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## Williamsburg Townhouse Makeover

This Williamsburg townhouse was completely renovated and converted into an owner's triplex with two additional rental units—but not without complications.

NY REAL ESTATE RESIDENTIAL | SEPTEMBER 8, 2010

## A Conversion in Williamsburg

By MAYA POPE-CHAPPELL

Dana Bushman said this Williamsburg, Brooklyn, residence was "an absolute hellhole" before it was gutted and converted into an owner's triplex with two additional rental units.

This Williamsburg townhouse was completely renovated and converted into an owner's triplex with two additional rental units—but not without complications.

"Despite the fact that the place looked rough around the edges, it was a more feasible project because it was structurally sound," said Ms. Bushman, who according to property records, purchased the home in 2004 for \$800,000.

At the time, tenants occupied each floor of the four-story building. Once half of the tenants moved out nearly four months after the purchase, Ms. Bushman said she and then-boyfriend Eric Wilhelm, who she married this year, moved into separate units on the top two floors.

Getting the other tenants out of the building was more of a task—nearly a yearlong legal battle. "It was a whole mess," said Ms. Bushman, recalling the dispute. "The court gave them 10 months to vacate and during that time they didn't pay rent and we had to pay for their utilities."

Once the tenants were out, the couple began converting the place into a three-family home from a four-family, but not without more complications, which Ms. Bushman documented on "Here is the House," a blog she kept during the renovation process. (She took the blog down when the couple listed the home.) After two sets of contractors left them unsatisfied, the couple redid many finishes themselves, everything from the tiles to the toilets. Even the home's blue facade, which had a shingled design, had to be redone because it couldn't withstand high winds.

"We've spent every waking moment working on this house," said Ms. Bushman of the couple who has made changes to the property right up until listing their home last month, including the cellar, which holds a laundry room and a recording studio.

The 2,100-square-foot owner's unit has two bedrooms, two baths and a glass sunroom, which leads to a private garden that was designed and featured on "King of Dirt" on the DIY television network. The modern interior has exposed brick, a center staircase, red-cherry wood floors throughout and African mahogany cabinets and detailing. Each rental unit has two bedrooms and one bathroom that together bring in \$4,300 a month.

The townhouse, located at 74A Conselyea St., was listed by CORE in August for \$1.695 million. The couple, both computer engineers, plan to move to Northern California once the place is sold.

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The townhouse is at 74A Conselyea Street, near the Lorimer L train stop. It was listed in August for \$1.695 million. CORE holds the listing. The couple, who both work as computer engineers, plan to move to Northern California once the place is sold.

Noah Rabinowitz for The Wall Street Journal

1 point on everything else