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ARCHITECTURE

## PERFECT PLOT

PSD RECREATES A SHINGLE-STYLE COMPOUND ON CAPE COD THAT FITS THE LANDSCAPE.

BY NANCY A. RUHLING  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRET MORGAN

PSD reimagines a Cape Cod Shingle-Style residence with playful architectural details and a stronger connection to its harborfront setting. Twin turret-inspired towers and a gracious new entry sequence create a dramatic sense of arrival while honoring the home's coastal character.



**The existing shingle-style house on Cape Cod** was in an awkward position, through no fault of its own. Years ago, there had been another house, on a separate plot, that sat between it and the street.

But when that house was torn down and new owners took up residence in the existing one, they decided that some major changes were in order to make it fit their needs and the spectacular harbor and golf course location.

They commissioned Cape Cod-based Polhemus Savery DaSilva Architects Builders (PSD), a firm they had worked with on two previous projects, to add a pool, a guest house that serves as a pool house and entertainment hub, a family room, and two bedrooms.

Their requests allowed John DaSilva, FAIA, architect and design principal of PSD, and the PSD team to expand upon their ideas, creating a new statement look for the home that makes the best use of the allotted space.

As it does with much of its work, the firm, which was the architect, builder, and landscape architect for the project, took a playful and whimsical approach.

“We’re serious about our design work, but we hope it doesn’t take itself too seriously,” DaSilva says.

The redesign started with the front entrance, which had been inconveniently located around the corner of the house. It was moved front and center, allowing the old entrance to become a porch off the new family room and eliminating what had been street-facing garage doors.



Thoughtful architectural interventions—from sculptural lighting to integrated built-ins—bring warmth, whimsy, and functionality to everyday living.

The drive was reoriented to create a dramatic sense of arrival that culminates with a circular turnaround that curves around a grassy space.

The three-car garage was incorporated discreetly into the new guest house, which attaches to the main residence via a covered veranda and includes fun accents such as a porthole-like window that sheds light on the interior stairwell.

Twin towers were added to each side of a new front gable. The first floor of one is a mudroom with beautifully integrated built-ins; the other, which is appointed with window seats, serves as the front entrance.

The most distinctive features of the makeover are the dual sets of “carpenter” columns PSD designed to bookend the entry porch that sits under the front gable.

“I call them carpenter columns because they look like they could easily be created by a carpenter,” DaSilva says. “They are a representation of classical columns rather than a recreation. They are very large so they have impact when seen from the street. They are scaled more to the approach than to the house itself.”

The columns read as two-dimensional architectural elements and wrap around the sides of the porch so that only one and half are visible from each side of the front.

“They also function as segments of a wall,” DaSilva says. “They add an aesthetic statement that makes the house unique and fun but not outrageous.”

The porch interior is clad in vertical boards to signify that it’s a transitional, indoor-outdoor space distinct from the rest of the shingle-sided home.

The material choice, DaSilva says, “is half-way between exterior shingles and interior plaster.”

The new family room, which has a wall of sliding glass doors, is another indoor-outdoor space. Its porch, the home’s original entry, has an excellent view of the harbor and the golf course.

Inside, the PSD team added architectural elements, including millwork, moldings, and ceiling coffers.

The primary suite was reconfigured with a new layout that takes in the views and creates a more comfortable setting.



Indoor-outdoor living takes center stage with expansive glass doors, layered textures, and relaxed interiors designed for gathering and entertaining.

“We removed the fireplace because it was located in the best spot for the bed,” DaSilva says. “The room now has a more appropriate bed wall, facing the balcony.”

The interiors by Wendy Callahan, whose

eponymous firm is based in Duxbury, are calm and casual, designed to work hand-in-hand with the architecture.

The color palette, serene blues and greens, subtly reflects the water and leads the eye to

the views. Spots of bolder hues, such as the large green leaf fabric in the game room, are strategically sited.

“The clients, who like to entertain, wanted everything to be family-friendly,” she says.

This was particularly important in the pool house, where the blue sofas are upholstered in a Sunbrella fabric that welcomes wet bathing suits, and the dining chairs are clad in vinyl.

Echoing the house’s new front columns, whimsical touches, such as the playful pufferfish wallpaper in the laundry room and the curved teal headboards of the twin beds in one of the guest bedrooms, provide a proper poke at convention.

And the guest bedroom in the tower of the main house throws formality aside with a neutral palm-leaf wallpaper, a rope chandelier and a raffia desk chair and headboard.

The landscape was significantly reworked, led by PSD’s senior landscape architect Rob Calderaro.

The biggest challenge was locating a full-size pool so that it and the guest house capture water views. The solution, which allows easy social flow between the guest house playroom and the pool terrace, is based on the geometry of the towers and the new wing.

This newly imagined house, inside and out, is living the best life. ♦



Soft coastal hues, playful materials, and reimagined landscaping complete the transformation of this Cape Cod compound into a serene family retreat.

The game room is flooded with natural light. The twin bedroom is finished in blue accents.

