

**WATER VIEWS AND EFFICIENT  
DESIGN COMBINE IN A FAMILY'S  
NEW DUXBURY HOME.**

# DOWN BY THE BAY

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS BERNSTEIN



The idea of building a home from the ground up can be daunting, especially when you consider all the little decisions that must be made along the way. It was even more challenging for a young couple who set out to tear down their existing Duxbury residence and replace it with a more efficient family friendly home—all while living abroad in Austria.

In 2006, the Boston-based couple returned to their Duxbury roots and purchased a small waterfront home overlooking Kingston Bay. While they loved the home's location, they knew that they would need more space as their family grew. When a job opportunity beckoned the family to move to Europe, the time seemed right to embark on a redesign.

Living just steps from the water's edge had its perks—like waking up to see boats quietly sailing across the bay and having a safe beach for the kids to enjoy—but it also meant the design team had to carefully negotiate zoning and environmental issues when building the new house. The project could have been a nightmare, but thanks to exhaustive research, planning and

constant communication between owners, architects, engineers, the general contractor, kitchen designer and others involved, it was a dream. Family members who lived nearby helped keep the couple well informed while they were away by running down to take photos of the progress and reporting back via Facetime.

Having an energy-efficient, sustainable design was important to the owners. With a master's degree in environmental management and sustainability, the wife sought advice about architectural firms from Marc Rosenbaum, an engineer and certified passive house consultant. He shared several names and the couple settled on Brown Lindquist Fenuccio & Raber Inc., who have offices in Plymouth and Yarmouth Port, based on the firm's experience designing energy-efficient projects.

"When you build a house, you want the most up-to-date information possible and we wanted this house as energy efficient as possible," she says. "If we had to cut back, we'd cut something else."

The resulting collaboration between the architects, principal Richard Fenuccio and project manager Tom Swensson, general contractor Shawn Dahlen produced a 2,400-square foot, three bedroom, two-and-a-half bath home that is so energy-efficient that the homeowners now earn credits on their electric bill nearly every month.

"This was a very interesting job that resulted in a tremendous amount of living area packed into an extremely small lot," says Dahlen. Extensive permitting and local review was required before a shovel even touched the ground.

The Shingle-style Gambrel was located in a flood plain, with saltmarsh wetland on either side. A new house was possible, but only within the existing footprint and a special permit was needed to expand upwards on an already non-conforming lot. Because it was new construction, the builders also had to meet exacting Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guidelines.

"They made it more conforming than it was, and with less impact on the environment," says the wife. The scale and style of the home—with its natural shingles and natural vertical siding designed to weather to a silvery grey—fit the neighborhood too.

"We got everything we wanted and more," she says. Amenities included a breakfast nook, a playroom over the garage, and an 8 x 10-foot screened porch with a deck above. Steel beams and concrete pilings raised the structure five feet above the existing grade and provided extra storage underneath.



(Far left) Old barn board was used to construct a custom sliding door for the powder room. (Left) Cam Snyder from Roomscapes in Rockland designed the kitchen and chose wood for the island and countertops.

A small deck was added off the master bathroom and an exposed brick chimney was incorporated into the décor of the master bedroom, adding color, texture and charm to the space.



To add character and gain a greater sense of space in the upstairs hallway, casement windows reclaimed from the original home were built into the walls of the two children's bedrooms letting in sunlight and permitting a parental peek into the rooms. An old workbench bought at Brimfield, which had been used as a second-floor vanity in the former home was cut down to become a powder room vanity. These small decorative touches helped personalize the space. "It was strange to be gone for the entire building process, and then walk in and have it feel like home," says the homeowner.

Dark reclaimed wood from the Cape was used for the floors and old barn board that came from Cambridge was used to construct a custom sliding door for the powder room.

Floor-to-ceiling steel doors with clear glass inserts surround the dining area and slide along tracks make it possible to close off the space without



blocking views of the ocean. An overhead light fixture above the table is crafted from pipefittings and three funnels was made by repurposed materials the couple bought in Brimfield.

Walls were painted a neutral "seashore palette," a shade the couple chose while in Austria. "Everything had to be picked so far in advance—hinges, everything—and that's where Tom Swensson was so incredibly helpful."

Cam Snyder from Roomscapes in Rockland designed the kitchen and chose wood for the island and countertops. The adjoining pantry features stainless steel shelving with magnetic, labeled spice tins that cling to the shelves so chefs can instantly identify ingredients.

An exposed brick chimney was incorporated into the décor of the master bedroom, adding color, texture and charm to the space.



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Overlooking Kingston Bay, the Dubuury home was designed to be energy-efficient and family friendly.

A half wall at the entrance to the master bedroom creates a sleeping porch atmosphere. Gazing out the large picture window at the foot of the bed is “like looking at living artwork, regardless of the weather,” says the homeowner.

Demolition began in August 2013 and the family moved in nine months later. “We are over the moon with the final product,” says the homeowner. “We already loved the location and were sad to tear down the old house, but this is better than we could ever have imagined.” 🍷

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