



Project Category: Basement \$50,000 - \$100,000

Location: West Madison

Madison, WI



This home has a small living room on the main level, with a modest eat-in kitchen. Being a home with limited living space, it was in need of a great finished basement. By removing the post in the middle of the basement, we turned this room into the largest living space in the entire house.



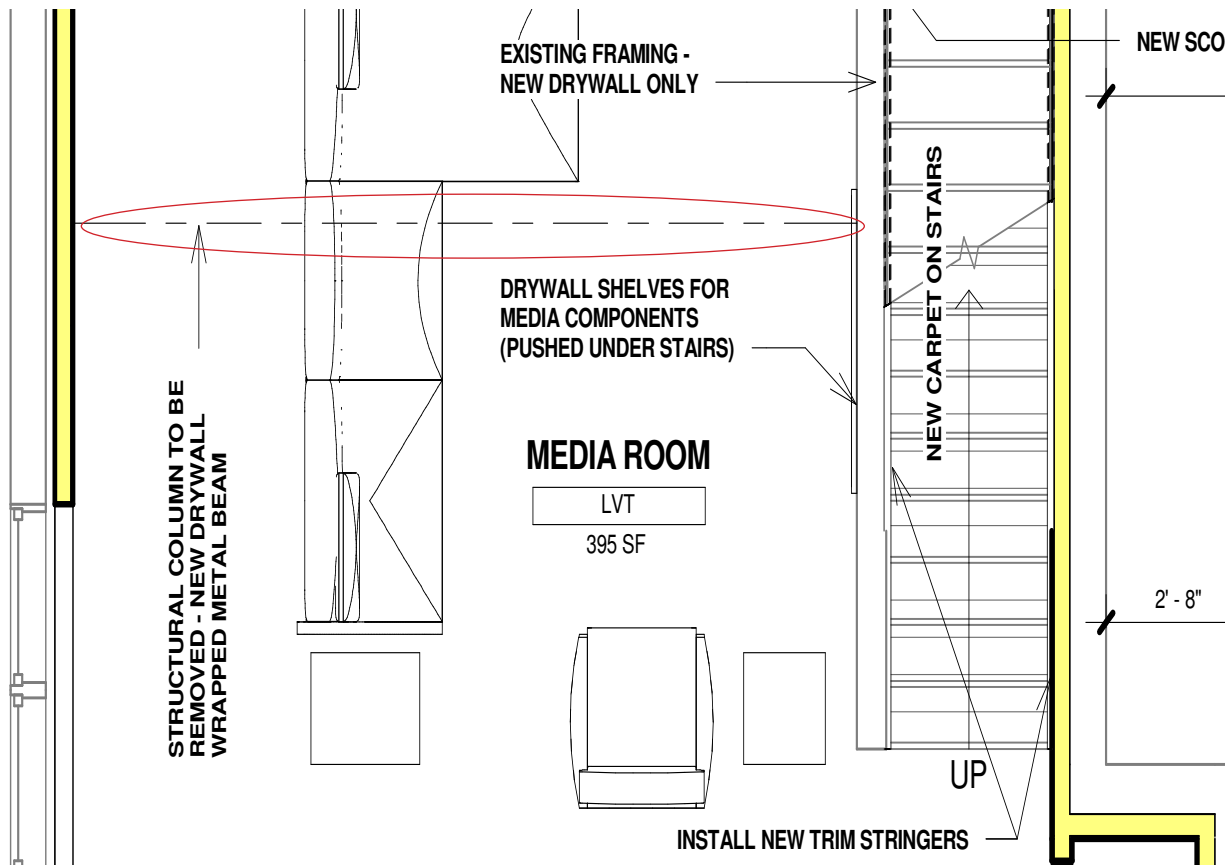


BEFORE: UNFINISHED BASEMENT WITH LARGE SUPPORTING POLE IN CENTER





AFTER: FINISHED BASEMENT SHOWING ORIGINAL EGRESS WINDOWS



Many times when we remove a column in the basement, we are able to simply add more sections of LVL beam to support the floor load above. However, in this house, the beam supports not just first floor, but also second floor load. Therefore, in order to clear span the 15 feet and remove the column, it was necessary to install a steel I-beam. These beams are much heavier and have no side to side flexibility, therefore, our construction crew had to disassemble the side of the house in order to shimmy the steel beam into the basement, and then lift it into its permanent location under the floor joists. The beam was then permanently supported down to the foundation and footings, and the exterior of the home was closed up again.





AFTER: FINISHED BASEMENT SHOWING STEEL I-BEAM

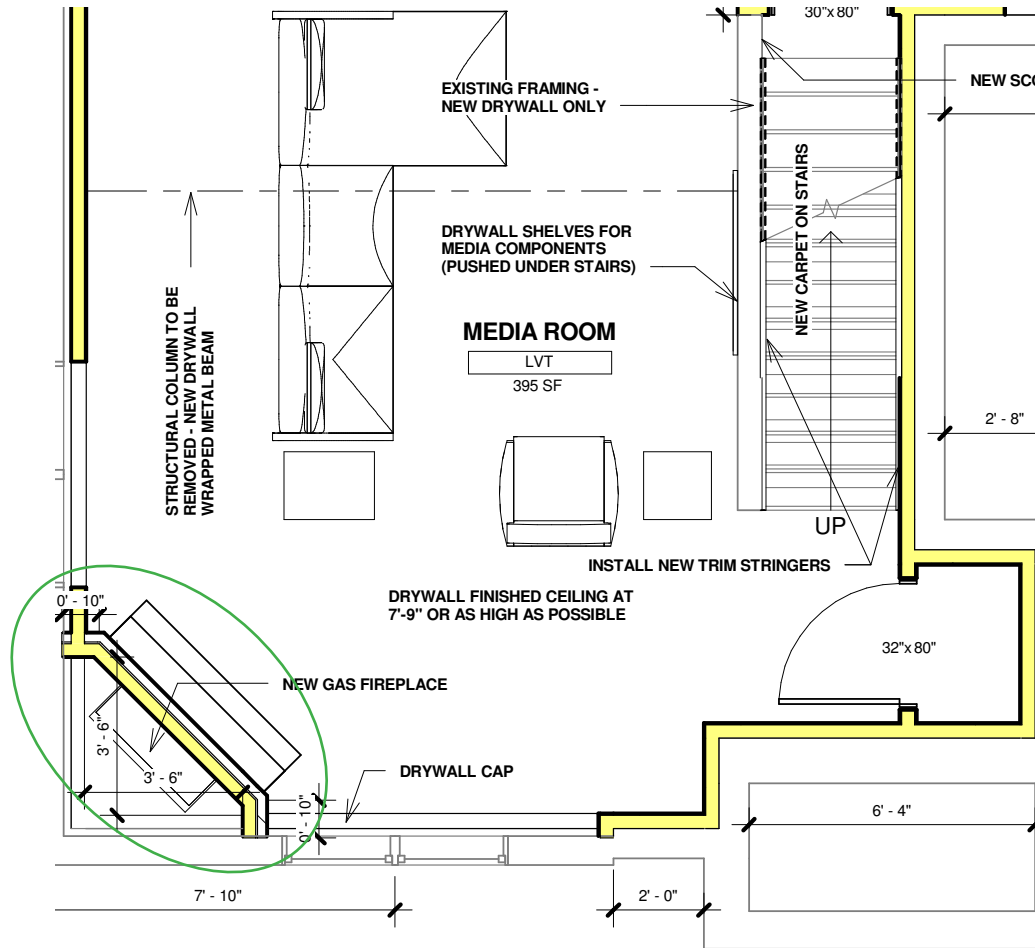




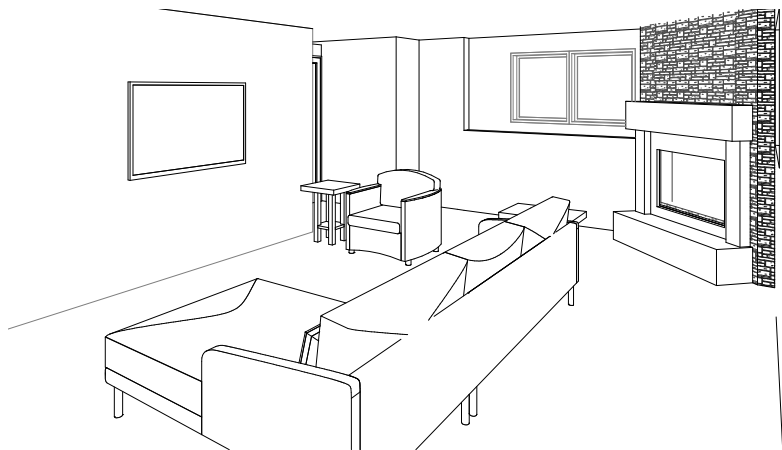
AFTER: FINISHED BASEMENT WITH MEDIA CENTER

Removing the column in the middle of the basement allows for flexible furniture placement. The TV is able to be placed in its optimum location on the media wall, and a sectional couch is able to be used in the center of the room. Had the post still been in place, this would not have been the case.





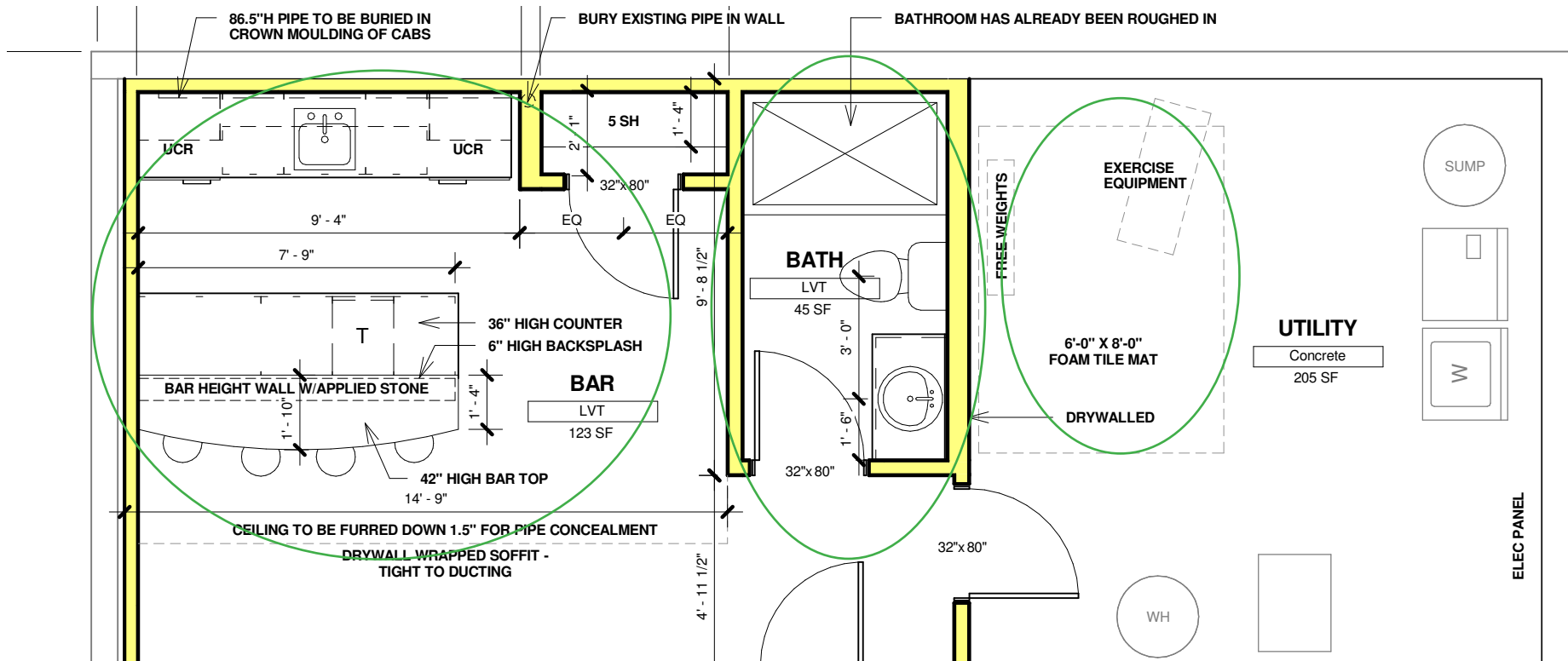
We decided to install a fireplace in order to keep the room cozy. Gas fireplaces are not only beautiful, they are also a great way of controlling the temperature of a basement room independently from the rest of the house. The new fireplace has a clean-view kit, meaning that there is very little metal showing before the stone surround. It helps to make the gas fireplace better resemble a real stone hearth.



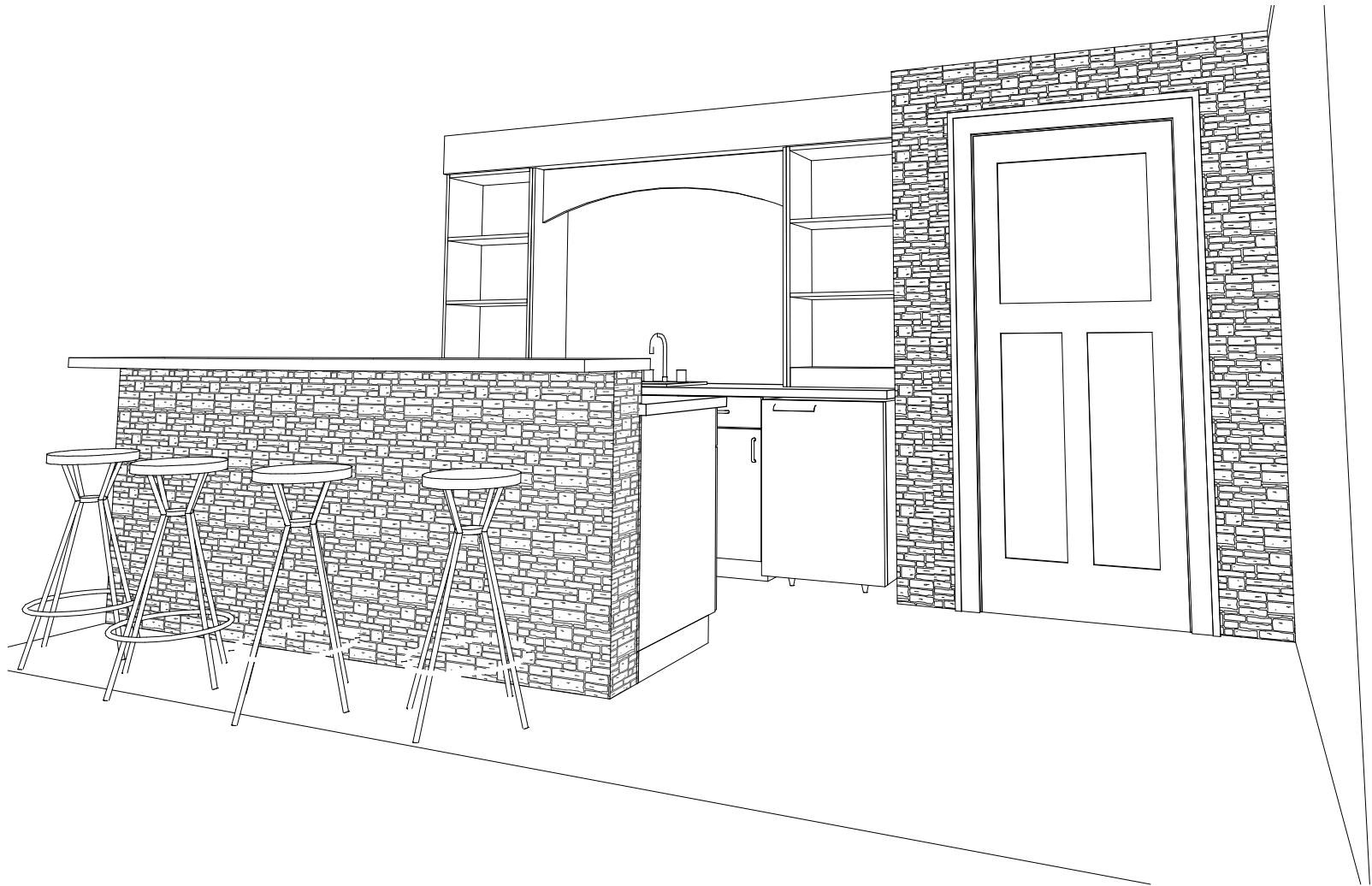


AFTER: THE CORNER FIREPLACE ADDS BEAUTY AND COZINESS TO THE SPACE





Because the homeowners anticipated using this as the primary living space in the home, with the TV moving to this area, they knew that they would need access to water and beverages. Because of this, a wet bar was a high priority feature for them. Now they have everything that they need downstairs. They have workout space in the unfinished portion of the basement, a bathroom with a shower for cleaning up after workouts, which also serves the needs of the basement living area. The bar provides functionality for entertaining without creating a need to run upstairs for water or beverages.



The design detail of the bar was really one of the key features of this space. Symmetry and classiness were important to the clients in order to achieve the look and feel that they had hoped for.





AFTER: THIS WET BAR INCLUDES EVERYTHING ON THE HOME OWNER'S WISH LIST





A pair of paintings which are displayed on the right wall of the wet bar provided inspiration for the design. The client had received a pair of paintings reflecting a classic, classy, 1940's era bar scene with a classily dressed man and woman. These pictures laid the foundation both for feel and color of the space.





AFTER: PICTURES PROVIDE INSPIRATION FOR THE DESIGN AND COLORS OF THE SPACE



AFTER: GLASS CABINETRY WITH CRISS CROSS MUNTINS



Glass doors with criss cross muntins were selected for the cabinetry, positioned symmetrically left and right, and a mirrored backsplash is featured behind the bar.



AFTER: MIRRORED BACKSPLASH OFFERS DISPLAY FOR WET BAR



**BOMBAY**  
SAPPHIRE  
Distilled  
LONDON  
DRY GIN  
Vapour  
INFUSED  
Hand selected  
exotic botanicals  
FROM A 1761 RECIPE  
IMPORTED  
PRODUCT OF ENGLAND  
47% alc./vol. (94° Proof)  
1 L

**JIM BEAM**  
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT  
BOURBON  
WHISKEY  
James & Co. Beam

**CHRISTIAN  
DIPLOMATS  
BRANDY**  
The French

**MESON**  
WHISKEY

**WHISKY**  
D-1

**WHISKY**  
D-1





AFTER: THE STONE FRONT OF THE BAR SEATING IS THE SAME STONE USED FOR THE FIREPLACE IN THE MEDIA ROOM

The seating area of the bar is a peninsula the identical length of the back bar, with stone that helps tie the two rooms together. It provides seating for four, and houses a kegerator and beer tapper.





Very careful planning was necessary in order to get the kegerator and beer tap laid out exactly according to the manufacturer's installation instructions, as some of the drilling had to be completed off-site ahead of time.

AFTER: THE KEGERATOR AND BEER TAPPER THAT WERE SELECTED ADD CLASS TO THE BAR AREA





AFTER: THE CUSTOM CRAFTED CABINETRY USES INSET DOORS AND DRAWERS, PROVIDING A CLASSIC FURNITURE LIKE APPEARANCE TO THE SPACE



AFTER: THE STAINLESS BEER TAP IS THE PERFECT ACCENT TO THE STAINLESS APPLIANCES



AFTER: BEVERAGE COOLERS ARE FEATURED UNDER EACH GLASS CABINET





AFTER: THE BEVERAGE COOLERS FEATURE PULL OUT SHELVING





AFTER: A VIEW FROM THE WET BAR AREA TO THE MEDIA ROOM



## CRITERIA RESPONSES

*To what degree were the expressed needs of the client met?*

The clients requested a bar & entertainment area, a living & media area with fireplace, and a bathroom with a shower. They also wanted to find out if a structural column could be removed.

- The basement contains all of these features.
- The column was removed. Of all the remodelers interviewed by the client, they told us we were the only one who made it sound feasible. Others told them it was too hard or too expensive. We, on the other hand, were able to tell them that we had done it in several other basements and we knew about how much it would cost for them to have it done, so that they could decide how to pursue the project.
- We even took care of little details such as having a keyed lock on the adjacent pantry door, so that clients can lock away alcohol when they want.

*To what degree does the project enhance the existing structures functionality?*

- The key part of the function of this basement finishing was removing the column, and installing a steel beam that clear spans the fifteen foot room, carrying both first floor and second floor load. This relatively small space now has room for flexible placement of furniture. A sectional occupies the optimum location for TV viewing. Without removing this column, the furniture placement would have been awkward and a sectional could never have been chosen.
- The bar was sized to accommodate 4 seats, while the host remains behind the bar. Cabinetry, countertops, and appliances were all evaluated to ensure the correct amount of room was provided. The peninsula of the seating bar matches to the back bar area symmetrically, and then is pantry closet utilizes the rest of the space on the back wall.

*To what degree does the project enhance the existing structure aesthetically?*

Stone masonry was integrated in both the bar and fireplace. The color and tone of cabinetry, flooring, and stonework was all considered. The clients had a pair of paintings received as wedding gifts, a complementary set which portray a bar scene with a classy man and woman sitting somewhat apart from each other. The feel of this scene defined the goals of the bar we created, and also was the inspiration for the deep red tone used on one accent wall.

The bar is really the defining feature of the entire space. It sets the feel the tone, the character for the rest of the space. A mirrored backsplash, cherry-tone wood, a light tone quartz top, and X-grid glass cabinet doors are aspects that create the desired feel. The back bar and peninsula seating area exhibit symmetry, and the inset doors and drawers continue the classy character.





*Is there evidence of superior craftsmanship?*

- There is a plumbing drain pipe hung from the floor joists above the bar. Rather than an ordinary soffit, the cabinetry is designed with a large crown which provides the solution. The cabinet boxes hang below the pipe, and the crown goes up to the ceiling, completely concealing the drain pipe. This required accurate design and planning, as well as careful execution.

\*A kegerator and beer tapper were installed in the peninsula of the bar area. This combo required pinpoint precision drilling and coordination between the countertop installers and our crew who were in charge of installing the system. Planning and templating had to be accurate within a fraction of an inch.

*Were innovative uses of material and/or methods of construction used in the project?*

Replacement of a LVL beam with a steel beam: The original house had a LVL beam and a center column, which would have divided the basement room into small sections, hindering furniture placement and function. Because this beam carries both first floor and second floor load above, the solution was not as simple as just adding more plies of LVL in order to meet design spec. Rather, the crew had to remove the siding, remove wall sheathing, and then shimmy in an ~700 lb steel I-beam to carry the load, lifting it into place and then re-closing the building exterior.

*Did the contractor overcome difficult obstacles?*

- *Schedule:* The project was requested to be completed in time for the Superbowl and a baptism party for the clients new baby. The deadline was met.
- *Beam:* To remove the column, we were not able to simply use more plies of LVL. Instead, a steel I-beam was required.
- *Product:* The kegerator and beer tap required pinpoint precision in the planning and manufacture of the countertop.
- *Plumbing clean-outs:* While these are typically easy to run carpet over top of, with a LVP floor, this isn't so easy. The clean-out and back flow prevention valve are carefully integrated into the flooring in an unobtrusive way.

