

»» Amazing Grace

Quality marks the impressive renovation of a Northwest Side two-flat

“THIS GUY TOOK the ugliest two-flat on the street and made it into something really exceptional,” says Marlene Granacki, a Re/Max Exclusive agent who sold

»» GRACELAND WEST

LIST PRICE: \$1.985 million

SALE PRICE: \$2 million

a reconstructed 1912 property sited on an extra large city lot for builder

Nonda Kourkouvis. Granacki is a longtime resident of Graceland West, an appealing enclave of classic homes west of Graceland Cemetery.

Kourkouvis, proprietor of Athens Construction Co., conserved only two exterior walls of the old building and created an otherwise new house that borrows from the esthetic of the vintage homes on the block. Last spring—before Kourkouvis finished the house and had forbidden Granacki from showing it—Bill Power, a trader, and Michelle Marme, a therapist, drove past and were smitten with its milky limestone façade and dark-rimmed windows and doors. Kourkouvis’s father-in-law, who happened to be at the job site, beckoned them inside for a tour. Later that night, “we called Marlene babbling, all drunken with lust for this house,” Power recounts, “and said we would buy it.”

Among the home’s attractions are a welcoming second-floor sitting area, leading to the master bedroom and three others; a blue-stone kitchen floor; and “a very relaxed feel to the whole house,” Power says. The buyers also were struck by Kourkouvis’s attention to qual-



ity. “Usually you look at hinges or electrical sockets, and the builder has put in the 37-cent version instead of the \$3 version,” Power says. “This guy apparently put in the \$10 version, so I’ve got nothing to worry about.”