CONCEPT

Not all patios have to be rectangular or square slabs poured against the back of the house. See how designer Maureen Gilmer massages the opportunities and constraints presented by this large family home so that all site problems are solved, homeowner requests are met, and the end result is a perfect mix of beauty and usability.

CONCEPT

FLOOR PLAN

A GAME PLAN FOR BACKYARD PATIO DESIGN

A QUIET SPACE FOR EVENING GETAWAYS.

SHADE COVER FOR OUTDOOR LIVING AREAS AND TO MAKE THE SPA MORE INTIMATE.

DESIGN PROBLEMS

The finish floor elevation is four feet above grade, making the home feel overly massive when viewed from future ground level outdoor living spaces. The connection to this house pivots on the large staircase that descends three feet down to finish grade which makes it a hub and potential bottleneck when entertaining.

DESIGN GOALS

A QUIET SPACE FOR EVENING GETAWAYS.

SHADE COVER FOR OUTDOOR LIVING AREAS AND TO MAKE THE SPA MORE INTIMATE.

A LARGE OUTDOOR DINING AND ENTERTAINING AREA WITH BUILT-IN BARBECUE COOK CENTER.

THE REVEAL

This plan is laid out into two primary use spaces. On the north end is passive space next to the master bedroom. The active outdoor entertaining area is on the south end where it is further linked to the master, kitchen and family room. Between these, the paving is minimized which cuts down wind and allows for higher end materials to be used.

THE REVEAL

PLANNING AREAS

The elevated finish floor demands more extensive foundation planting, so these beds are larger and more irregular to nest the home in greenery of varying height and depth.

OUTDOOR KITCHEN

The outdoor kitchen requires a direct link to the indoor kitchen, which is facilitated by the new stairs that provide an intuitive flow to the outdoor kitchen while retaining a wide open view of the yard in every season.

SPA AREA

The spa is linked to the master bedroom and set off to the side as a passive space where one can relax, read, and enjoy the spa. The spa is set off to the side with a screen planting for additional privacy from neighbor views from the kitchen and eat-in area.

SECONDARY STAIRCASE

A secondary staircase added here provides more direct access between indoor and outdoor kitchens and entry for the bathroom and access to the main outdoor living and dining areas.

FLOOR PLAN

A family home with a doorway access to the patio which allows the entire circulation plan but also access to the back of the building. The new outdoor living spaces are on a tile deck that can be raised or lowered as needed.

FLOOR PLAN

PERSPECTIVE view of back of patio before

PERSPECTIVE view of back of patio after

THE FINAL PLAN VIEW

This plan is laid out into two primary use areas. On the north end is passive space next to the master bedroom. The active outdoor entertaining area is on the south end where it is further linked to the master, kitchen and family room.