

ADDRESS

Historic Cape home gets contemporary makeover

By Regina Cole Globe Correspondent, May 13, 2016, 4:02 p.m.



On the outside, the Greek Revival house is sweetly traditional. The gabled front, clearly the original section likely dating to the 1820s, displays the hallmarks of the Greek Revival style: pilaster corner boards, a fluted door surround, transom and sidelights around the entry door. The rear addition is plainer but also of the 19th century. A carved plaque in the peak proclaims the home's name, Time Out.



Time Out, neither grand nor imposing, is nonetheless an exemplar of vernacular, or colloquial, style. The 3,344-square-foot house is an intrinsic element in Chatham's Old Village Historic District and the winner of a 2015 Chatham Preservation Award. Clad in white-cedar shingles, Cape Cod's house siding of choice, it faces the water across a narrow street, part of a close-built collection of homes dating from about 1730 to the 20th century. The neighborhood personifies the unpretentious but authentic historic charm that draws visitors to the Cape.

The home's Greek Revival style is important to a Chatham village steeped in history. The renovation restored historic architectural elements to the house's front and removed a series of telescoping rear additions, replacing them with a two-story ell. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS

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The interior, however, is of today. Behind the carefully restored facade is a very contemporary house with features desired by homeowners now: a superbly outfitted kitchen that flows into the dining and living rooms in an open floor plan, a practical mudroom and adjoining bath just inside the back door, a home office tucked into a quiet corner close to the action, a basement given over to playing children. The decor incorporates natural wood, stone, rattan, driftwood, and the colors of the sand and the sea. Through the windows are drop-dead gorgeous views of Chatham Harbor Inlet.



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Time Out is a piece of the past, its Greek Revival style important to a village steeped in history. It is also the newly renovated four-bedroom vacation home of a young family.

In college, [Julie Stein](#), an interior designer based in Wilton, Conn., became friends with the lady of the house, a cofounder of Victress Capital, an investment firm focused on women-owned businesses.

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“They bought this to be their vacation home in 2009,” Stein said. “It’s a perfect spot for them. They can walk downtown and to the beach. And, the house came with a perfect name.

“For four summers, they lived in the house as it was, but then she called me for help. They wanted to turn an awkward layout into a contemporary, open one with a big focus on the views.”

The homeowners turned to [Polhemus Savery DaSilva Architects Builders](#), a Cape Cod firm with a long history of working in historic districts.

John DaSilva, design principal of the architecture and construction firm, calls the design of the house “bar and gable,” pointing to its popularity as a vernacular building form on the Cape. He oversaw an ambitious project that ended in late 2014; it restored historic architectural elements to the house’s front and removed a series of telescoping rear additions, replacing them with a two-story ell. The original front section of the home now houses the kitchen, dining room, home office, and, upstairs, a master suite. On the first floor, the new rear section holds the living room, a sitting room, the stair hall, and a guest bedroom while also providing easy access to the backyard. Upstairs are children’s bedrooms.

“It’s complex to transform a historic house for modern living,” DaSilva said, pointing out that starting fresh is usually much easier and sometimes even less expensive. “To begin, we lifted up the old house, built a new foundation underneath, and set it back down.

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“But while it was up in the air,” he recalled, “a big storm was forecast. We had to put it back down so the house would not get blown over.”

The structure was “rickety,” he said, noting that historic does not necessarily mean well built.

“While the original vernacular proportions and details were not beautifully executed, the house contributed significantly to the fabric of the village and was a protected historic structure,” he said. “A sense of history was maintained for the public good.”

Historic district regulations generally govern a building’s exterior, leaving homeowners to renovate interiors as they wish.

Polhemus Savery DaSilva reused original framing and sheathing boards whenever possible, but the firm also introduced modern materials like spray-foam insulation and steel beams, which can carry the weight above the wide-open spaces of the kitchen and living room.

The front door now leads directly into the kitchen, which boasts two large islands and a six-burner gas stove crowned with a custom zinc vent hood. The honed-glass backsplash, rattan counter stools, and soft grayish blue on the walls speak of the beach. To the right is the dining room, also furnished with rattan, glass, and a pierced-resin chandelier that evokes coral.



The kitchen has two large islands and a six-burner gas stove crowned with a custom zinc vent hood. The pendant lights are from Simon Pearce. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS

“We wanted a seaside feel without going overboard with shells, et cetera,” Stein said. “The interior is comfortable and heavily textured but not busy. And while there are pops of color, we look toward the outside for color inspiration.”

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Like the kitchen, the dining room has wooden shutters at the bottoms of the east-facing windows. They provide privacy without blocking light or views. The living room is at the center of the house, open to the kitchen and dining room, while French doors lead out to the side yard. The wood-burning fireplace is tucked into a corner. Above the seating, butted boards applied to the ceiling in a geometric pattern are painted a high-gloss white.

“With the open plan, the ceiling is a large, expansive, flat surface,” Stein explained. “The pattern adds interest to the ceiling, defines the space, and cozies things up.”

A side door near the kitchen accesses the mudroom; at the rear of the house, a pair of French doors in the sitting room open to an outdoor living space paved with flagstone and furnished with a spa, shade umbrella, and lounging and dining furniture.

The process of redesigning the interior added a few inches of ceiling height to first-floor spaces and took them from the master bedroom,



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where a newly peaked ceiling (thanks to space stolen from the attic) would compensate. As a result, three windows facing the water in the gable's peak are lower than you would normally see today. Their placement, however, was driven by exterior forces. Historic-district zoning ordinances stipulated that the new room configurations had to incorporate the front facade's original window locations and proportions.

With the same fealty to history, the new rear addition is only seamless on the inside: DaSilva's exterior design makes it clear that this is a later section of the house.



The mudroom just inside the back door. Polhemus Savery DaSilva Architects Builders custom built the cabinets, the towels were a gift from a friend to the homeowner, and the fabric on the bench is from Schumacher. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS

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“It represents two local building traditions,” he said. “The front is a more detailed and formal Greek Revival section that represents the sea captain's vernacular, while the plainer rear section represents the fisherman's vernacular.”

Both he and Stein point to this as a great marriage of historic preservation and summer vacation.

“The great thing about vacation and second houses,” Stein explained, “is that they free you up to collaborate with the clients to create exactly the environment where they will feel comfortable relaxing with family and friends.”

“This house was designed for a young family as they live today,” DaSilva said. “We had to devise a way to make this the perfect house for them while at the same time retaining its historic lineage.”

BEFORE



The home likely dates to the 1820s. POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



The 3,344-square-foot house is an intrinsic element in Chatham's Old Village Historic District. POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



The design of the house is "bar and gable," a popular vernacular building form on the Cape. POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS





Clad in cedar shingles, Cape Cod's house siding of choice, the home faces the water across a narrow street, part of a close-built collection of properties dating from about 1730 to the 20th century. POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



The front door opened onto stairs. POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS





The kitchen. POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



Just off the front door. POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS

AFTER





The home received a 2015 Chatham Preservation Award. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



The new patio as viewed from the driveway. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS





The dining table and chairs are Kingsley-Bate, and the sectional and arm chairs are from RH. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



Behind the carefully restored facade is a very contemporary house with features homeowners desire now. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS AND BUILDERS



The coffee table in the living room is from Artesia, but it has a custom Silestone top. The sofa and chairs are from Lee Industries, the ottomans are custom upholstered in China Seas' "Nitik Grande" in Sky Navy, the rug is Kochi by Fibreworks, and the fireplace surround is soapstone. The hurricane lamps on the mantel are by Oomph, the sconces near the door are by The Urban Electric Co., and the lamp is by Oly Studio. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS





The sconces are from Visual Comfort & Co., the pillows are John Robshaw, the bed is by Oomph, and the side table is from Dunes and Duchess. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



The home has pops of color inspired by nature, as seen here in a half bathroom. The vanity was made by Zentique, the countertop is soapstone, the wallpaper is China Seas' "Seya" in Bali Blue, the mirror is from Serena & Lily, and the light is Currey & Co. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS





The home office is tucked in a corner of the house but close to the action. The furniture is from Design Workshop, the paint is Benjamin Moore's "Edgecomb Gray," and there is Phillip Jeffries sage grasscloth at the rear of the built-in, which was custom made by Polhemus Savery DaSilva Architects Builders. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



The original front section of the home now houses the kitchen, dining room, home office, and, upstairs, the master bedroom suite. The pierced-resin chandelier is from Oly Studio. The table is not available to the general public, but the bench is from Parc Monceau in Westport, Conn., the wallpaper is Phillip Jeffries' Japanese Paper Weave, the cabinets are by Roomscapes Luxury Design Center of Rockland, and the backsplash is AKDO's Fusion Vision glass and marble mix. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



The fabric on the chair pillows is Madeline Weinrib, the sofa pillows are by Ryan Studio and John Robshaw, the driftwood table is from Oomph, and the stair runner is Patterson Flynn Martin. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS





The kitchen has two large islands and a six-burner gas stove crowned with a custom zinc vent hood. The pendant lights are from Simon Pearce. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



The kitchen's honed-glass backsplash, rattan counter stools, and soft-grayish-blue walls speak of the beach. The cabinets are by Roomscapes Luxury Design Center of Rockland, the lighting is by The Urban Electric Co., the countertops are a honed Calacatta marble, and the wood flooring, which runs throughout the first level, is 4-inch-wide white oak stained a custom dark shade. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS





The master bath vanities are by Roomscapes Luxury Design Center of Rockland; the flooring is white Thassos marble with a Blue Celeste-marble mosaic border; the countertops are Azul Neve marble; the sconces, by RH, are in polished nickel; and the benches, by Oly Studio, are clad in China Seas' "Rio." BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS



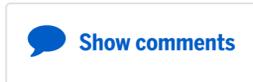


The trundle beds are by Maine Cottage, and the sconces are Serena & Lily. The rug has been discontinued. BRIAN VANDEN BRINK/POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA ARCHITECTS BUILDERS

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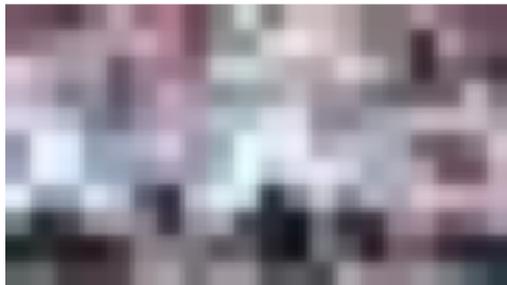
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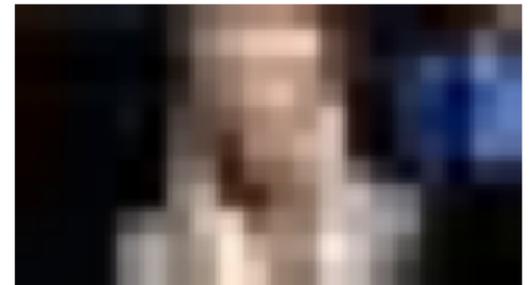
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Lots of people bought second homes on the Cape during the pandemic. This summer, that means more short-term rentals.

The Cape has nearly 18,000 short-term rentals on the market this summer, a 12 percent increase from April last year and nearly 50 percent more than March 2021, according to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue and the Cape Cod Commission.



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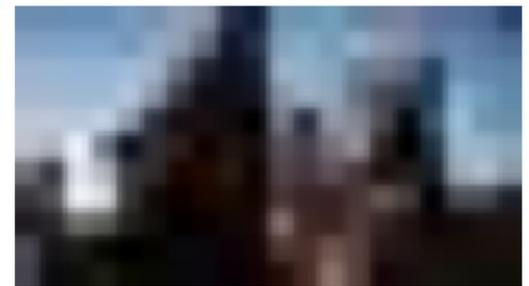
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