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A stunning new home in Spring Garden embodies **WayBar Development's** commitment to elevating the luxury single-family home market in Philadelphia.

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by **Matt Cosentino**

Colin Conway (left)
and Robin Barua,
co-founders of WayBar
Development, at their
property on Wilcox
Street in Philadelphia



Building on a Grand Vision

A STUNNING NEW HOME IN SPRING GARDEN EMBODIES **WAYBAR DEVELOPMENT'S** COMMITMENT TO ELEVATING THE LUXURY SINGLE-FAMILY HOME MARKET IN PHILADELPHIA.



WayBar Development

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At first glance, Robin Barua and Colin Conway seem quite dissimilar. Dig a little deeper, however, and it's easy to see how their shared values have helped their joint venture—WayBar Development, a burgeoning real estate investment firm behind an array of projects throughout Philadelphia—establish a stellar reputation just four years after its inception.

Barua is the organized one, bringing a sharp eye for design and more of a conservative approach to business decisions. Conway, on the other hand, is driven by an intense ambition to keep the company moving forward. Armed with those complementary skill sets, the co-founders are in perfect alignment when it comes to their mission for their company and the city they call home.

"We're yin and yang in the sense that we balance each other," Conway says. "It's been a fruitful business relationship and he's also my best friend, so he's easy to work with. We're very different in a lot of ways, but we share the same vision.

"We want to build quality homes, and we

want to build unique homes," he continues. "I was born and raised here, and Robin migrated to Philadelphia after college. This is home for both of us, and we're trying to slowly contribute to the landscape of Philadelphia and the skyline one project at a time."

Both seasoned Realtors who met while working for a local brokerage, Barua and Conway also share a background in construction. After gaining invaluable experience handling deals for investors, developers, and builders, they decided to branch out and oversee their own projects from start to finish.

WayBar—a play on both of their last names—was officially born in 2020. Since then, they have completed more than 30 projects and have close to 20 more in the works, ranging from condominiums to commercial mixed-use buildings. Their true niche is the luxury single-family market, a realm they aim to elevate with every house they bring to life.

One of their most recent homes is a four-bedroom, four-bathroom, 3,200-square-foot house at 1914 Wilcox Street in the city's Spring Garden neighborhood. The building, which previously consisted of a first-floor residence and a second-floor dance studio, underwent a complete transformation in the hands of WayBar Development.

"This is like our baby—it was one of our statement projects that we created," Conway says. "It's a 100-year-old carriage home, and we worked tirelessly with the Philadelphia Historical Commission to design and create something special."

The goal was to preserve the historical integrity of the home while also updating the interior and adding modern amenities. The end result: an elegant residence unlike any other in the city. Highlights include a custom-built grand spiral staircase, a gourmet chef's kitchen, a one-car garage with a beautiful mahogany door, and a third-story addition featuring a primary suite, an outdoor space, and a full rooftop deck.

The home would be perfect for empty nesters looking to return to the city, families with older children (the bedrooms are located on different floors), or those who love to entertain; during a grand opening party, the space hosted 85 people comfortably.

"Spring Garden is a family-friendly neighborhood close to a lot of the arts and history in Philadelphia," Barua says. "It's close to many museums and the Franklin Institute, it's close to the [Ben Franklin] Parkway when they have parades, and you're only five blocks north of Center City. It's an ideal location, whether you're a bachelor or bachelorette, or if you have a family. There are many activities to do there, and it's a very classy part of the city. As far as status level, I would compare it as right up there with Rittenhouse."

Although this particular home was among the most difficult to finish in the company's brief history, every project WayBar takes on requires extensive renovations. Conway and



Barua embrace the challenges that come with reviving even the most dilapidated structures. Conway's father, Philip, serves the company as head of construction. With 35 years of building experience under his belt, Philip has taught his son and Barua the importance of quality craftsmanship and doing things right the first time.

"One of our slogans is, 'Paving the way and raising the bar,'" Conway adds. "If you look at our portfolio, no two houses are the same, and the quality of construction that we bring is a little different than most. We're not building just for the ROI; we're building homes that we would want to live in ourselves. One of the rules we follow is that we want to build homes that will stand the test of time, and in 20 years we want people to recognize it as a WayBar Development house."

Their style is already catching on with others in the industry, as well as with potential buyers. Barua and Conway have strong relationships with other Realtors, who are quick to connect them with their clients because they know WayBar delivers on its promises.

"We eat, live, and breathe real estate, honestly," Barua says. "My hobbies are real estate and golf, and every conversation is about real estate. We really love what we do

and we try to keep elevating ourselves and try to do the next big thing. We strive to build a good product with a great design that is efficient, and nothing brings us more joy than having happy homeowners.

"Our clients are always willing to show off their homes to potential buyers, and I think that speaks volumes for our company," he continues. "The only thing that really matters at the end of the day is your reputation, and we take that very seriously."

WayBar has another new listing at 2023 Spring Garden Street; the 4,000-square-foot property has four bedrooms, five baths, and a 60-foot rear yard with landscaping and hardscaping that is hard to find in the city. Projects on the horizon include a residential boutique hotel above commercial space at 11th and Walnut streets, and a similar endeavor in Old City.

"We're a younger company, but there are many more projects in the pipeline," Conway adds. "We have a lot of unique ones coming up, and this is just the beginning. We take pride in what we do. We're young, we're hungry, and we want to keep pushing the envelope. Each project is a new challenge, and we take on challenges with open arms. There's never a problem and always a solution." ■