



Case Study

The Art of the Modular Renovation

**REIMAGINING LIGHT AND LIVABILITY  
IN CHEVY CHASE, MD**

Service: Modular Renovation / Window Reconfiguration

[finecraftcontractors.com](https://finecraftcontractors.com)

# THE CONCEPT:

## What is a Modular Renovation?

For many homeowners, the word “renovation” implies months of displacement, dust, and whole-house chaos. However, smart homeowners are increasingly turning to Modular Renovations—a strategic approach where improvements are made in focused, high-impact phases rather than all at once.

This recent project in Hyattsville, MD, perfectly illustrates this philosophy. Having previously engaged Finecraft Contractors to add a screen porch, these homeowners returned a year later to tackle a new, specific pain point: the rear façade glazing. By upgrading their home one module at a time, they improved their quality of life without the disruption of a full remodel.

# THE CHALLENGE:

## The “Pane” of Maintenance

The original condition of the home featured expansive glass on both the upper and lower levels of the rear exterior. While the intent was to let light in, the execution was outdated. The glass was divided into a grid of small, individual panes separated by numerous ledges.

These ledges created a significant functional problem. They acted as shelves for debris, trapping leaves and dirt. Cleaning was a constant battle; even after washing, water would pool on the ledges, immediately soaking the glass and leaving it dirty again.

Initially, the homeowners assumed the solution was a simple swap: replace the old glass with new glass in the same configuration.



# THE SOLUTION:

## Reconfigure, Don't Just Replace

Because Finecraft Contractors approaches every project as a design partner rather than just a builder, they proposed a more creative solution.

Instead of a like-for-like replacement, Finecraft suggested **consolidating the glass**.

- ➔ **Design Shift:** On the upper level alone, the design moved from **25 individual pieces of glass down to just 9**.
- ➔ **Aesthetic Balance:** A major concern was maintaining the home's character. The clients did not want a cold, commercial “storefront” look. Finecraft meticulously duplicated the original wood aesthetics of the home, ensuring the new, larger windows added warmth and blended seamlessly with the existing architecture.





## THE RESULTS:

### A Contemporary Transformation

The impact of this focused renovation was immediate.

- ➔ **Maximize Light:** By removing dozens of frame dividers, the obstruction to the outdoors was minimized. The home is now flooded with natural light, feeling significantly more spacious and less cluttered.
- ➔ **Effortless Maintenance:** With the elimination of the debris-catching ledges, the exterior stays cleaner for longer, and maintenance is no longer a source of frustration.
- ➔ **Modern Function, Traditional Feel:** The space feels contemporary and open, yet retains the warmth of the original structure.

### The Finecraft Difference

Perhaps the most telling aspect of this project was the client experience regarding scale. *"Being a smaller project, we thought it wasn't going to get a lot of attention,"* the homeowner noted. *"But Finecraft paid a massive amount of attention to it. We were very impressed with the detail and time spent."*

This Hyattsville project serves as a blueprint for homeowners who want to upgrade their space: You don't always need to gut the house. Sometimes, you just need to reimagine the view.



## 3 TIPS FOR IDENTIFYING HIGH-IMPACT UPGRADES (FROM THE HOMEOWNER)

*Based on this project, here is how you can spot "modular" opportunities in your own home:*

- 1 Don't just replace—reimagine.** When a feature breaks or ages, ask if the design itself is the problem. Can the configuration be changed to solve a functional issue?
- 2 Look for the "friction."** Identify parts of your home that are annoying to use or clean. These are often the best candidates for renovation.
- 3 Trust the process.** Renovating in phases (modularly) allows you to live in your home while steadily increasing its value and comfort over time.



## FINECRAFT AS A DESIGN-BUILD (OR BUILD-ONLY) PARTNER

FineCraft is a design + build residential contracting company who, aside from the build, provides architectural drawings done by architects (not draftsmen) as well as an interior design service that includes selections services. If you have plans from an architect we welcome the opportunity to bid on your project and look forward to being your contractor of choice. Architects FineCraft has worked with (not design-build): Muse | Kirwan Architects | Donald Lococo Architects | Christian Zapatka | Runningdog Architects | GTM Architects | Manion Architects | CACAO Studio | Lyons Architecture | Bennett Frank McCarthy Architects | Brennan & Company | Moser Architects.



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for one to  
find out more  
about us and  
our process.

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