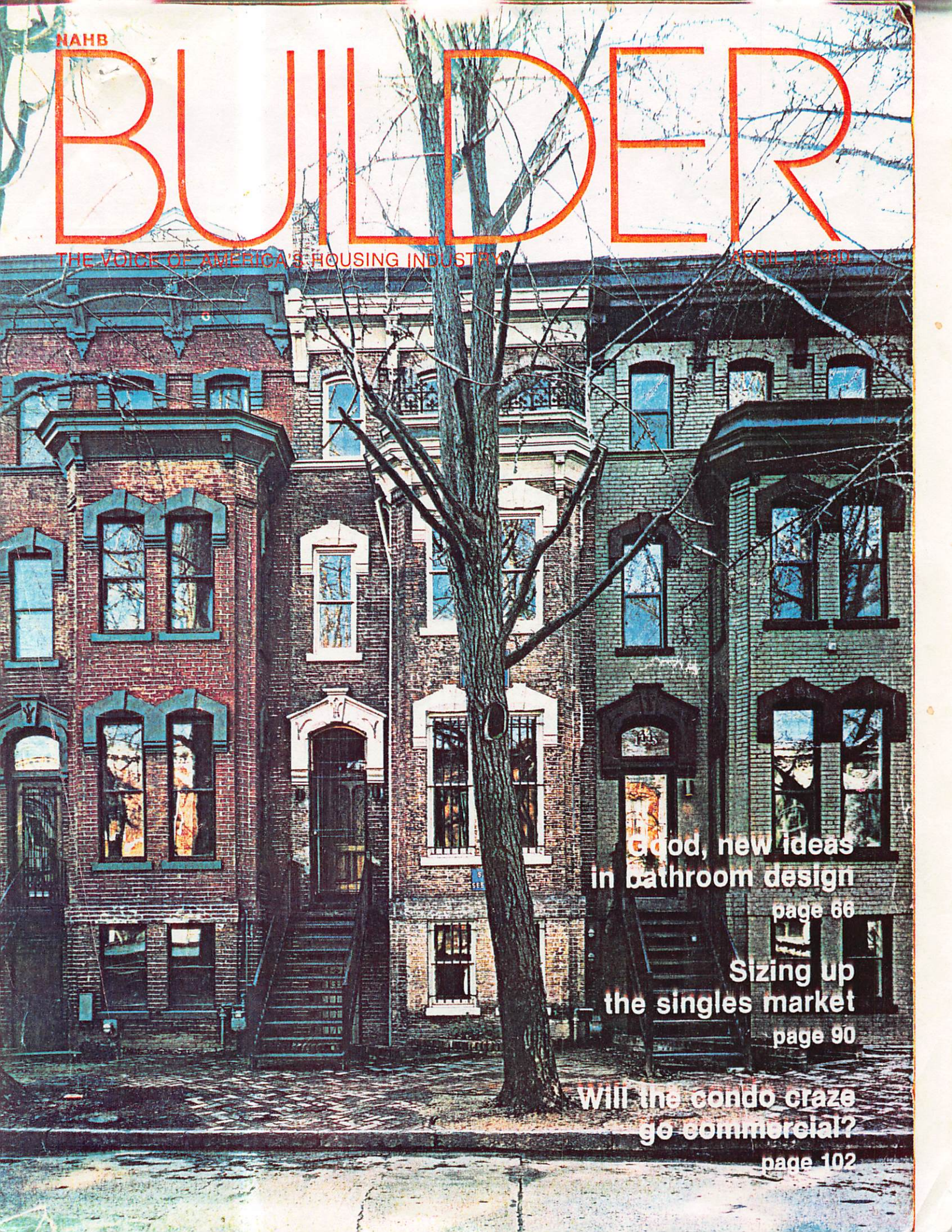


NAHB

BUILDER

THE VOICE OF AMERICA'S HOUSING INDUSTRY

APRIL 1, 1980



**Good, new ideas
in bathroom design**

page 66

**Sizing up
the singles market**

page 90

**Will the condo craze
go commercial?**

page 102

A tale of three townhouses

Wendy Adler Jordan
Managing Editor

From the tree-lined sidewalk, the three townhouses look much alike, just as they did when they were built in the 1890s. But behind the facade it's a different story.

Located in an area of inner-city Washington, D.C., that is coming back to life after years of neglect, the houses at 1444, 1446 and 1448 Swann Street, N.W., were purchased by three different buyers in 1977 and 1978 when all three were nothing but brick shells. Each buyer filled in the shell with a house to meet specific design requirements. The results are a dramatic example of the many choices open to a builder rehabilitating an old house.

The tall, narrow townhouses were dark

and restricted in space. Designing for an affluent, young professional profile, each used skylights, balconies, patios and open interior spaces for light, flexible use and a sense of greater size. Each buyer opted for some traditional elements—fireplaces, wood floors—blended with some that are strikingly modern. Each buyer put custom work and quality materials into his house. And each house has a one-bedroom English basement rental unit. There the similarity ends.

Washington-based renovation architect Douglas Garriott designed the 1448 Swann Street (photos pages 82-83) rehabilitation for Werner Minshall to resell. Minshall, who lives on Swann Street in another renovated house, pur-

Front and rear "before" views of the three run-down Swann Street townhouses (right) contrast with the elegant front and distinctive rear facades of the houses after rehabilitation (far right).



Photos: Jeffrey Shulman

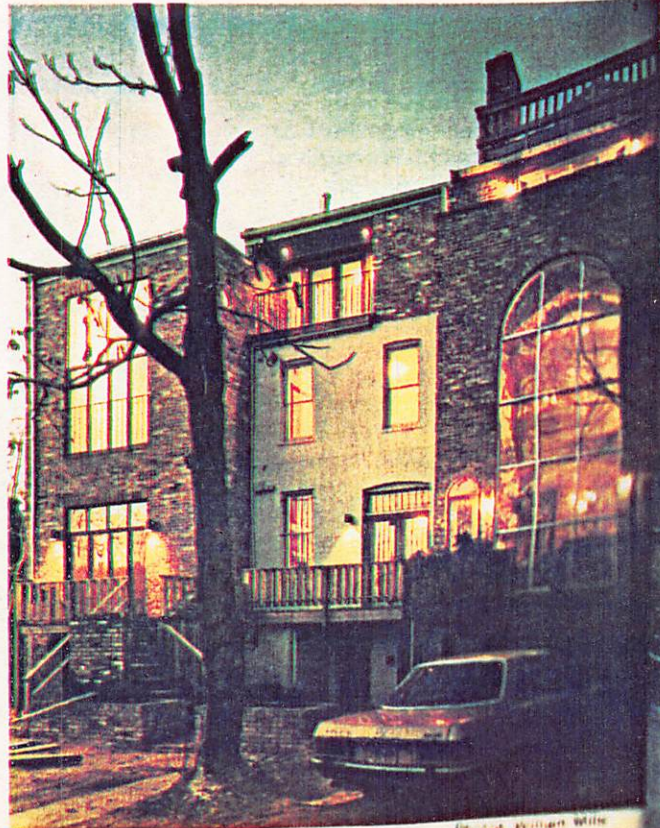


Photo: Wilma Wink

1446 Swann Street

custom detailing and handwork, said Linda Hart, wife of builder Steven Hart. They view the house as "outstanding and unusual, and no one says it isn't worth the price."

1446 has a sitting room-dining room on the first floor, with a brick column fireplace. The kitchen, equipped with luxury appliances, and a breakfast room are in the rear. A bedroom and living room, with fireplace, are on the second floor, and two more bedrooms are on the third floor. The third floor back bedroom has a balcony and also opens over the stairwell, with an oak railing and panel doors that can close off the room for privacy.

The house has a skylit central stairwell, a redwood deck and a redwood balcony off the bedroom suite. Floors are oak and ceramic tile.

Hart, a sculptor, worked in angular, geometric shapes to form dropped ceiling areas and stairway. He designed the banisters and oak trim for baseboards, door frames, and backing for light fixtures. Oak Grove Design of Brookeville, Md., made them. High, narrow Victorian-style windows were custom made.

ABC News makeup designer and theatrical consultant John Mastriani designed the rehabilitation of 1444 Swann Street (photos pages 86-87) for his own residence, and did most of the work himself, with the help of his father. He bought the house in 1978 for \$60,000 and spent \$70,000 on the rehabilitation.

Mastriani's plan was to gain as much light as possible and to use undisguised building materials. Details are in the Art Deco style. The house has been labeled High-Tech Deco.

The interior walls of the 15 by 44-foot house are bare brick. Exposed duct work is painted and treated as part of the design.

To give a sense of spaciousness, Mastriani accented the vertical and the diagonal in the design. Rising 33 feet through the center of the house is a black



Barefoot and Hart designed the 1446 Swann Street rehab. The house has a kitchen with counter opening into breakfast room (left), dining room with brick fireplace (below), third floor bedroom that opens to stairwell (bottom left), double doors to redwood deck (bottom right) and skylighted stairwell with oak stairs and banisters (right).

