

WINNERS *by* DESIGN

BY ANN MARIE SCHEIDLER

KIPNIS ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING NABBED THE TOP SPOT IN *BETTER'S* BEST OF 2019 AWARDS IN THE HOME & DESIGN CATEGORY. HERE, THE FIRM SHARES ONE OF THEIR MOST IMPRESSIVE PROJECTS.

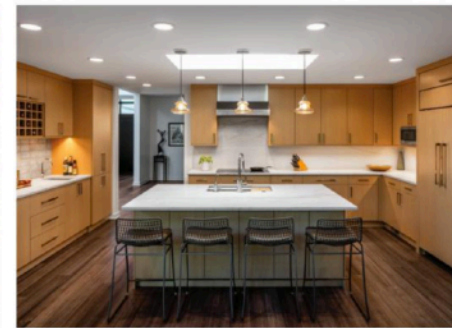


The garage was one of the largest challenges for Kipnis to incorporate into the sleek design of this home. But small details like extending the roofline made the design seem visually more harmonious.

Opposite: As modern and minimalist as many of the homeowners' interior design choices were, they decided to extend the stonework from the exterior into the front foyer.

A. J. BROWN IMAGING





From left: The floor-to-ceiling windows bring the outdoors inside in this open family room; the floating staircase is not only an art piece, but it functionally separates the public and private spaces on the first floor; the kitchen employs some of the most energy-efficient appliances on the market, including an induction cooktop.

Kipnis Architecture and Planning

BEST OF 2019 WINNER FOR HOME & DESIGN: BEST ARCHITECT CHICAGO

SEEING GREEN

TWENTY SIX YEARS AGO, when Nathan Kipnis, FAIA, president of Kipnis Architecture and Planning, launched his eponymous architectural firm, he was hired by a local family for a small bathroom renovation project. As the years ticked away, this same couple turned to Kipnis three more times with a variety of larger scale initiatives—most recently the comprehensive design of their dream home in Glencoe.

Tucked on a lushly wooded lot off of Sheridan Road, Kipnis’ clients wanted a zen-like feel to a home designed for first-floor living. “We talk about ‘aging in place,’” explains Kipnis. “That doesn’t necessarily mean getting older, but in designing a home

for first-floor living, it leaves open the possibility that this could be a ‘forever’ home.”

Meshing mid-century modern and craftsman aesthetics, Kipnis and his team expertly divided the home’s public and private spaces using a floating staircase.

“You know how everyone says their latest project is their favorite,” says Kipnis, “this is absolutely true for me of this house. Not only does my client’s yogi-lifestyle carry throughout this beautiful space, where the windows are floor to ceiling and the outdoors have literally been brought inside, this home is also the most energy efficient one we’ve ever designed.”

Additionally, Kipnis incorporated resilient design strategies into this home. Resilient design is the ability of a house to handle natural or manmade disasters or interruptions and recover quickly. These include oversized gutters and downspouts, ice and

water shield membrane under the entire roof, backup electrical systems, multiple sump pumps, etc.

Kipnis Architecture and Planning is guided by the idea that architectural design excellence need not be sacrificed for principles of sustainability. Instead, they believe green design expands what is possible architecturally, in construction methods, and what materials are used. A Kipnis company tagline is “High Design/Low Carbon™.” Before ground is broken on one of their designs, they model the future energy performance of the house. “There were lots of tricky details for us to consider in making this home perform as well as it did,” he says, using the home’s thickly insulated walls as an example. “Our hope is that someday soon we’ll update our tagline to read ‘High Design/Zero Carbon.’”

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