

Featured Garden: November 2021

Description

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Our feature garden this month comes with a HOUSE! There are so many aspects to Beautification and rescuing a derelict property in North Avondale and making it your home definitely beautifies our neighborhood. Here is one familyâ??s story.

Iâ??d like to introduce you to **3981 Lowry Avenue**, home of Chris and Monica Human.





What made you decide to rescue this house?

We moved to North Avondale from Fairfield. After living in the suburbs for so long we expected this to be a big transition. With not knowing what areas within the city might suit us, we decided to rent a house while we explored different areas. Thankfully we landed on Lowry Avenue at 3986. We were immediately welcomed by neighbors and in no time fell in love with our street and all the families around us. 3981 was almost directly across the street from us. For the first few months, we honestly didnâ??t even know there was a house there as it was so overgrown you could not see the house from the street. We later learned that 3981 was referred to in the neighborhood as â??The Creepy Houseâ?• . It had been abandoned for about 7 years, was boarded up, had been vandalized, and all the pipes had frozen and burst. One day I walked across the street and around the property. When my wife came home from work that evening, I told her â??Weâ??re going to live in that house one dayâ?•, to which she replied â??yeah right!â?•.

Had you done this type of thing before?

We had done minor renovationsâ?¦a bathroom here and there, a basement, a kitchen. In 2010 we bought a commercial building on Short Vine and did a major renovation there but nothing to this

extent. Every inch of 3981 Lowry needed helpâ?¦roof, electric, plumbing, HVAC, you name it.

Had you looked at others?

We had looked at other homes requiring renovation, a few in Northside and Norwood.

Any in North Avondale?

We had looked at a house one street one over on Dickson that was eventually sold at auction.

Any tips for others who want to rescue/restore homes?

It is not for the faint of heart. It is not as easy as they make it look on TV. However, in the end it is worth every minute.

How long did it take you?

It took us just about a year to complete the renovations.

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Any big surprises?

There were many surprises along the way. With a house of this age, every wall you open, or layer you peel back can bring a new challenge. The biggest surprise by far was about 6 months into the project, a city inspector stopped by just to make sure we knew that the property had been condemned several years before (this little fact had not come to light in any of the due diligence done before purchase, not to mention as permits were pulled, plans submitted, etc.)

Did you do the work yourself?

We did a good amount of the work ourselves but did hire in subs for some of the major projects like plumbing, electric, and HVAC.

How did you choose your colors and plant materials?

Colors were chosen by my wife after much research online. For plant materials, I spoke to a couple of different nurseries getting input, but one of my main considerations was that I wanted perennials. I want things to be as maintenance-free as possible while still adding color and life to our landscape. I like to be able to trim things down in the fall and for them to pop back up in the spring. Then with a little mulch and water weâ??re ready to roll.

(As shared by Chris Human)

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