

# INTEGRITY

# Update

Spring  
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## Amherst College Project Combines Preservation and Energy Efficiency



**Y**ou may have noticed several of Integrity's signs in downtown Amherst. Three properties—on Spring Street, South Pleasant Street, and Northampton Road—were recently purchased by Amherst College with rental housing in mind. "These 4- and 5-bedroom homes were too large to rent as they were," said Patrick Chehade, the college's director of rental housing. "Most faculty, especially junior faculty, do not need that much space. We wanted to convert the large one-family homes into two-family units."

Amherst College hired architect Tom Hartman of Coldham & Hartman Architects to divide the homes into 2- and 3-bedroom apartments. Every effort was made to save the unique architectural details and historic features of the homes' interiors and exteriors.

The project included putting up some walls and removing others, renovating and adding kitchens and bathrooms, and

addressing energy efficiency and safety issues, all while preserving the historic character of these beautiful homes.

### Managing a Complex Process

Having completed many similar projects in the past, Integrity is well-versed in the communication and coordination process, which often requires the consensus of a number of entities. In this case, our job was to convey information to the college, the architect, and Amherst's planning and zoning boards in order to expedite decision making and keep the project running smoothly. As the project manager, Anna Novey worked closely with everyone involved, keeping them informed and coordinat-

ing the subcontractors, vendors, and Integrity field staff.

Novey drew up an aggressive schedule to accommodate the college's tight timeline. Start dates for the three houses were staggered to keep work flowing. "Careful planning saves time and

*"Amherst has a rich history and we recognize the importance of preserving the character of these historic houses. They are part of what makes Amherst such a special place to live and work."*

money, and sequencing is key to making any job run efficiently," she said.

Working with Hartman, Integrity designer Heidi Flanders created window and door schedules and framing plans

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for porch designs, updated kitchen layouts, and added details necessary to get the plans through the building department. Having an architect and a design/builder working together on the specs ensures a cohesive project where cost-effective recommendations can be made as plans are being developed.

### Upgrading for Safety and Efficiency

As with a lot of older homes, these three had drawbacks, such as poor insulation, lead paint, old appliances, and outdated fixtures. Abide, Inc., which specializes in environmental contracting and restoration, has worked extensively to bring the houses into compliance with MA state laws and will make all units safe for families with children under six years of age.

Where blower door tests exposed areas of significant energy leakage,

Integrity replaced windows, added insulation, and sealed leaks. Heating systems were converted from oil to natural gas, and energy efficient appliances and new lighting were installed.

### Preserving History

Retaining the historic character of these homes was key to the project and very important to all involved including the Town of Amherst. One house went before the planning board and another through the ZBA for approval. “We are happy to work with the town. Amherst has a rich history and we recognize the importance of preserving the historic character of these homes. They are part of what makes Amherst such a special place to live and work,” remarked Heidi.

Old windows were replaced with energy efficient ones in the current locations in order to retain the look of



single-family homes. Our carpenters took great care in refinishing fireplace mantels, woodwork, doors, and old oak staircases and painstakingly moved an original stained glass window. The preservation and renovation of these houses is a testament to Integrity's goal of providing innovative design/build solutions, fine craftsmanship, and exceptional customer service in the Pioneer Valley. Amherst College now has six new rental units that are energy efficient and family friendly, and the historical character of these beautiful homes has been preserved for all of Amherst to enjoy. ■



## Meet Kyle Belanger

### Project Manager



Kyle was majoring in Building Materials and Wood Technology at UMass Amherst when he began his building career at Cowl's Building Supply. He spent a semester interning at Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity before graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in 2008. During his years at the lumberyard, Kyle sharpened his skills in sales, estimating, and engineered

wood design while forging strong relationships with customers and suppliers.

As project manager at Integrity, he guides clients through their projects' design and building phases with the know-how gained from a good education, a solid work background, and hands-on experience. Kyle's experience working with manufacturers over the years has been invaluable. He has a thorough knowledge of products and materials and keeps abreast of what's new on the market. He's able to provide our clients with a variety of options and cost comparisons to help them get the best quality products at a price that fits their budgets. "In addition to his extensive product knowledge, Kyle is hard working and conscientious, always willing to put in the extra effort and ensure top-quality results. He is a great addition to the Integrity team," remarked Heidi Flanders.

When asked what he likes most about his job, Kyle answered, "Finding solutions to the unique challenges that arise in the renovation of an existing building. It's always rewarding to fulfill a client's unique remodeling needs, regardless of how a building was constructed."

Kyle is a native of Belchertown, where he currently resides. ■

## Our *Complimentary* Design Consultation

Have you been thinking about a home-improvement project but you need a little direction? Integrity will send our designer, Heidi Flanders, to your home for a one-hour consultation, free of charge.

We can help you define your ideas, sort through the options, and decide how to proceed. Heidi is well-versed in commercial and residential projects of all sizes, and she recently became a Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist.

Take advantage of this complimentary service and find out how you can make your home exactly the way it works best for you.

## INTEGRITY

DEVELOPMENT & CONSTRUCTION, INC.

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Whether you're an avid golfer or just looking to swing some clubs in the great outdoors, I would welcome your company. Call me, and we'll schedule a day or evening game. It's a lot more fun than playing alone!

*PETER*