

PRESTO CHANGE-O

A stunning new entry transforms a tired 1950s house



Written by **JILL CONNORS**
 Photograph by **JOHN HORNER**

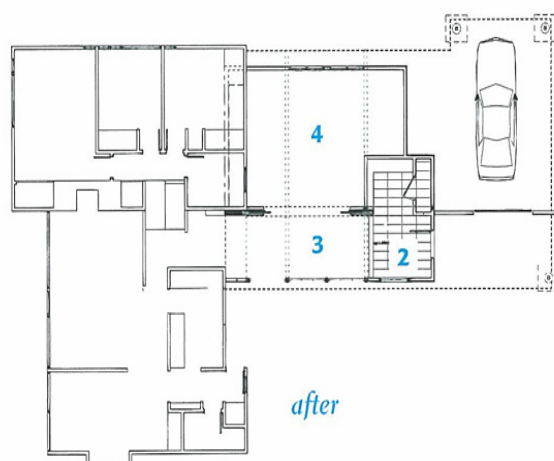
IGNORING SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS TO “tear it down,” the owner of a 1950s house in Lexington finally found a kindred spirit in Peter Feinmann, president of Feinmann Inc., a design-build contractor based in Arlington. “We don’t look at knocking down houses as a first option,” says Feinmann. The 1951 house, though modest and unassuming at first glance, had some architectural pedigree owing to its location in Five Fields (an area known for a group of affordable modernist houses built by family-minded architects in the 1950s), as well as its elements of contemporary architecture: shed-roof forms, vertical grain siding, and expanses of glass. For the newest owner, a university professor, Fein-

mann was asked to keep a minimalist aesthetic, but give the house a more welcoming presence. “We enhanced the original intention of the house,” says Feinmann, who built a right-angle addition that includes a light-filled entry gallery under a flat roof, and a home office with a 16-foot-high ceiling tucked under a shed roof. The addition is clad in vertical grain siding, matching the existing house. Inside, the entry’s tile floor transitions to oak flooring in the gallery, similar to the original floors. “We didn’t have to do a lot to the existing house because the ties were pretty clean,” says Feinmann. The addition also includes a carport-garage. Best, for the homeowner, who favors Far East design sensibilities, the addition provides geometric definition for a front-yard Japanese garden. Welcome home. ■

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before



after

LIGHT GLOWS FROM within the new entry (ABOVE, LEFT), presenting a warm and welcoming face to visitors. Glass was used for the four clerestory windows projecting above the entry; for the façade, translucent structural-composite panels were chosen for their higher insulation factor. The modest house (TOP) was built in 1951 in Five Fields, a neighborhood of architecturally significant houses in Lexington, Massachusetts. In the original layout, the front door led into a small foyer [1]; now the entry includes a large vestibule [2] and light-filled gallery [3]. A home office [4] was also added.