

EAST MEETS WEST

Hamptons-style home rises out of rock

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After glimpsing the expansive, recently-constructed home on Ridge Road in the Tiburon hills, it's hard to imagine the property the way David Holscher, the new home's architect, described it looking when the homeowners first purchased it a few years ago.

The house that existed on the property then was smaller, said Holscher, the president of Holscher Architecture in Belvedere — he estimated the home was around 2,400 square feet, if that. There was a crumbling back porch, he said, and a backyard that blended with weeds from the nearby hillside.

When the property was purchased in 2011, the new owner had a vision — not to remodel, but to completely rebuild.

That existing house was demolished and Holscher, along with a crew from Sausalito Construction, Inc., was hired to design and build a 4,400-square-foot home in its place.

That extra space accommodates four bedrooms, five and a half bathrooms, two living spaces, a large kitchen, a



JOCELYN KNIGHT / FOR THE ARK.

The view from the pool and hot tub looking back at the recently completed Hamptons-style house on top of Old Tiburon.

breakfast nook and more, set against sweeping views of Tiburon, the San Francisco skyline and the Golden Gate Bridge. It's a far cry from the house Holscher described; so different, in fact, that he said the entire previous home was contained in the space occupied by the current home's living room.

The property is on a "spectacular lot," Holscher said, and the first thing he and the homeowners knew when designing the home is that they wanted to use the space in the best way possible.

"What we tried to do is make the whole house flow," Holscher said.

The design plan started with a basic



JOCELYN KNIGHT / FOR THE ARK

The view from the upper patio of the new home, facing toward Angel Island, overlooks the pool and hot tub.

Hamptons-style aesthetic — a home with a gray shingled-roof that feels classic, yet open, spacious and relaxed. Those style houses typically feature certain details, Holscher said, including tall windows, trim and wainscoting throughout the home and darker wood floors. Beyond the basics, he worked with the homeowners to adapt that style to their particular tastes.

The backyard-facing walls on both levels of the home are lined with windows, giving those inside the chance to enjoy the views from nearly every part of the house. One focal point in particular, he said, was capturing the view of the Golden Gate Bridge to the west by making sure windows were placed to make that view accessible.

“We tried to capture the view and light with the design,” he said.

Equally important, Holscher said, was designing an outdoor space that was livable, functional and felt like a natural extension of the home. The home contains both a top and bottom patio area; the bottom patio is outfitted with a fire pit, pool and a grassy yard.



SAUSALITO CONSTRUCTION INC.

The new house under construction.

The space is stretched as much as possible, with the patio extending far out on to the land and the pool as far out on the property as code would allow to create the feeling that the property was rolling out into the hillside and nature surrounding it.

“It really feels like you could go out and go swimming in the bay right out of your pool,” Holscher said.

Constructing the house to achieve the look and feel of that final design presented a unique set of challenges. To achieve the height of the house that the home-

From tear down to build up



Contractor photos document the process: from top left, the old house, which was deconstructed for salvage; a tractor with a shifter was used to sort rocks for later use in retaining walls and landscaping; laying out the foundation of the upper floor; builders cut about 12 feet back into the hill in order to construct the lower floor; the house takes shape.

owners wanted — while simultaneously making sure that none of the neighbors' views were obstructed — the construction team had to bring in an excavator to dig into the home's serpentine rock and granite foundation; the process took several months, said Don Scheiner of Sausalito Construction. He did add there was a bonus to the time invested: Scheiner's team was able to use the rocks from the demolished foundation to landscape the backyard, hand-laying the stones around the edge of the property.

But that wasn't the only time-con-

suming digging. Scheiner said he spent nearly six weeks digging out the terrain in the yard to plant a line of seven-foot trees that were meant to provide privacy while retaining those Golden Gate Bridge views.

"If you were to cut them down one foot, you'd be able to see the neighboring house," Scheiner said.

One of the most detailed areas of construction, Scheiner said, was the patio area on the top level of the home. Originally, the space was designed to stick much farther out past the home;

the plans also called for a bedroom on the top floor. However, the design had to be altered after it was determined the patio would block neighbors' views. The bedroom was moved to the lower level of the house, and the patio area was pulled back, meaning it had to be built on top of the first floor living spaces.

That required building a self-draining deck under the bluestone patio, an intricate pedestal and grate system that holds weight and drains water down to the lawn area, Scheiner said — pretty sophisticated detailing for a residential



PHOTOS JOCELYN KNIGHT / FOR THE ARK

From left, a second family entertainment room on the pool level and the kitchen and breakfast nook offer bright, spacious places to gather.

house.

Ultimately, Holscher said, all of the work came together to create a finished home where people can easily move through the house and utilize all the space.

“It’s the way the house rolls down the hill and into the pool, everything feels connected, and that, to me, is a great feeling,” Holscher said. “When you’re in that house, you basically feel like you’re in a sanctuary.”

The construction of the home took about two years, Scheiner said. Though the homeowners weren’t present to see the daily changes, it’s a process they’ll be able to visualize. Scheiner snapped a picture every day the construction crew was at the house, tracking the home’s



progress from start to finish.

“I have a stack of photos about this thick,” Scheiner said holding his thumb and pointer finger about an inch apart.

“I’ll give the owners those photos.”

Contributing writer Emily Lavin covers education and youth for The Ark.