



Strong architectural details adorn the front portico. Dentil molding, Doric columns and classical urns help make up the design.

OPPOSITE Standing proud, an equine sculpture casts his watchful eye upon all those who enter.



MAKING A SWEEPING STATEMENT

The house was deceiving at first glance. Sitting proudly on a meticulously landscaped parcel of land, the traditional New England home looked as if had been there for years, having evolved and expanded over time perhaps, as many of the stately homes in this charming town have done. Its fine architectural detailing was quite apparent, serving as a testament to the high level of craftsmanship bestowed up it by its creators and reminiscent of earlier architectural gems produced by other well respected American master builders.

STORY BY KATIE KEATING

PHOTOS BY NEIL LANDINO




There's a sense of history and timelessness to the classic Connecticut colonial. Stone chimneys, crisp white drop-bead clapboard and a wood shingle roof are reminiscent of stately New England homes built by earlier master craftsmen. Mature trees and native plantings surround the well manicured two acre parcel.



Set on two acres, the narrow lot posed potential site challenges to the project due to the gently sloping nature of the property. Constructed by Jim Higgins and Foster Lyons of Greenwich based Coastal Point Construction, the home's main entrance makes a strong statement as you approach it measuring approximately fifty feet wide in the front. The rear portion of the house however, has been designed to step down and expand out back, conforming to both the narrow nature of the property and grade changes from the street level down to the lower portion of the lot. Fieldstone patios and well planned terraces spill out back and follow the sweeping contour of the land creating a natural progression from indoor to outdoor spaces. Granite fieldstone protects the walkout basement entrance and serves as a sturdy base for the family room and screened porch above. Stone chimneys rise to the sky creating symmetry and balance to the front facade of the house. Classical design elements such as a wood shingle roof and drop-bead clapboard painted white give the house a sense of timelessness and tradition. Doric columns arranged in two sets of three, stand tall at either side of the front portico creating a sense of enfilade as you enter the home.

You're greeted with a clever mix of classical architecture and "youthful transitional décor" as you step through the door. True plaster moldings run throughout the living and dining rooms while arched entryways allow passage from room to room. Raised paneling and a classical scroll detail embellish the main staircase as every step you take is softened by a carpet runner sporting a modern geometric design. Walnut flooring runs throughout the formal public spaces and has been stained in a rich dark tone. The wine cellar, media room, fitness room and full bath located on the lower level can be accessed via

A photograph of a library interior. The walls and trim are painted a deep navy blue. A large fireplace with a dark wood mantel is the central feature, with a fire burning inside. Above the mantel are five framed photographs of horses. To the right, a built-in bookshelf holds books and decorative items. A modern, dark wood chair with a woven seat and a patterned pillow is in the foreground. A red side table is visible on the right. The floor has a patterned rug.

In the library, walls and trim have been painted in "Ebony King" by Benjamin Moore. The rich, saturated color highlights the architecture which according to Gibson, "dictated the color choices for the home's interiors". Pops of orange, mercury glass and a custom carpet add pizzazz to the rich textures in this space.





Architectural art and sculpture seen in select spaces add visual interest and further the tone set by Coastal Point's attention to detail in their classically inspired millwork.

stairs within the two story stair hall. Back stairs lead to a laundry room and then on to the kitchen. "There's nearly a ten foot drop from the first floor to the lower elevation", said Higgins.

Interior designer, Gary Gibson stated "that it was the architecture that drove the colors of the home's interiors" and that having worked on previous projects with the homeowner, he had a good understanding of what his client wanted. "They loved the architecture which we complemented with color, texture and fine finishes". "Our task was to create a fresh, sexy, comfortable environment, very much suiting the client." The biggest challenge he faced however, was the tight time frame in which to complete the project; a short six months.

A rich color palette in shades of gray

and taupe prevails throughout the home. Crisp white moldings frame much of the space, accenting the classical nature of the exquisite architectural details in the home. Gibson has blended a whimsical mix of lighting fixtures to illuminate each room. Suspended crystal globes appear like falling drops of water while a Fortuny silk chandelier adds a bit of Asian flare above the contemporary dining room table. Some fixtures seem juxtaposed against the backdrop of traditional architecture adding drama and surprise to many of the rooms. With young children and canine members of the family running about the house, Gibson had to keep function and comfort foremost in the design of each space. In the family room; earthy tones, durable chenille sofas and mohair club chairs provide a homey yet hearty area

for family down time. The sturdy wood coffee table adds an organic element to the grouping and unifies the seating arrangement around it. Windows have been dressed in Cascade Stripe by Larsen while a bead board finish adds depth and interest to the back of the built-in bookcases. Illuminating the double height space is a rustic antler style chandelier from Paul Ferrante. Off the family room, a grand stone fireplace anchors a well proportioned screened porch offering seasonal living and entertaining space during warmer months.

While some of the homeowner's existing pieces were able to be reupholstered and repurposed, Gibson filled in and accented with many new pieces, both modern and vintage finds that add pops of color and sparkle throughout. In the powder room



Historically inspired spaces have been dressed with a “youthful transitional” flare. A contemporary stair runner with strong geometric lines plays artful homage to the classical architecture surrounding it.

OPPOSITE Restrained elegance permeates throughout the living room. Playful references to architectural elements are seen in the both art and sculpture form.

an antique chest finds new life as a glamorous vanity coexisting quite happily with modern sconces and a zebra grass wall covering from Phillip Jeffries. Architectural art and sculpture seen in select spaces add visual interest and further the tone set by Coastal Point’s attention to detail in their classically inspired millwork. In the living room, fluted columns support framed artwork mixing well with a less formal wood and steel coffee table and contemporary style sofa to convey a feeling of restrained elegance. Larsen fabric, a “go-to” choice for the designer, has been used for the living room drapery panels and is seen again in other patterns in some of the other rooms, including the library and kitchen, and in the dining room as upholstery for the dining chairs. Quarter sawn oak was used in the library and the room has been

painted in its entirety in “Ebony King” by Benjamin Moore. As the rich stone surround reflects the warm glow of a roaring fire one’s prompted to ask if the beautifully detailed veining within the surround set the stage from which the room’s décor sprang to life. Many of the carpets used throughout the home are custom, some being designs by Madeleine Weintib. The owner’s love of all things equine is apparent in the creative mix of artwork scattered throughout the home, both in print and sculpture form.

The luxurious master bedroom offers sanctuary at the end of a busy day. A soothing gray palette punctuated by crisp white trim accentuates the architecture and sets the tone for dreamy fabrics and comfortable furnishings. Drapery fabric by Jim Thompson in a shade aptly named;





ABOVE Glazed custom cabinetry, granite counter surfaces and warm wood floors set the stage in this light filled kitchen. A Larsen plaid dresses the French doors leading to the generous patio beyond.

RIGHT Set below a pergola, this outdoor living room provides ample seating for a warm weather get together.

OPPOSITE Form and function were foremost in Gibson's mind. With children and canine members of the family running throughout, fabrics and furnishings had to be comfortable, functional and above all else, fresh.





True plaster moldings run throughout the living and dining rooms. In the dining room, a raised panel detail and fluting along the fireplace mantel are further examples of the many architectural embellishments making up the design of home. In the dining room, a Fortuny silk chandelier contributes a bid of Asian flavor to a whimsical collection of artifacts. The over-scaled mirror adds drama, echoing the fragmented pattern of the Larsen fabric on the dining chairs.



"Evening Sun" softens the lines between the saturated wall color and clean white window trim. In the master bath pale gray walls painted in "Shimmering Stone" by Farrow and Ball combine with sleek marble surfaces to create a lighter spa like atmosphere. The scrolling detail in the walk-in shower has been repeated again in the inlaid marble "carpet" in front of the tub. Natural woven shades adorn the windows. A large walk in cedar closet on the third floor offers ample storage space and is accented by the porthole window seen on the front of the house.

Professional style appliances, glazed custom cabinetry and natural stone surfaces make up the design in the well equipped kitchen. The classically inspired cabinetry boasts intricate detailing, glass front doors and in some areas furniture like features. The L-shaped counter offers plenty of room for prep, serving and casual dining. In the breakfast area, a round pedestal dining table provides seating for four. A Larsen plaid in blues and browns frames French doors which lead out to the generous blue stone patio in back. Measuring approximately one thousand square feet it allows for multiple seating arrangements, one of which is covered by a pergola. Mr. Higgins has designed all the masonry and landscaping for the project, some of which include raised beds trimmed in stone containing roses, boxwood and hydrangea. Flowering pear trees dot the front offering flowery blooms in spring.

A noble steed constructed of twig stands guard outside this timeless home. He welcomes visitors and keeps careful watch upon the sweeping property that surrounds him. He does not speak of what waits for you inside. For the surprise is yours to savor and enjoy for years to come. ■

Katje Keating is an interior designer and freelance writer and can be reached at 203.339.5820 or katjkeating@yahoo.com



RESOURCES

Coastal Point Construction
Foster Lyons
James Higgins
108 River Road
Cos Cob, CT 06807
203.661.1107
coastalpoint.com

Interior Design
Gibson
Gary Gibson
7350 Beverly Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90036
323.934.4218
garygibson.com

The house spills out naturally following the contour of the narrow property. Field stone patios give way to well planned terraces that have been built into the gently sweeping land. The generous patio measures approximately one thousand square feet and supports several seating and entertainment areas.

Fieldstone walls define the outdoor terraces and provide a sturdy base for rows of hydrangea, boxwood and roses. All landscape and masonry details were designed by Jim Higgins of Coastal Point.

