Renovations to Public Spaces of The Crest at Congressional Plaza

Rockville MD

PROBLEM:
The owners of this eight-year old courtyard-focused housing complex knew they had problems. The entire public space was devoted to an over-sized pool, only open one quarter of the year. The lobby/lounge had no corresponding outdoor space to spill out to in nice weather, and the lobby was not organized to encourage interaction among residents.

Ground floor apartments had windows opening directly to the pool court, affording no privacy for the occupants of those units, and when the pool was closed, there was no outdoor space where residents could socialize.
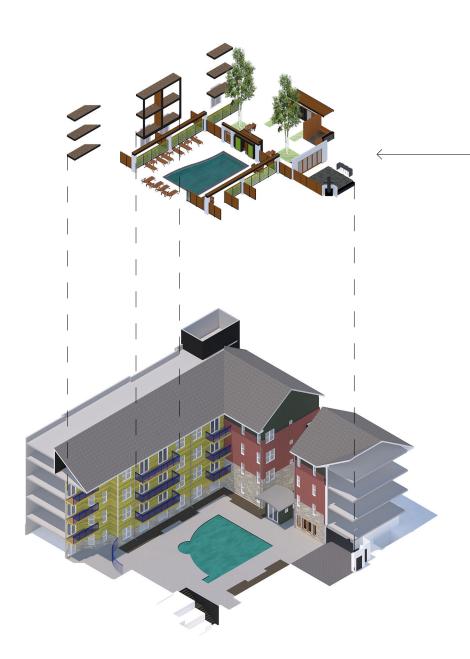
SOLUTION:
By shrinking the pool and its dedicated fence-enclosed terrace, communal outdoor space could be created off the renovated lobby and private gardens provided for all the ground floor units facing the courtyard.
The only modifications to the building itself was a new, more subtle color scheme, and the clustering of balconies into larger-scaled figures to give hierarchy to the courtyard facades, and privacy to adjacent balconies.

White-painted brick piers with steel lintels are infilled with ipe fencing, forming a common language of materials used throughout. Fences facing the pool are open-wire green screens planted for privacy and visual warmth.

What had been one, big undifferentiated space, devoted entirely to a seasonal use, is now 12 separately defined spaces ranging in function from private to semi-public to public.
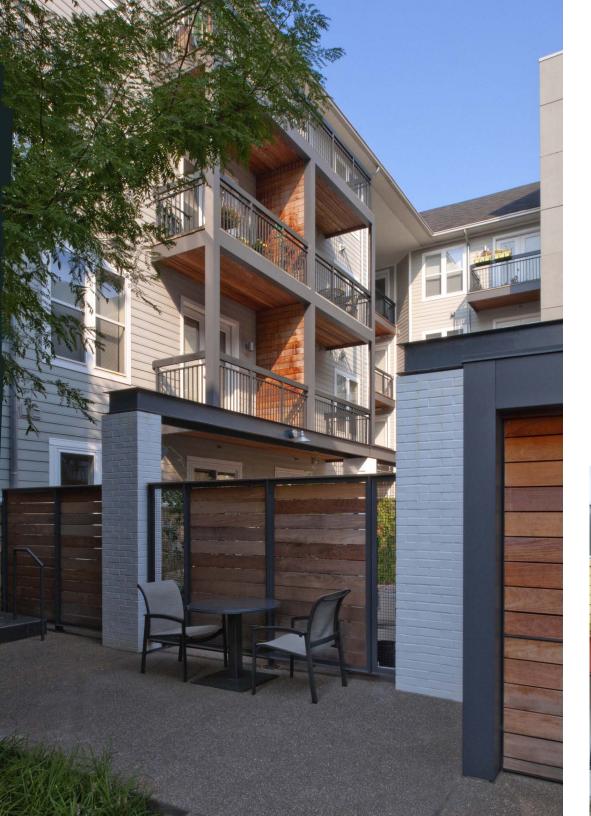
BEFORE

New architectural elements placed to subdivide existing courtyard into multiple private and public spaces

Existing

New

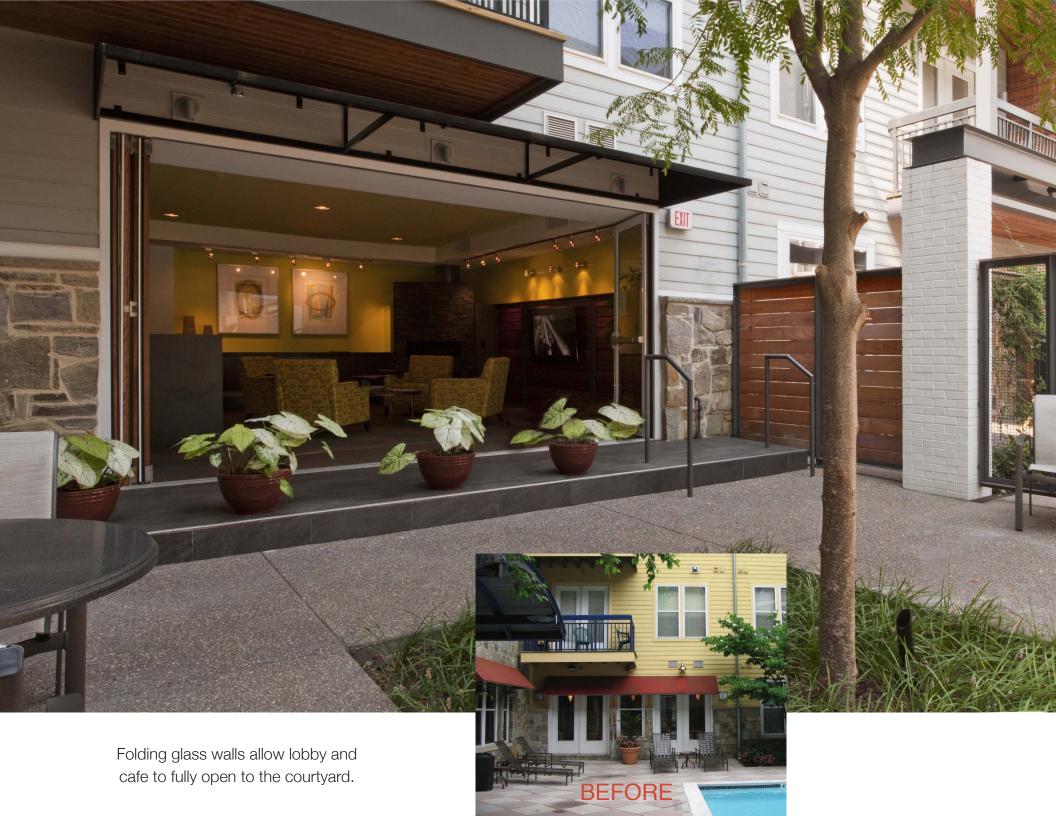Elements and materials of the garden structures are extended upward on to the facades.
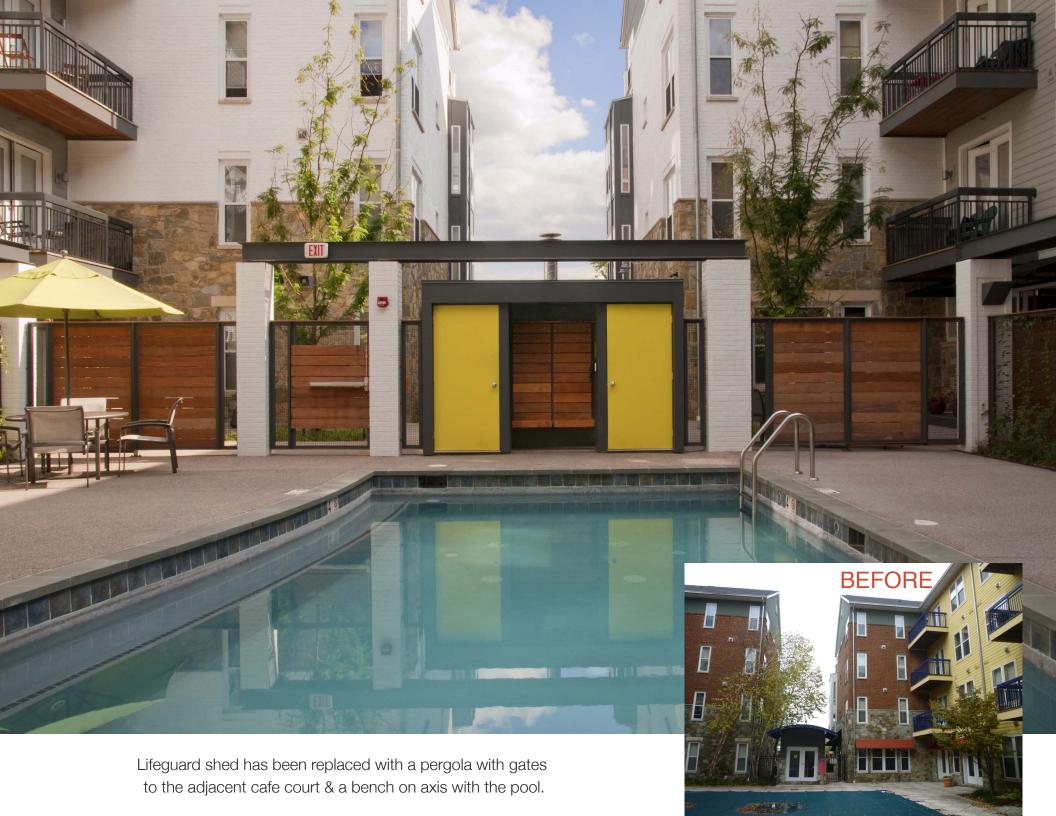
BEFORE

Original closed lounge area is now opened to both the lobby and to a new courtyard, and repurposed as a cafe.

BEFORE

A new outdoor space, accessible even when the pool is closed, opens from the cafe and lobby.

BEFORE

Folding glass walls allow lobby and
cafe to fully open to the courtyard.

BEFORE

Lifeguard shed has been replaced with a pergola with gates to the adjacent cafe court & a bench on axis with the pool.

Ground-floor unit windows that previously opened directly to the pool terrace are now French doors that open into private garden spaces.

Horizontal balconies with no privacy between adjacent units have been divided and framed to make loggias for each apartment.

BEFORE

POOL COURT

CAFE COURT

Entry Court

BEFORE