



POLHEMUS SAVERY DASILVA BUILDERS DESIGNERS

Sustainable architecture on Cape Cod

By John R. DaSilva, AIA

Weathered wood, gabled roofs and rugged construction are as much a part of Cape Cod as the special quality of light, the smell of pine needles and the sound of the surf. Cape Cod has a rich architectural past that has not always been respected, but still predominates. As the architects and builders of Polhemus Savery DaSilva – an architect-led, design-driven, design/build firm based on Cape Cod – we are entrusted with contributing to that heritage when we design and build new houses, and the stewardship of that heritage when we alter old ones.

Our goal is to make valuable and sustainable improvements – on aesthetic, functional and environmental grounds – while preserving what is good about what is already here. We are fortunate to have clients who agree with our values and make responsible decisions.

Increasingly, our clients choose to renovate and expand rather than replace older homes. As creative professionals, we find this type of work to be as exciting as new homes, but the challenges and rewards can be quite different. We find it very gratifying to be able to fix what is wrong and enhance what is right when altering older buildings. Sometimes the scope of these projects is quite simple; and sometimes it is even more complex than building new.

The approximately 100 addition/renovation projects we have done range from the transformation of single rooms through custom-made furniture to the complete re-making of historic buildings, where the character was beloved, but the structure was depleted. We have worked throughout Cape Cod with historical houses built in all periods from the 18th century to today. We have renovated and expanded Capes, colonials, shingle-style mansions, Victorians, ranches and contemporaries. In recent years we have even altered several of our own projects originally done years ago for clients whose needs have changed over the years.

Sustainable design and construction for our region must begin with the desire to be responsible toward both the environment and historical heritage. Sometimes the best way to build sustainably is to not build something new at all, but to renovate something old. This saves the latent energy within the existing construction, minimizes waste and maximizes reuse of materials. In a region where change is best when thoughtful and deliberate, we believe our approach to renovations and additions insures positive and sustainable change.

Polhemus Savery DaSilva Architects Builders (www.psdab.com) is an architecture, interior design and construction firm with offices in the Cape Cod Villages of Chatham and Osterville. You can contact them at 508-945-4500.

