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Property Information

Heirloom Home



515 Everett St N



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An Extreme Makeover

In April of 1886, Frank Berglund, a guard at the Minnesota Sate Prison, purchased Lot 15, Block 5 of Sabin's Addition. Because the south end of the lot bordered the ravine, the lot was a larger than normal 43 x 215 foot lot. On the north 125 feet, he built a house at 423 West Laurel Street in 1886. (See the entry for 423 West Laurel Street). In 1888, he turned his attention to the back 90 feet of the lot, and made an application for a building permit on June 23. The contractor for this new home was to be Sven Berglund, a well-known Stillwater carpenter and contractor. The structure was to be one story, built into the hillside using 10-foot studs. The size was 18 feet by 30 feet with an 8-foot-by-11-foot cellar 7 feet deep. The floor plan was identical to his first house at 423 Laurel Street. The cost of the second house was estimated at \$500.

When the residence was completed, Frank Berglund soon sold it and left Stillwater. By 1896, the current owner, Joseph Butterfield, had managed to buy a back portion of the adjacent Lot 14, from Lella Smith (who lived at 417 West Laurel Street) thereby enlarging the lot to its current dimensions.

Over the years, the residence passed through several owners, eventually ending up in the possession of Richard Jackson, whose parents had first purchased the house. In 2005, Richard Jackson moved into a nursing home and put the house up for sale. John Brach knew Mr. Jackson because he had restored the home next door for his mother-in-law and was concerned the Jackson home would be torn down because it needed so much work. John declared he "was looking for a new project" and he and his wife, Kim, bought the house in 2005.

The original house had been built into the hillside, and needed a new foundation to replace the old one which had collapsed in some areas. Stone from the old foundation was salvaged for landscaping. The home had never been connected to the city sewer system, so this was corrected with much difficulty by extending new sewer pipe across the ravine for a connection.

Many of the original elements of the 120-year old house, including the windows, had been replaced once, and needed to be replaced again. Trim was reproduced to match the original and the pine floors were refinished. In 2007, the Brach's, with the help of their sons, Justin and Ryan, built a fifteen-foot by fifteen-foot addition on the south side of the house, increasing the number of square feet from 1,300 to 2,000. A new garage was added, carefully preserving the old two-stall horse shed above the creek. And the Brach's, who have restored two previous homes in Stillwater, savor the eccentricities of an old house: the dining room in this house has a three inch slope in the floor

