

THOUGHTFUL PLANNING and A CAREFUL BUILD by McPhee Associates create

# A NEW ANGLE ON Tradition



Written & Photographed by Roe Osborn

Construction by McPhee Associates

Above: The great room, with wide pine floors and a wall of windows and doors, is large enough to accommodate two distinct sitting areas; one for enjoying the fire and one for game playing and TV watching.

THIS YOUNG COUPLE HAD BEEN ESCAPING TO THE CAPE FOR YEARS and fell in love with the calm, cool waters and sandy beaches of Cape Cod Bay. When they decided to build a place of their own for their family, they had strong opinions of what they wanted in their new house, and the traditional Cape Cod look and feel was paramount in their wishes. With this in mind, they turned to Northside Design, in Yarmouth Port, and McPhee Associates of East Dennis, to design and build their new home.

## Classic, but with a new angle

The design they chose was the time-honored Cape-style, but with a slightly different approach. At one end of the house, the garage angles toward the road with a roof height shorter than the rest of the house. In fact, the last bay of the garage sits under its own shed roof as if an old-timer had built it as an afterthought to house a piece of machinery. The other end of the house steps back and down in two sections giving the house the “added-onto” look of an older, more established home. The angles and changes in the roofline add character to the façade of the house and help to break up the massive feel that houses such as this can have.

Another strategy employed to keep the exterior appearance of the home minimal was dropping the floor framing inside the foundation instead of letting it sit on top. “We lost around a foot in height using that



## a classic Cape home



strategy,” explained Rob McPhee, vice president of McPhee Associates. “And on the other side of the house it meant less steps down to the patio,” putting the indoor and outdoor living spaces closer to the same level.

On the side facing the bay, dormers raise the house to a full two stories in the style of a saltbox, creating space for a generous second-floor master suite and two bedrooms for the couple’s young children. Unique features on this side of the house include the two single-story rooms that jut out from the house. A large screened-in porch, with a deck overhead, extends the master bedroom suites on both the first and second floors. And at the opposite end of the house, a single-story gabled room angles off the kitchen to create an everyday eating area with a 280° view of the bay. Outside, these two rooms create a visual buffer that makes the patio in back of the house more private and intimate.

Top: A view of the front of the home shows the unique angles that were used to minimize the appearance of its grand scale. Bottom: The kitchen opens directly onto the stone terrace.

### Even the landscaping has that classic Cape feel

The couple’s desire for maintaining the Cape style in the design of their home extended to the landscape and outdoor areas as well. Instead of the usual decks that adorn many houses these days, they opted for a ground-level, flag-stone patio, which is much more in keeping with a Cape Cod home.

“Starboard Landscaping added wide planting beds that make the house nestle into its site,” said McPhee. “They planted three layers of mature plants that get progressively higher disguising the size of the house,” in addition to installing the patio, he said of the Cape-based company.





At left: An expansive lawn runs along the back of the home and offers the perfect place for a row of Adirondack chairs and gazing at the ocean.

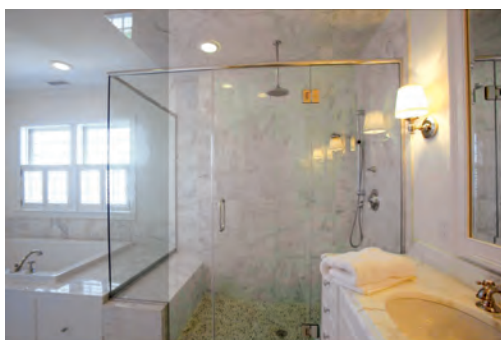
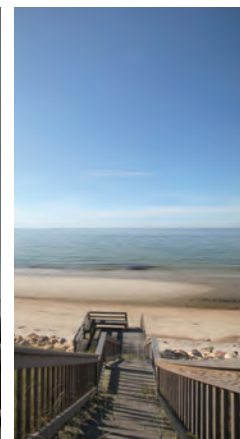
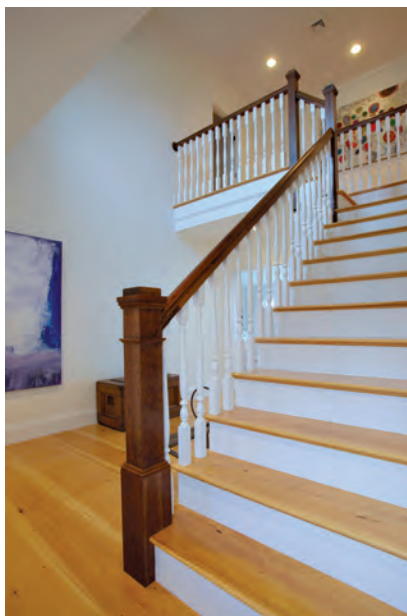
## Getting the interiors just right

Inside, the public areas of the house comprise most of the first floor, taking full advantage of the bay views. The homeowners wanted the same traditional Cape feel for the interiors as well. Standard twelve-over-twelve windows are trimmed with painted molding in a vernacular profile. The first floor spaces have customary flat ceilings, except for the eating nook with its cathedral ceiling and exposed beams. The kitchen is outfitted with simple cabinetry painted white and topped with black countertops in a natural material, again fitting the look and feel so often found in the area. The back wall of the kitchen that houses the stove is set at an angle to carry the angular theme of the exterior into the inside of the home.

The living room and family room of the house sit back-to-back in a single open area in the center of the house. Understated built-ins at either end of the room add both character and function to each space. A large television takes center stage in the family room with shelves and cupboards that hold games and activities. A fireplace is the focal point of the living room with shelves for books and display items flanking both sides. Natural wide-plank pine flooring ties together all the areas of the house in a nod to the barefoot beach-cottage vernacular.

## Going beyond the build phase

Not only was this house designed and constructed to fit into its site well, the house is built to take the brutal weather dished out by winters on Cape Cod Bay. "One storm broke the flag pole into three pieces," quipped McPhee. Their duties were not over when they handed the keys over to the homeowners. McPhee's company maintains and watches the property all year long. In addition to the usual duties of taking lawn furniture in and out, they remove and store the wooden steps leading down to the beach each winter, and make sure the house stays in great shape all year round and is ready for the summertime arrival of its more than happy owners. **HOME**



Clockwise from left: The master bath is a study in calm. The master bedroom is part of large suite separated from the busy household. The home's center staircase. The dining nook features a cathedral ceiling with exposed beams. Private steps lead to the private beach.



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