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Business Leaders Get It.

[URBAN LIVING]

Not so big

Bungalow-type cottage inspires compact new lifestyle for Jim and Ellen Reichman

Jim and Ellen Reichman used to live in a dramatic, 3,000-square-foot waterfront home in Kirkland. On three levels, it had a fabulous view and was the kind of home that visitors described as "stunning" and "spectacular," Ellen says. A year ago they moved into a home that's roughly half as large--and they

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couldn't be happier. Now, as they describe their new home, the Reichmans use terms like "quality," "livability," "comfort" and "community."

They have embraced the notion of better, not bigger. And they have discovered that they're living large in their smaller home.

Their two-story, bungalow-style cottage is in Danielson Grove, a neighborhood of 16 homes in Kirkland built by The Cottage Company. It has three bedrooms, two and 3/4 baths and a large, old-fashioned front porch. The house feels larger than its 1,650 square feet.

For Jim, the chief technology officer of Paccar Inc., and Ellen, a guidance counselor at Bellevue High School, the house is perfect for them and their beloved standard poodles, Kayla and Sasha. Moving there meant not only a house change but a major change of lifestyle.

It was about three years ago, after their adult children, Alexandra and Justin, had moved out, that they began thinking of downsizing.

"I remember one winter when I got sick and I had to run up and down the stairs with the dogs," Ellen recalls. "I was by myself because Jim travels a lot, and I started thinking this was too much house for us. We had a whole lower level we never really used. I thought it would be nice to have a smaller house."

They weren't interested in a condo or a townhouse--they had tried condo living before and deemed it "a disaster." They didn't want a big lot, but the smaller homes they looked at were uninteresting and devoid of character.

"It was a long process to find the right house," Jim says. "We were really struggling about what kind of house would be right for us."

Then one day Jim heard a radio ad for Danielson Grove and its architect, Ross Chapin Architects. The award-winning company is becoming well-known for its high-quality, energy-efficient "not so big" homes.

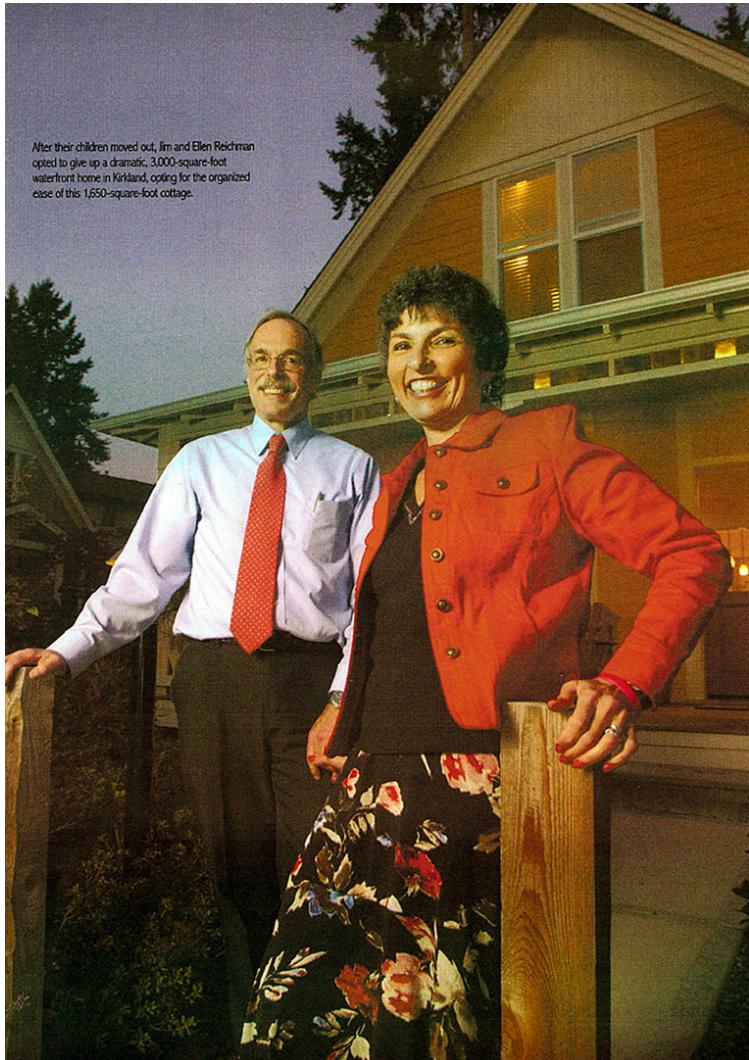


The Reichmans' welcome committee: Kayla, left, and Sasha.

"I had misgivings at first about the proximity to the neighbors, about privacy. The first month was hard, but then, miraculously, everything fell into place, and I began to love it."



This colorful pendant lamp was one of the kitchen light options available to the Reichmans because they purchased the cottage while it was under construction.



After their children moved out, Jim and Ellen Reichman opted to give up a dramatic, 3,000-square-foot waterfront home in Kirkland, opting for the organized ease of this 1,650-square-foot cottage.

"We came over and looked, and it was exactly what I had in mind," says Jim.

It was love at first sight for him, but not quite for Ellen--it took her a month.

"I had misgivings at first about the proximity to the neighbors, about privacy," she says. "The first month was hard, but then, miraculously, everything fell into place, and I began to love it. Last summer, living here felt like being on vacation!"

They appreciate the meticulous planning and attention to detail that make the home feel so comfortable and inviting.

"They (The Cottage Company partners Linda Pruitt and Jim Soules) think very carefully about what people need and want," says Jim. "It's all livable, usable space."

The Reichmans bought while the house was still under construction, so they were able to make

some of their own choices in fixtures and finishes. They also had a bench built in at the entry, with four baskets beneath it for storage.

Rooms are bright and airy because of tall windows and large skylights that open up. The living room has built-in bookcases flanking the free-standing natural gas fireplace, which is the primary heat source for the whole house. Floors on the main floor are knotty red birch.

The kitchen has granite counter tops, a pull-out pantry and lots of storage. "We had a much bigger kitchen in our other house," Ellen says, "but everything fits into this kitchen."

Jim took up cooking a number of years ago when Ellen began working outside the home. Now he's the cook of the family, and he deems the kitchen very functional and efficient. Adjoin-

ing the kitchen is a breakfast area. "I thought I'd miss having a formal dining room," Ellen says. "But I don't."

A short hallway leads to the guest bathroom and the study, which doubles as a guest bedroom. "We like the fact that you can shut off

Downsizing meant that the Reichmans had to dispose of a lot of furniture, which they gave to their children and to charity. They kept some special pieces, such as the bedroom set they've used throughout their 37-year marriage, the bookcase that belonged

Probably the Reichmans' favorite part of the house isn't actually inside the house at all--it's the wide front porch. They love to settle into its Adirondack chairs with cups of coffee to read the newspaper in the morning, or to watch the



the guest room and bath from the rest of the house," says Jim.

Off the guest room is a very private patio area. Jim barbecues there, and enjoys it like never before. "I never used to like to barbecue," he says. "But I've barbecued more than ever since we moved here--because the patio is close and easy, like an extension of the kitchen."

Upstairs, the master bedroom is a calming retreat, with the bed tucked under a large skylight in the steep dormer ceiling.

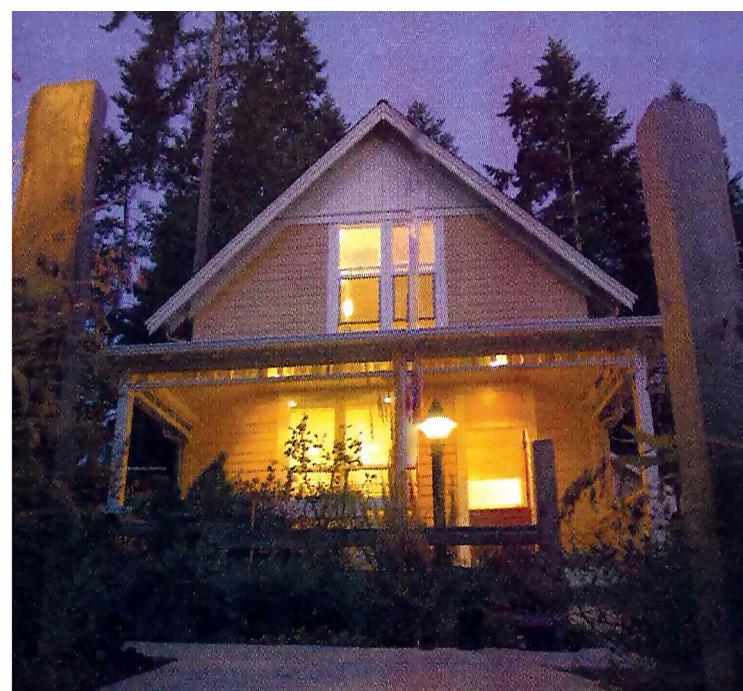
"Of all the homes we've lived in, the master bedroom in this house has the best feeling," says Jim. The large master bath has an old-fashioned claw-foot tub in addition to a shower.

The other bedroom upstairs--with its own bath and a large closet--also doubles as a TV room and study for the Reichmans.

The home of the technology director of Paccar is surprisingly low-tech. There's no sign of a giant-screen TV or multiple computer systems. And that's the way Jim likes it.

I tend to do that (technology) at work. I never want to personally be on the cutting edge of technology," he says. "My son jokes that he can judge when something is on the way out, because that's when I buy it!"

From the Dutch door at the entry and the glass tile accents at the front porch, to the indirect lighting and the custom bookshelves--there's a richness of detail that gives the home an old-fashioned warmth.



to Jim's parents, and the antebellum andirons that are a family heirloom. They purchased some furniture to fit the style and scale of their new home.

"The interesting thing is that there's nothing we miss," Ellen says. "We're also way more organized here. You have to be when you don't have a huge amount of space." The home has attic storage with pull-down stairs and storage above the single-car, detached garage.

glow of the sunset in the evening.

It's also a place to survey their fenced-in cottage garden and the common gardens beyond. Owners are responsible for maintaining the property within their own fences; the common garden and lawn, as well as the commons building for parties, are maintained by the owners association.

A native New Yorker, Jim says the arrangement of homes in Danielson Grove reminds him of go-

ing to summer camp in Pennsylvania every year as a kid. There's a wonderful sense of nostalgia about the community, he says. A touch of whimsy is the name plate attached to the porch of the houses. The Reichmans' is "Wildflower."

"You get to choose the name for your house," says Ellen. "We chose 'wildflower' because it's the name of the street in Winthrop closest to our cabin there. We have a cottage and a cabin--we feel very lucky!"

Working in the garden surrounding their home is a newfound delight for the Reichmans. "We were never gardeners before, but we found taking care of our garden is really fun," Ellen says. "It's manageable for us, and it's gratifying." Nearby, there's a communal garden shed where people can store their tools.

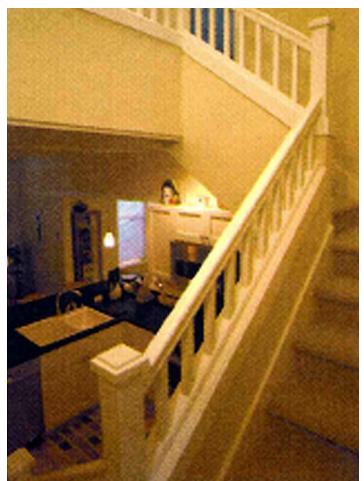
Another unexpected lifestyle change has been enjoying the sense of community in Danielson Grove. In neighborhoods where they lived before, people would come home, go into the garage and into the house--and never see each other, Ellen says. "Here, you see people coming and going," she says. "It's very neighborly, but not intrusive."

They like the fact that the neighborhood is more diverse than they expected, running the full spectrum from old to young, single, married, with and without children. Jim got involved right away and currently serves as the president of the board of the Homeowners Association.

"Our neighbors do things together, like movie nights, potlucks," Ellen says. "We did a shower for a neighbor who's having a baby. Everybody came. It's so nice--they are people you can count on. It's what old-fashioned communities were like..."

When the Reichmans moved to their new home in Danielson Grove, they discovered that when quality is high, less can truly be more.

"I love this house," Ellen says. "This house meets so many of our needs."



Behind the Reichmans' kitchen are stairs leading to the second floor.