

Cape Cod *Charmer*



A FULL RENOVATION TURNS AN AGING CAPE INTO A REIMAGINED RESIDENCE ENJOYED BY THREE GENERATIONS.

BY **JENNIFER SPERRY** » PHOTOGRAPHS BY **AMBER JANE BARRICMAN**

"We wanted it to look like we were never there," says the architect of this renovation/addition project in Orleans. "We wanted it to look like the house was simply re-shingled and re-painted. That's what we were going for."



In the living room, McPhee Associates wrapped the existing dark ceiling beams in white poplar, finishing off the ceiling in between with six-inch V-groove paneling.

While the house hadn't been updated in some time, it was located on a quiet road on the coast of East Orleans, with views of Little Pleasant Bay in the near distance.

"It had this charm," recalls owner Sarah Lyn Kashou of her first impression. "We went to see it with our friend, architect Mike Tartamella, and told him we wanted to make it a beautiful new Cape while keeping its original charm intact."

Sarah Lyn and her husband, Peter, envisioned a welcoming, amenity-rich home, complete with a garage and in-law suite. Living in Wellesley outside Boston, the Kashous and their two teenage sons were looking to retreat to a quieter, more private setting. However, they also sought a neighborhood with four-season activity for Peter's mother, who would be in residence most of the year.

With Tartamella's assertion that he could upgrade the property without sacrificing character, the Kashous made the leap and brought on veteran builder McPhee Associates to construct the home. Tartamella, managing principal at Patrick Ahearn Architect, had worked with McPhee on Cape residences before. The owners embarked on a renovation/addition project to achieve their own slice of Cape Cod after nearly 20 years of staying in "every crack and corner" of the peninsula, notes Sarah Lyn.

The homeowners loved the c. 1950 Cape's feel: its small rooms, low ceilings, and dormers. "We wanted to avoid something super grand and new; we liked the cozy feel," says Sarah Lyn of the original section.

Tartamella managed to maintain key portions of the existing layout while providing the family's desired modern amenities. He transformed two front rooms (formerly bedrooms) into a den and bedroom suite respectively. The entry staircase remains (shiplap makes it feel fresh), as does the living room, complete with a converted gas fireplace. In place of the old kitchen, Tartamella delivered a dining room with French doors framing water views.

“We reinvented the interior; there are no more compartmentalized spaces. The layout enjoys lateral connectivity parallel to the water views,” describes the architect. With better flow through the main living spaces, the “update celebrates the way people live today,” he adds.

McPhee’s carpenters executed Tartamella’s architectural details—wainscoting, crown molding, V-groove paneling, and shiplap—flawlessly with quality craftsmanship. In place of the old wide-plank pine floors, McPhee installed light oak Sawyer Mason flooring.

“Our clients decided on a pre-engineered, prefinished floor system,” explains Rob McPhee, president of McPhee Associates, based in East Dennis. “It has a wood surface that can be sanded and refinished once or twice over a backing of plywood. It’s a practical, more stable way to install wide boards in moist environments.”

The kitchen marks the transition from existing structure to addition. Here, the architect took advantage of the lack of a second floor and vaulted the ceiling to the roof lines, giving the frequented space a light, airy, and contemporary feel. White on the custom cabinets and paneled ceiling keeps the atmosphere feeling clean and crisp, while oak on the island base and ceiling beams adds warmth.

“We did a lot of reframing and reworking undersized wood members,” says McPhee, who, since taking over the company reins from his father, upgraded its scope to a full-service design/build/maintenance firm (although they acted principally as builder on this home). “We repaired the foundation and replaced all the siding, trim, windows, and doors. We basically rebuilt this house from the inside out.

“A renovation like this takes time and patience and vision but it came out great,” continues the builder.

“The finished product is very respectful of the classic architecture that existed at the start.”

White cedar shingles, antique slate-colored roofing, granite steps, louvered shutters, and a cupola paint a convincing picture of Cape Cod style. A small wing off the living room was modified into the husband’s office, with French doors opening onto the rear deck.



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Rounding off the addition is a front-to-back mudroom and powder room, two-bay garage with finished space above, and in-law suite. The in-law suite reaches back towards Little Bay Harbor perpendicularly from the main volume of the house (hinging off the new mudroom) and culminates in a bay window. Its vaulted living room, complete with built-in wet bar, feels spacious and grand. A bedroom and full bath round out the comfortable living quarters.

Outside, the home was meant to look like the owners bought it and simply re-shingled and repainted. Using board-and-batten siding on the garage implies that it could have been a detached carriage house or barn incorporated into the structure at one time. "Changing materials isn't uncommon and helps break up the scale," notes Tartamella of the flourish.

This board-and-batten garage and mudroom entry lends the finished home a hint of modern farmhouse, which Sarah Lyn carried into her interiors (she has a design background). She worked closely with McPhee's design team to choose finishes, fixtures, and furnishings. From the start, she directed the home's aesthetic inside and out.

"We kept the exterior very traditional but strove for a more clean, more contemporary look inside. Traditional but elevated," summarizes Sarah Lyn of her vision.

RESOURCES

BUILDER: McPhee Associates of Cape Cod East Dennis, 508-385-2704, mcpheeassociatesinc.com

ARCHITECT: Patrick Ahearn Architect

CABINETS: Horgan Millwork

