

New England HOME CT

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Fresh Take

Alisberg Parker Architects puts their own twist on the colonial vernacular.

BY ALYSSA BIRD

Seamlessly integrating a new structure into a historic neighborhood is easier said than done, but Alisberg Parker Architects was up for the challenge. When a pair of empty nesters looking to downsize contacted the firm, they planned to simply renovate their existing 1890s



ABOVE: Alisberg Parker Architects designed a colonial-inspired house to blend with the surrounding neighborhood, but thoughtful exterior details—including a sloped overhang and a dark entry—announce the property's distinctive contemporary flair. **LEFT:** Unlike a traditional colonial, the interiors of this newly constructed residence are airy and open; the house still enjoys a small entry vestibule thanks to a custom slatted-wood divider that conceals the living area.

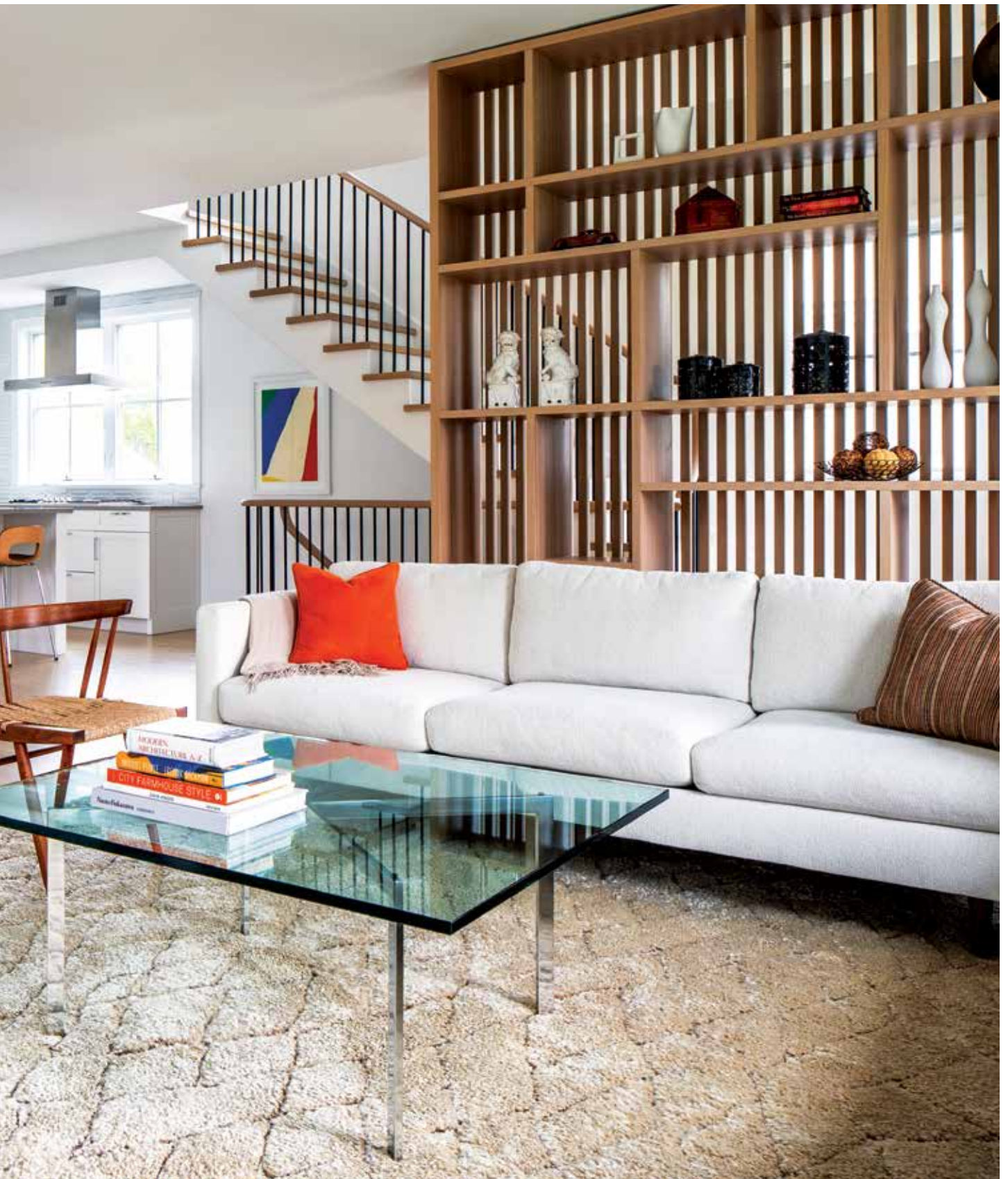


LEFT: The exterior features a mix of white clapboard siding and stained western red cedar siding and railings; a door between the house and garage conceals an open-air staircase leading to the balcony above the garage. **BELOW:** The living and dining areas and the kitchen are open to one another, but clutter is kept at bay. “We didn’t want people putting their coats on the back of the sofa when they walked in,” says the homeowner. “An idea that started as a screen, which felt cold and one-dimensional, ended up as a bookshelf. It brings the entire space together.”

Greenwich farmhouse. After coming up against a metaphorical wall (and literal foundation problems), the homeowners and architecture team decided that the only way forward was to start from scratch.

“The neighborhood is filled with colonials built in the early 1900s, which was the inspiration for this house,” says firm principal and partner Ed Parker. “The owners wanted the home to fit into the surrounding area while incorporating a more contemporary feel.” Indeed, the 2,500-square-foot five-bedroom residence features a simple gable roof seen on many nearby structures—as well as the site’s former home—but the architects had a bit of fun with the exterior. “We cut into the volume with a more contemporary front







“THE OWNERS WANTED THE HOME TO FIT INTO THE SURROUNDING AREA WHILE INCORPORATING A MORE CONTEMPORARY FEEL.”—Architect Ed Parker



door and kept the detailing very neat and clean,” says Parker.

Site regulations prohibiting an attached garage presented one of the biggest challenges for the design team, so they conceived a plan that fudges the fact that the garage is technically considered detached.

“There is an open-air stairway between the garage and house that leads to the balcony over the garage,” explains Parker. “Initially we didn’t know what to

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The primary bath contains a custom vanity, Olympian White Danby marble countertops, Porcelanosa floor tile, and wall tile from Inax. The third floor is divided into two spaces: a bedroom, seen behind this barn door, and a sitting area and workspace. On the upper level, “We leaned into the fact that the eaves come in on this floor, and it feels quite cozy and charming,” notes Will Jameson of Alisberg Parker Architects.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The architects utilized the small corner lot to its full potential, providing outdoor space above the garage as well as in the form of a terrace off the main floor. The powder room features a limestone sink from Stone Forest, aged-brass fittings from Jaclo, and Inax tile. “The circulation in this home is very efficient, with one staircase running from the basement to the third floor,” says architect Ed Parker.



do with the space above the garage, but this makes the most of the small lot and offers privacy.”

The contemporary touches extend to the inside, which features an open floor plan with sleek finishes. “You walk through the front door into a large, expansive space with a stairway that runs from the basement up to the third floor,” says Will Jameson, the firm’s director of interior architectural design. “The staircase binds the house and provides a feeling of cohesion. It almost has the sense of a New York townhouse.”

When it came to the layout, the homeowners gave clear directives: one main living area as well as rooms for their two grown children, an office, and outdoor space. “We utilized every square inch of what we had,” says the homeowner. “The house shines. It stands out, but it also fits in so nicely with its surroundings.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: For details, see Resources.



ARCHITECTURE:
Alisberg Parker Architects

BUILDER: Parallel Construction Management