Aging With Beauty

Talk about modifying a home for ‘aging in place’ and baby boomers recoil, in fear of mortality and, worse, ugliness. Now the design industry is filling this niche, stylishly.

In Ask Home

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HE HANDSOME East Chatham, NY, kitchen of interior designer Kevin Welden and his partner Peter Newman, doesn’t appear lifted out for re- grouped octogenarians, but it is. Well-designed details take into account the falling eyeweight and limited mobility. The 60-something couple knows they will encounter in their golden years, a term that looks no one. Upper-rebeded and under-cabinet lighting sup- plements the three-pendant over the island, much of the Maker-style cabinetry, from Home Depot’s Devora line, consists of drawer rather than-do- n’t-drawling cabinets; the stacked stainless- steel kitchenaid wall comes down bending over; and the luxurious room—passages of 60 inches instead of the standard 36—guarantee ac- cess to people of any ability.

“You wouldn’t notice any of these features un- less they were pointed out,” said Mr. Welden, who noted that the tweaks that make their home safe enough to put off moving into assisted living didn’t add to the overall cost of their kitchen re- model. “People don’t say, ‘Oh, you built this so you can bring in a wheelchair?’ They come into the kitchen and say, ‘Wow!’

American baby boomers are reaching retire- ment age at a rate of 10,000 a day, according to AARP; as such, they’re rather unique breed, with apocryphal recollections of being at Wood- stock thus contemplating their own mortality and plan for their demise, even though they think paying deeply for such shortlivedness.

“Pall are the leading cause of fatal and morta- l injuries among older persons,” said Erik Landau, co-founder of the Living in Place Institute, who modified the acceptable term in ‘aging in place’ (AIP) whom he co-founded it, because “ nobody wants to talk about getting old.” The formerly-based educa- tional organization trains medical professionals, builders, designers, and contractors in AIP principal- es. “The cost of a fall is estimated at around $34,000 in just direct medical expenses”, be con- tinued. And according to Goenethen Financial’s 2017 Cost of Care Survey, the national annual inc- omen for assisted living is $45,000 (as high as $72,000 in some states), so making your home safe enough to maintain your independence clearly Phius to page 04.

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SHINedin the many features designed to allow Kevin Welden and his partner Peter Newman to safety use their East Chatham, NY, kitchen into their 80s and beyond.

Long-D- type cabinet pulls are easier to grasp for stiff fingers.

Coping lighting compensates for diminished sight.

Matte surfaces help avoid glare, confusing to older.

Passages 48 inches wide allow for all levels of ability.

Drawers provide easier access than black-nice cabinets.

Single-level faucets hands the need for manual agility.

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OFF DUTY
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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Does This Look Like an Old Folks’ Home?

“Redesigned bathrooms are among the first markers that aging in place is happening,” says Rachel Lin, executive director of the ABA.

“Older adults and people with disabilities are making bathroom design a priority. The emphasis is on creating spaces that are easy to use by people of all ages and abilities.”

But not all bathroom remodels are created equal. Some are more about aesthetics and function than accessibility. And some are not even designed for people who will need the bathroom in the future. In fact, a recent study by the American Society of Interior Designers found that only 20% of homeowners who have remodeled their bathrooms in the last five years have actually made their space more accessible.

“People often remodel their bathrooms to accommodate their current needs, but they don’t think about how they will need it in the future,” Lin says. “They might install a new vanity or a fancy tile floor, but they don’t consider accessibility.”

Lin says that one of the biggest mistakes people make is not thinking about the needs of the people who will be using the bathroom. For example, a bathroom that is designed for someone who uses a wheelchair might not be accessible for someone who uses a walker or a cane.

“Bathrooms should be designed with the future in mind,” Lin says. “They should be designed with the needs of the people who will be using them in mind.”

She suggests that people who are planning to remodel their bathrooms should consider the following:

1. Make sure the bathroom is easy to navigate. This means having enough space for a wheelchair or a walker to turn around, and having enough space for someone to sit down.

2. Make sure the bathroom is easy to use. This means having enough space for a person to sit down, and having enough space for someone to stand up.

3. Make sure the bathroom is easy to maintain. This means having enough space for a person to clean the bathroom, and having enough space for a person to move around.

4. Make sure the bathroom is easy to use in the future. This means having enough space for a person to use a shower, and having enough space for a person to use a toilet.

Lin says that by following these guidelines, people can create bathrooms that are easy to use for everyone, now and in the future. She also says that by following these guidelines, people can create bathrooms that are easy to maintain for everyone, now and in the future.

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