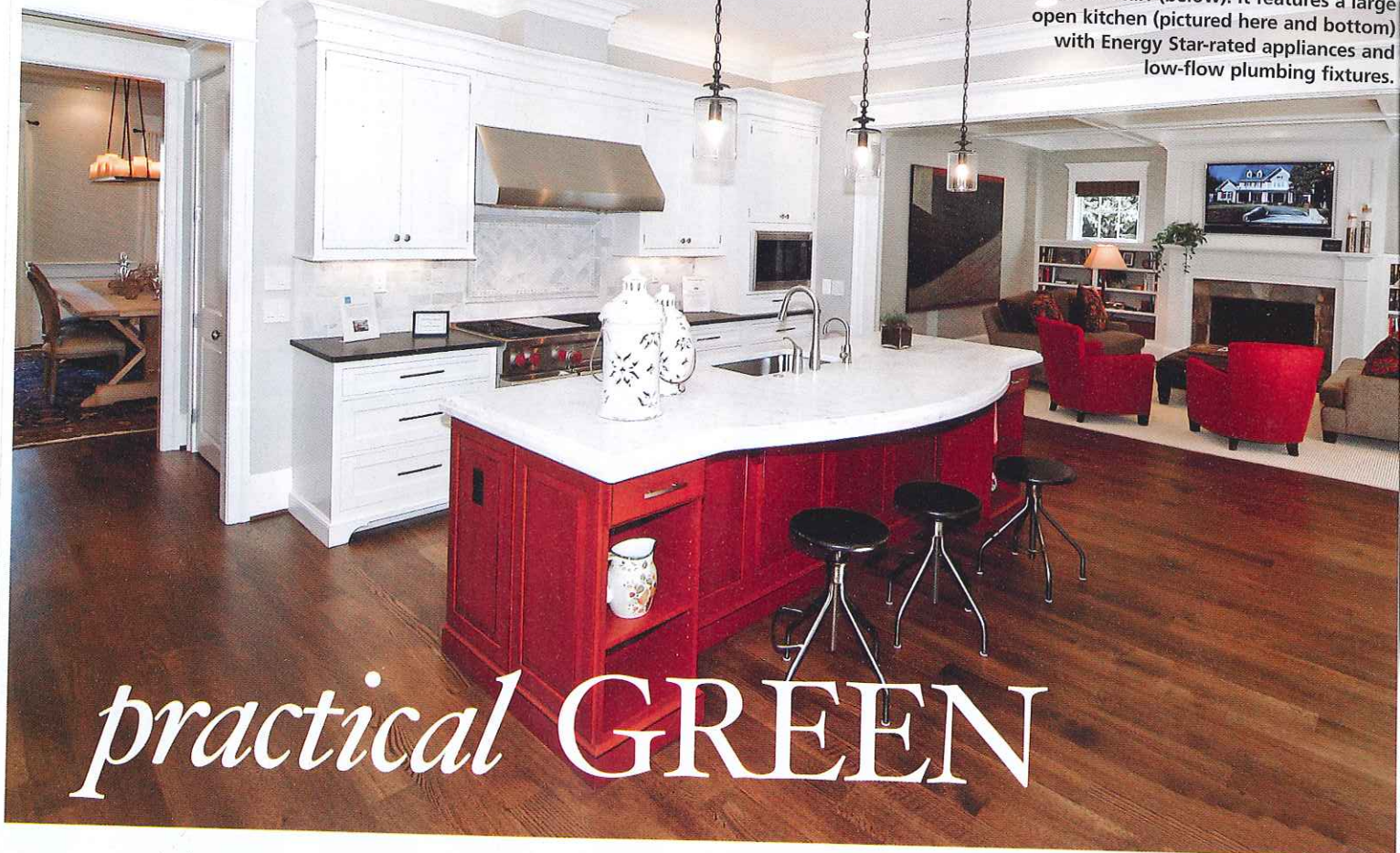


THE GREEN SCENE

The energy-efficient Bradley Green Home is surrounded by drought-tolerant turf (below). It features a large open kitchen (pictured here and bottom) with Energy Star-rated appliances and low-flow plumbing fixtures.



practical GREEN

A local builder offers sustainable options to the high-end homebuyer

The white shingle-style model home on Bradley Boulevard in Bethesda has generated considerable buzz since its debut last fall. Designed by architect George Myers of GTM Architects, the spacious five-bedroom residence boasts a welcoming front portico, an oversized gourmet kitchen and luxurious bathrooms. But there's more beneath the stylish amenities and architectural detail than meets the eye.

Dubbed the Bradley Green Home, it is a modular house constructed in half the time it would take to build a typical custom home. It takes advantage of practical green-building methods such as geothermal heating and cooling, solar-powered hot water and a rainwater-collection and -irrigation system. Designed with a tight building envelope using high-efficiency windows and insulation, it is expected to be 40 percent more energy efficient than a traditionally built home (its LEED certification is pending).

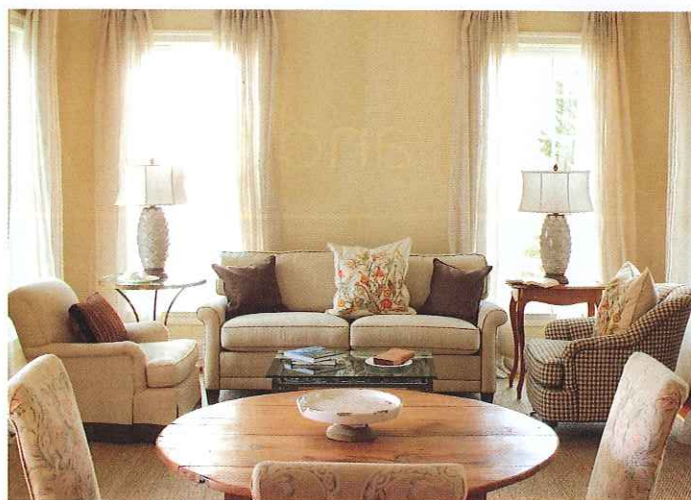
New Classics by Sandy Spring Builders—an affiliate of Sandy Spring Builders, which has a 30-year-track record of building upscale homes in the region—developed the model. “The house shows that you can take a beautifully designed, architecturally detailed, well-constructed home that is along the lines of what many people are looking for in a new home,” says Mimi Brodsky Kress, one of New Classics’ principals, “and incorporate sensible, practical green features.”



THE GREEN SCENE



The master bedroom (left) overlooks the Retreat—a stylish, eco-friendly guesthouse (above) with classic proportions and roomy interiors (below). To the right, a living retaining wall reduces runoff.



RETREAT, TOP AND RIGHT: © ERIK KVALSVIK

New Classics partnered with Haven Homes, a Baltimore-based company that creates energy-efficient, air-tight modular homes, to build the Bradley Green Home using George Myers's design. It was completed in less than 16 weeks from foundation—half the time associated with typical construction techniques. Since finished modules were transported to the site in a single day, the builders avoided the material waste and transportation costs involved in conventional building. The shorter construction time also reduced prolonged disruptions and noise pollution in the neighborhood. The Bethesda Green Home is now serving as a model for similar homes to be built throughout the region.

In the backyard, a small, freestanding guesthouse with French doors flanked by columns is also open for tours. The home was designed by architect Russell Versaci for Retreats, LLC, a venture he launched last year with Sandy Spring Builders. The company has introduced a line of systems-built cottages that range from 475 to 1,100 square feet in size. Delivered to home sites in just 45 days, they can serve myriad purposes, from offices and studios to guesthouses and in-law suites. Also based on modular construction, Retreats are energy-efficient and minimize waste as well as construction time.

The Bradley Green Home and its Retreat have struck a chord among consumers and sales of similar models are on the rise.

Kress attributes their success to an educated public who can differentiate between “feel-good green” and “practical green.”

“Practical green is something like the geothermal heating and cooling,” she explains, adding that while these alternative methods cost more than traditional systems, the payback and tax credits are worth the investment. “With rain harvesting, you’re saving on your water usage but you’re also recycling nature’s rainfall. You’re helping the environment and you’re saving money in utility bills and in consumption.

“As we did our research and looked into things,” Kress concludes, “it made a lot of sense.” ❖

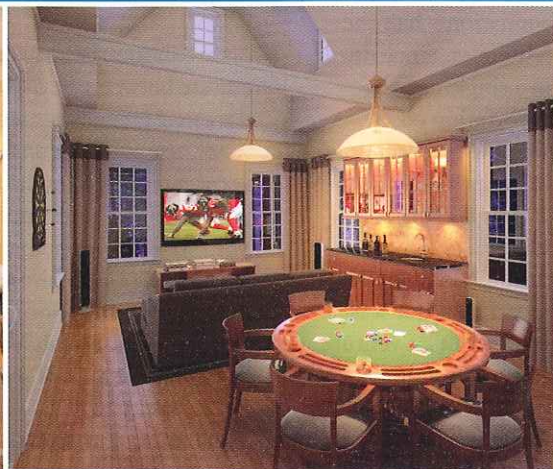
MAIN HOUSE ARCHITECTURE: GEORGE MYERS, AIA, GTM Architects, Bethesda, Maryland. **RETREAT ARCHITECTURE:** RUSSELL VERSACI, Russell Versaci Architecture, Middleburg, Virginia. **CONTRACTOR:** NEW CLASSICS BY SANDY SPRING BUILDERS, Bethesda, Maryland. **INTERIOR DESIGN:** URBAN COUNTRY, Bethesda, Maryland. **LIVING RETAINING WALL:** FINE EARTH LANDSCAPE, INC., Poolesville, Maryland. **LANDSCAPING:** CLEARWATER LANDSCAPE, Ijamsville, Maryland.

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