

**CotY<sup>TM</sup> 2015  
Awards**

**Residential Bathroom    \$50,000 — \$75,000**

**Actual Project Cost:       \$65,000.00**

# Five Star Comfort at Home

From Boring to Elegant Luxury

## ***The Way Things Were***

This client came to us as a referral from a friend who lives in their neighborhood. This client also happens to be the President of the Homeowner's Association in their Neighborhood which we hope will bring us more business in that area.

## ***The Goals of the Project***

This husband and wife do a fair amount of traveling for business and always enjoy the amenities and features of bathrooms that are typically found in higher end hotels. They asked our team to work with them to design and create a new Master Bath that would allow them to enjoy all of those amenities in their own home.

The clients also shared that they are on the cusp of retirement within the next few years and wanted to update the Master Bath in advance of the time when they would consider down sizing in 5 years or so.

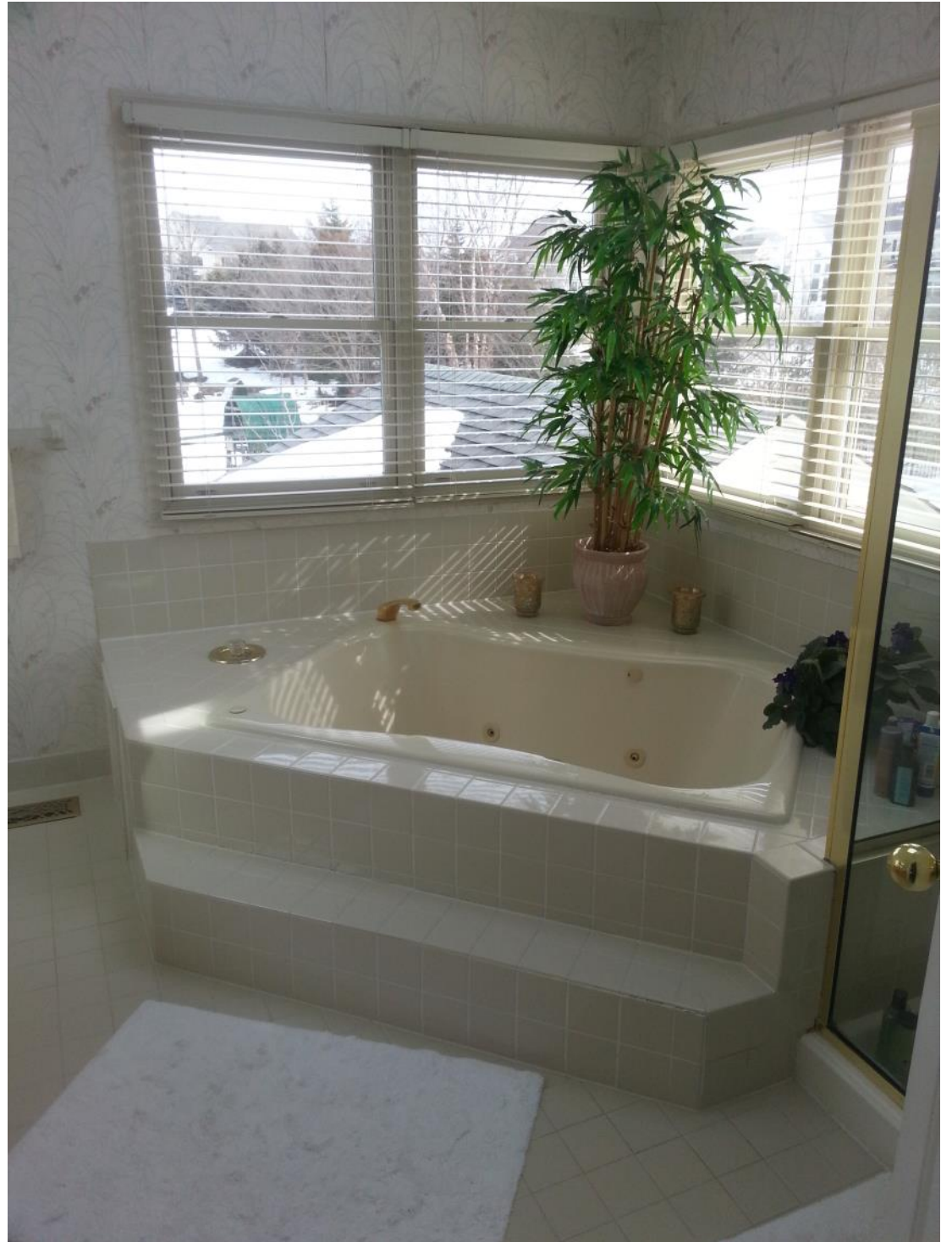
Their existing bathroom was very typical of many other higher end homes built during the 1990's.

## ***It was boring!!***

The most prominent feature was the drop in whirlpool bathtub with the plain off-white tile surround that took up nearly half the bathroom.

They felt that the style of bathtub was very dated and the owners wanted to tear it out in favor of a new pedestal style tub to give the bathroom a more elegant and luxurious feel.

This view also shows the double hung windows in the corner. The owner said that they never opened those windows and they wanted to take them out and install new Picture windows. This would help the room feel bigger and allow more light to come in.





The owners communicated that the old shower, while considered adequate in the 1990's, was too small and, with the polished brass shower surround and acrylic shower pan, was quite dated.

They wanted to enlarge the shower as much as possible without moving the window or the door. They also wanted to incorporate rainhead shower head, two body sprays and a hand held spray.

With a view toward aging in place, the owners requested a flush threshold in the new shower.

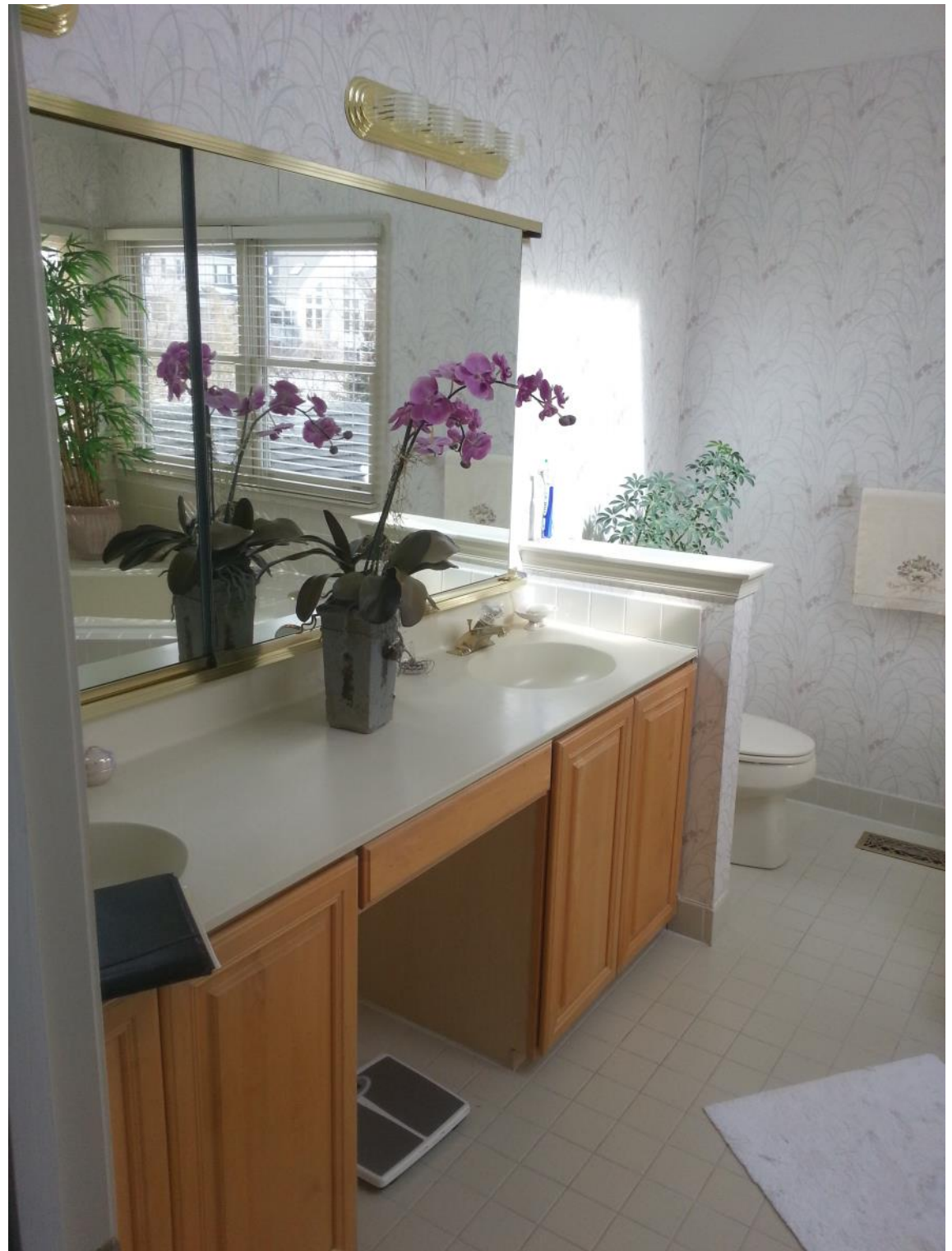


The existing vanity was also quite boring and dated with the Oak particle board cabinets, the non-descript cultured marble vanity top and the polished brass fixtures and medicine cabinets and lights.

And the wall paper definitely needed to go.

We decided to remove the half wall between the vanity and the toilet to gain a few more inches for the new vanity.

The old 4" x 4" tile flooring was also about as plain and boring as it gets.



## **The Design**

We engaged in the design process with our clients in the spring of 2014. We would be working within the existing space although taking space out of the Master Closet to enlarge the shower was considered but rejected as an option.

This client indicated early on that they would value the input of the Interior Designer on our team who could help them make all final product selections. They had experiences before where they could not agree on things and valued a third party perspective to give them confidence that they were making good decisions.

The basic location of all of the fixtures would remain unchanged with minor changes for drain and supply lines. The following are the key features we want to draw your attention to.

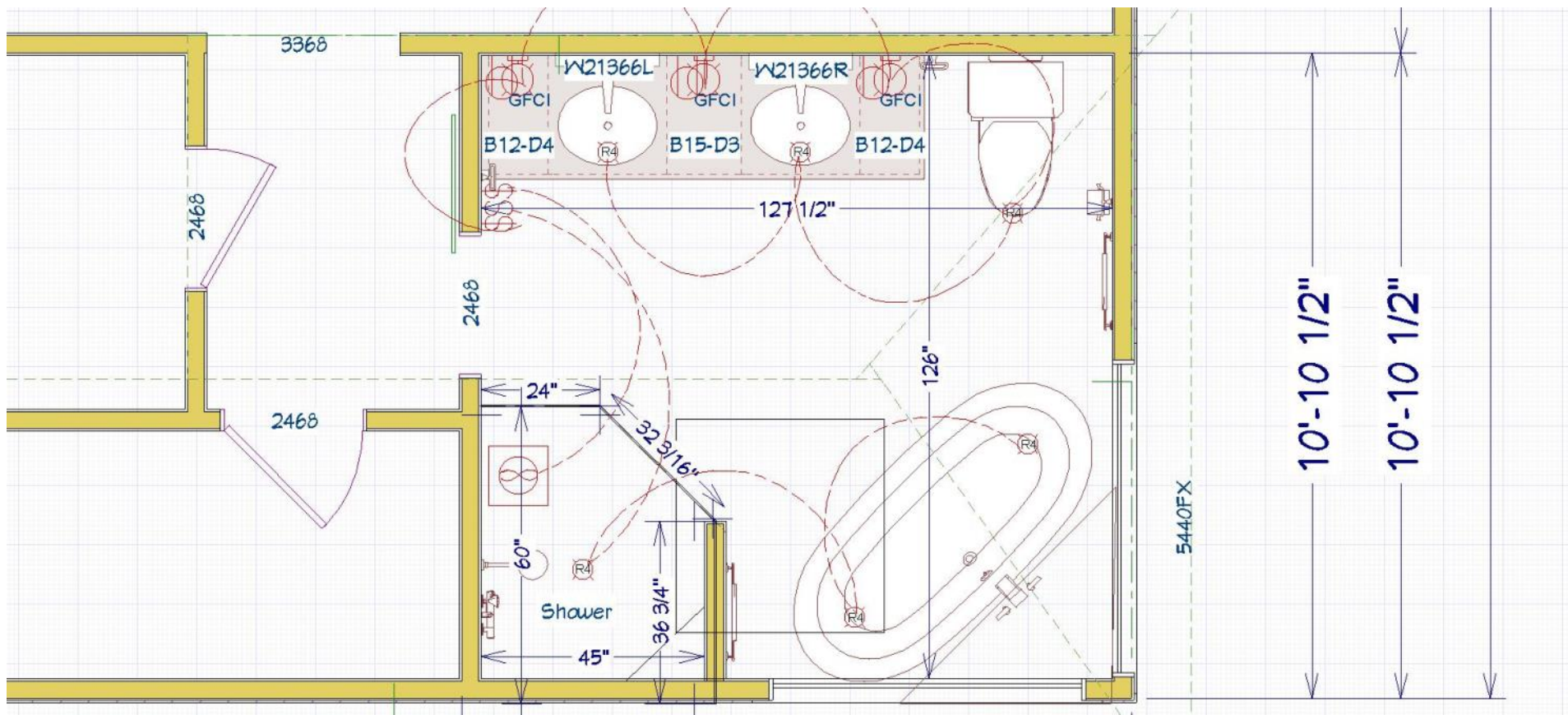
- ♦ **Bathtub:** The owner still wanted a bathtub and it would still be a prominent feature of the bathroom. They had already been looking and had fallen in love with the **Victoria and Albert Marlborough** pedestal bathtub which we placed on a 45 degree angle in front of the windows. There would be a corner pedestal with a granite top directly under the windows where the faucet would be mounted on the deck with a hand spray pull out.
- ♦ **The shower** also became a much more prominent feature of the bathroom. We enlarged it as much as we could both toward the window and toward the door. A half wall would separate it from the bathtub alcove but the rest of the enclosure would be heavy glass. One clear want the client had was to have a **flush threshold** into the shower. This would require us to re-frame the floor in order to sink the shower pan into the floor. We also recommended a **Schluter Linear Drain** so that we could use the same format floor tile in the shower that we planned to use on the main floor. The fixtures in the shower would include a HansGrohe Thermostatic mixing valve located on the half wall. The diverter would be located on the same wall as the RainHead shower, a Handheld spray on a slide bar and two body sprays. We also included a niche with a shelf for soaps and shampoos and a small corner seat for shaving.
- ♦ **The Door:** Because of the proximity of the shower glass to the door and also to eliminate distraction from the beauty of the new shower, we changed the design of the door to be a **sliding barn style door** mounted outside the bathroom in the small entry alcove. The door would be **full length frosted glass** which would also allow natural light to enter the small dark alcove just outside the bathroom.

- ♦ **Cabinetry**: The new cabinetry was designed with **Talora frameless cabinetry**. The owner selected Clear Alder with a Coffee stain which provides a deep red/brown with a strong resemblance to Cherry. The owners wanted a 4 drawer stack for each of them, and a center 3 drawer stack for larger items such as a hair dryer etc. The medicine cabinets would match the cabinetry and be recessed into the wall. The owners requested an electrical outlet in each of the medicine cabinets. We suggested installation of a **Sillite** receptacle. The new bathroom cabinetry has far more storage than they had before.
- ♦ **Windows**: As mentioned before, the owners did not like the existing double hung windows. They never opened them anyway and wanted to something else. We discussed several options including stained glass overlay for privacy but in the end, they elected to just replace the existing windows with new clear picture windows. We brought in another team member to design and supply the window treatments.
- ♦ **Flooring**: We specified porcelain tile for the floor and walls of the shower. Our talented Interior Design did an outstanding job of guiding the owners in their product selections and also of provided the distinctive and challenging tile layout of the floor and shower walls. She also designed the backsplash from the countertop all the way to the ceiling above the vanity which truly adds another level of luxury and elegance to the entire bathroom.
- ♦ **Lighting**: We designed additional lighting in the sloped ceiling to provide more effective illumination of the room. All of the light switches are dimmers for maximum flexibility in setting the mood desired.
- ♦ **Radiant Heat**: One amenity that our team suggested that the owner quickly embraced was the installation of Radiant heat in the floor. Few things feel as luxurious as a warm floor to cold feet in the morning. We were excited be the first in our area to use the **new Schluter Ditra Heat** product that was just brought into production this year. This system makes the addition of underfloor radiant heat very easy and affordable.

## CHALLENGES WE FACED

- ♦ **Access:** Along with most Master Bathrooms, this room was on the second floor in the far left rear of the home. Access to the bathroom was into the front foyer, up the stairs, across the hall, and through the Master Bedroom. We covered the foyer floor with cardboard underlayment and hardboard panels, covered the carpeted stairs, hallway and Master Bedroom Carpet with plastic carpet covering. On this project, because of the distance down through the house, we actually set up exterior scaffolding up to the second floor and removed all the debris out of the window.
- ♦ **Framing:** **Reframing the floor** for the shower necessitated pulling up the subflooring, cutting down the existing 2 x 10 floor joists and then sistering in new 2 x 6 joists alongside in order to maintain the strength of the floor. Reframing the vanity wall to create **recesses for the medicine cabinets** necessitated installation of a new LVL beam as a header across the entire width of the vanity. We also had to move a **plumbing vent** in order to do this.
- ♦ **Plumbing:** We also had to **pull up the subflooring** in order to access the plumbing and make the changes necessary. The **plumbing layout** was also challenging because the mixing valve was on the half wall of the shower, and the diverter and the other fixtures were installed on the opposite wall. The drains from the old vanity sinks were also installed too high and had to be lowered in order to accommodate the new undermount sinks.
- ♦ **Shower Pan and Tile:** As you will see, the tile was designed to lay on a 45 degree angle. Part of the beauty of the bathroom is the way we laid the tile so that the grout lines flow right into the shower pan. But the shower pan slopes to the right and so it took thought and time to lay out the tile so that the grout lines looked right.





A new and innovative product we used is the Schluter Ditra Heat uncoupling membrane and underfloor heating cable.

This system greatly simplifies the installation of the heating cable. There is no mesh to cover with thinset. The wire snaps neatly into the uncoupling membrane for a fast and clean installation.





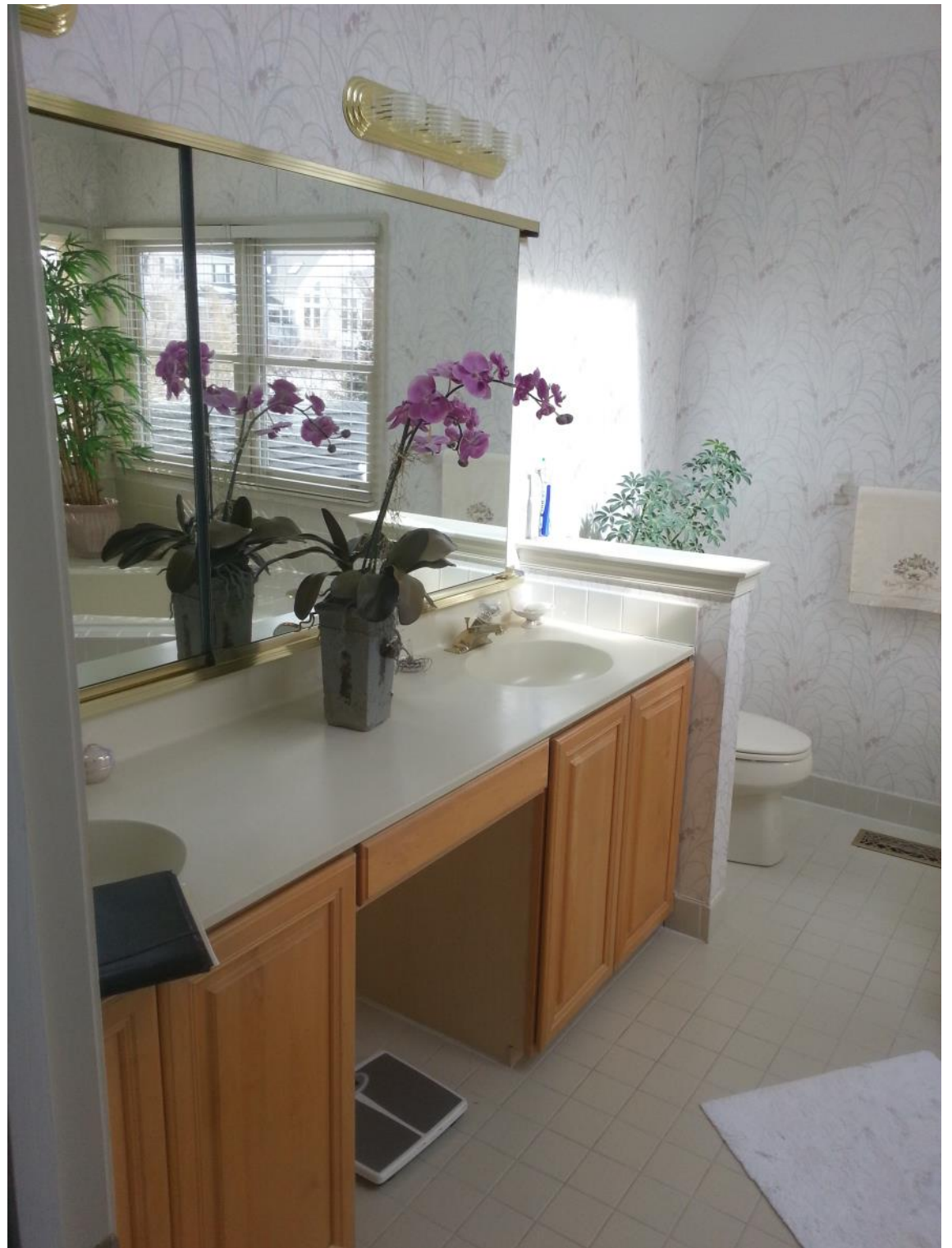
Step into our new bathroom through the new sliding door. Changing the door to a sliding door outside the bathroom eliminated a conflict with the new shower glass seen to the right. We used the Aero Sliding door hardware from Real Carriage Door Co.

As you enter, we now want to help you really witness the transformation of this bathroom as we take you through some before and after pictures.

The pictures on the following pages display the understated elegance of this new bathroom.



This of course shows the  
before picture of the  
vanity area.







This shot beautifully displays the new cabinetry and medicine cabinets accented by the elegant mosaic tile backsplash. The three sconces both provide light toward the face but are also distinctive and elegant. The comfort height toilet to the right will serve our clients well as they age.





**This picture and the ones following draw you in a little closer to see the details of this exquisite bathroom.**









This before picture shows the old bathtub that formerly dominated the bathroom with the plain off-white tile surround.

This view also shows the old double hung windows that we replaced with new picture windows.

Notice also the old outdated wall paper that we eliminated.





This panoramic shot shows the gorgeous new Victoria & Albert Marlborough bathtub and the new picture windows with gorgeous new window treatments.



This shot shows the new bathtub in detail. One challenge that tested our planning involved precisely locating the tub in the alcove and also the location of the drain .

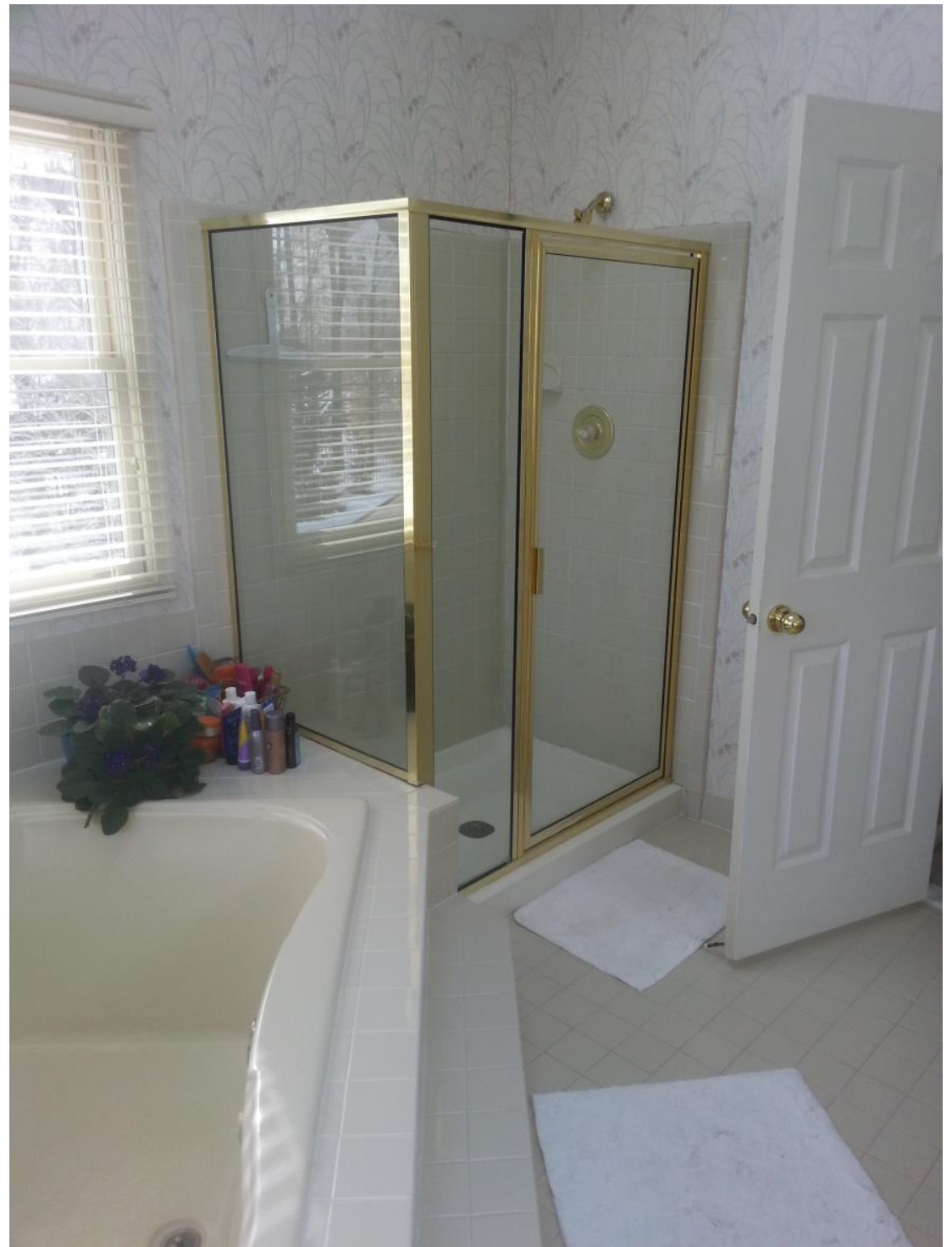


These vignettes display the new blinds installed by our team member.

This also shows the corner pedestal countertop where the faucet is mounted. It allows for a convenient spot for a candle or two for special evening of relaxation.



This before shot provides a great perspective of the shower in relation to the old bathtub and it provides a proper contrast to the pictures that follow.





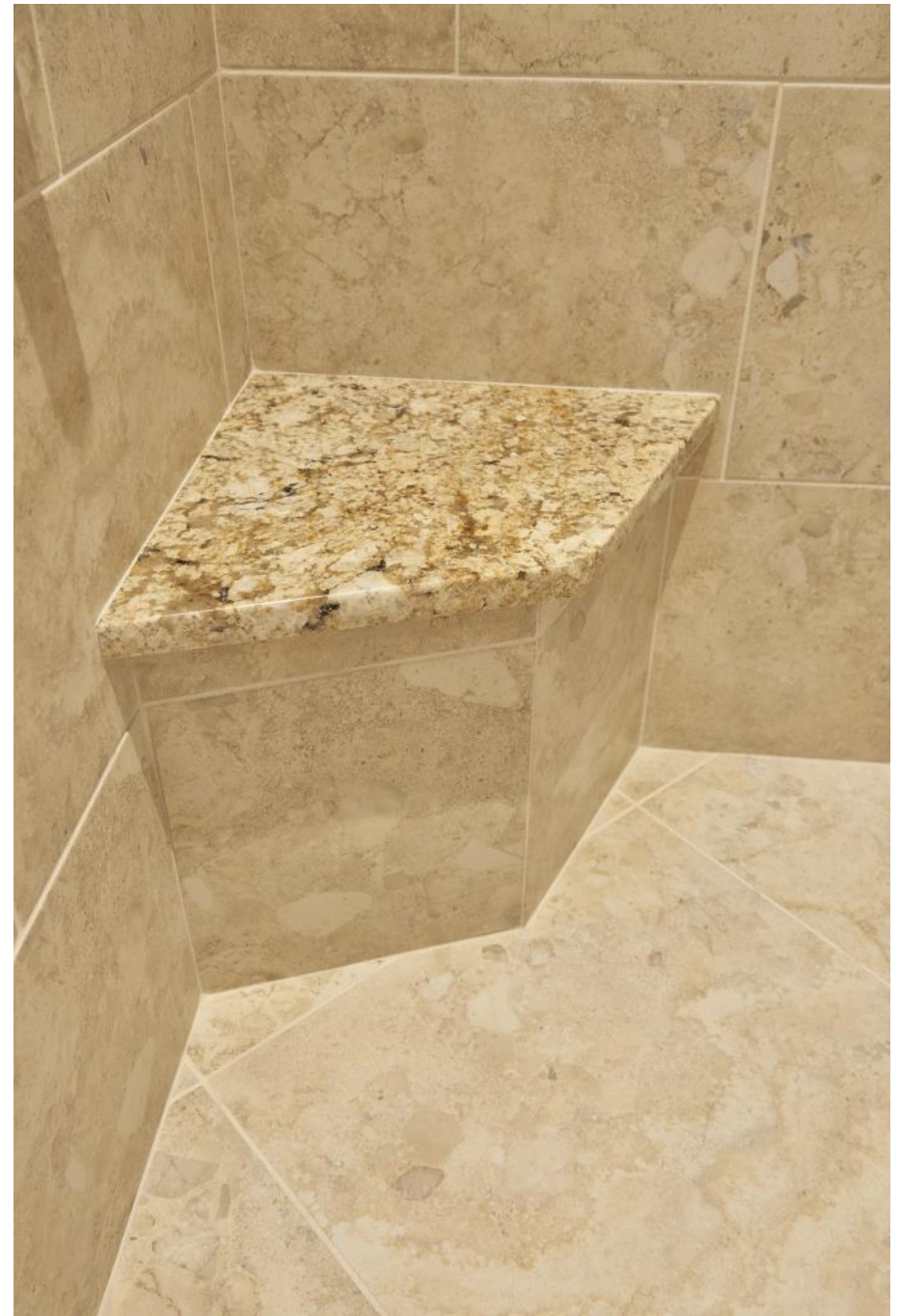


WOW is a word that aptly describes this bathroom. This shot is a perfect representation of the nearly the entire bathroom from the tub over to the new sliding door.



These pictures move in closer to the shower to display the beautiful tile work and layout. Our tile setter and team member did an outstanding job.





Once again, these shots move in closer to display the thought, planning and craftsmanship that was invested in this project from start to finish. The shot on the left also displays the flush threshold and the grout lines that flow from the main floor into the shower.





These two vignettes display the niche created in the wall for storage of soaps and shampoos and also the Schluter Line Drain which has become very popular with our clients. This **innovative solution** provides a really creative drain solution allowing us to use large format tiles on the floor to match the tiles on the main floor of the bathroom.

These detail pictures show the precise expertise of our trade partner that template and installed the heavy shower glass. The 45 degree corners are actually manufactured with beveled edges that overlaps as the door closes thereby eliminating any leakage. Outstanding.



## **Conclusion**

**These clients were a pleasure to work with and the bathroom was fun to design and create.**

Including our own company, a total of 5 NARI members worked on this project.

This Master Bathroom is a **Elegantly Designed bathroom** that showcases the creativity and attention to detail that every member of our team brings to every relationship we have with our clients.

There were **multiple challenges** that we faced over the course of the project all the way from Design to re-configuring the underfloor plumbing and reframing the floor for the flush shower entrance.

We also used the latest in innovations using Schluter Kerdi Board, the new Schluter Kerdi Line Drain, and especially the new Schluter Ditra Heat uncoupling membrane and Radiant underfloor heating system.

The Owners were consistently impressed with our entire team—our staff and our trade partners and they are exceedingly pleased with the final result. We brought the new bathroom together in a way that exceeded their expectations and they are very happy.

We leave you with our Beauty shots.

Thank you for considering our project.











# *The End*

