





Text by PAULA M. BODAH | Photography by JESSICA DELANEY | Produced by KARIN LIDBECK BRENT



ABOVE: Dan Gordon and Patrick Taylor devised an informal, understated landscape, with low-growing native plants that can withstand the salty air. **BELOW:** An oversized island (with easy-to-clean CB2 leather chairs) means the whole family can gather for a casual meal. **FACING PAGE, TOP:** Two walls of windows with minimal panes surround the sunny living room. **FACING PAGE, BOTTOM:** The wet bar is open to the stairwell, letting light flood into the kitchen.

ith the last of their four children out of college, Susan and Sonny Zaverucha felt ready to downsize—to a point. What they really wanted, they told architectural designer Kevin Dauphinais, was a place cozy enough for two but roomy enough to welcome their progeny as well as future childrenin-law and grandkids.

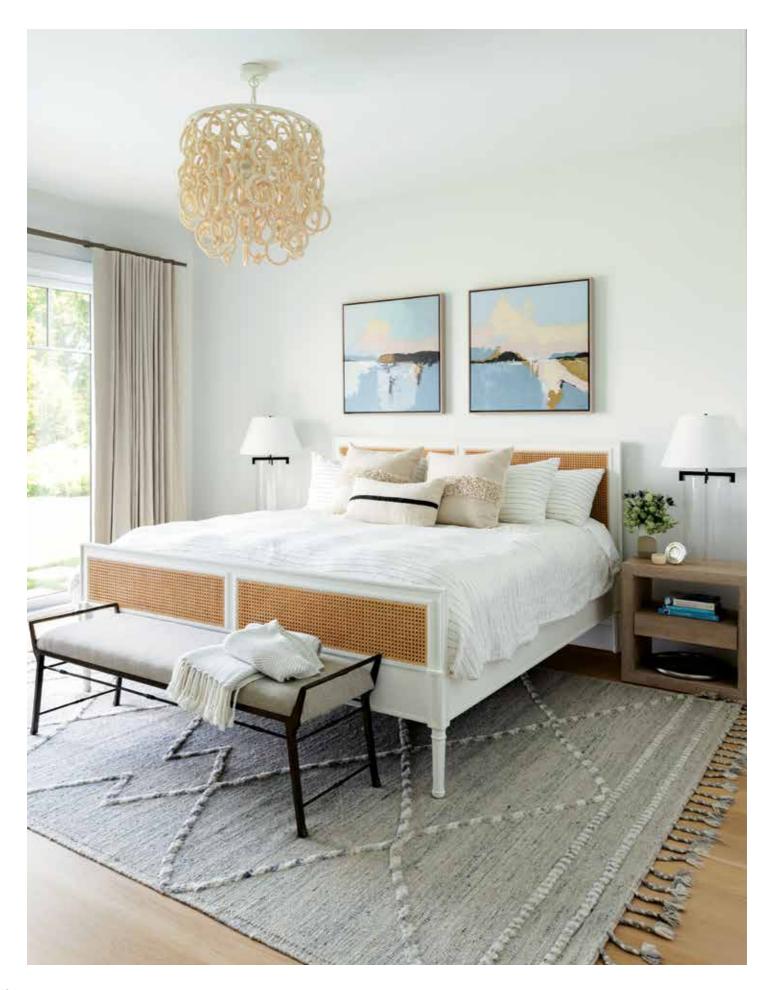




The Duxbury, Massachusetts, property they had bought was a gem overlooking the marshes of the Back River with views to Duxbury Beach. But it was only about a half-acre and, like so many waterfront properties, subject to plenty of rules and regulations about building. Susan and Sonny imagined several guest rooms in addition to their own bedroom suite, a two-car garage, a swimming pool, and plenty of gathering spaces indoors and out—a big program for the small lot.

Dauphinais, owner of Sandbox
Design Studio, took advantage of the
lot's sloping nature to design an upsidedown house, with the living spaces
and the primary bedroom suite on the
ground level and the guest bedrooms





tucked below at what he calls the garden level.

On the approach, the dwelling looks like an unassuming one-story that nods to the New England waterfront vernacular with its cedar-shingled garage and cedar roofs on both garage and house. "From the street, you don't know there's a lower level," Dauphinais says. "It's kind of a nice surprise."

A black-framed glass front door flanked by two tall windows gives the facade a modern slant, as does the vertical siding of Boral, a synthetic product composed of recycled materials including volcanic ash. "It's very weather- and rot-resistant and takes paint really well," Dauphinais explains.

Dan Gordon and Patrick Taylor devised a landscape plan as understated as the house, with low-growing plantings, including drifts of fountain grass and Russian sage. "It's not overly formal," says Taylor, who acted as project manager. "Because of the coastal environment, we chose plants that can withstand the climate, like bayberry, summersweet, and grasses."







"OUR INTENT
WAS TO CREATE
AN ELEVATED
COASTAL HOME
THAT TAKES
ADVANTAGE OF
THE EXPANSIVE
MARSH AND RIVER
VIEWS."

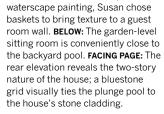
—Designer and homeowner Susan Zaverucha

134

Susan, who is an interior designer, worked alongside designer Julia Vandal to dress the light-filled open floor plan in casual but stylish furniture and accessories. "Our intent was to create an elevated coastal home that takes advantage of the expansive marsh and river views," Susan says. In the windowlined living room, a pair of Verellen sofas and twin lounge chairs wear easy-care slipcovers in summery white. Splashes of blue—from the turquoise of an abstract painting in the entry to the azure of toss pillows in the living room to the navy of the kitchen island—further connect the house to its surroundings.

To keep the garden level as bright as the main floor, Dauphinais set two skylights in the ceiling above the sleek, stainless-steel-railed stairway. "The skylights let the light pool down to the middle of the house on the lower level so







Sonny, a commercial developer, acted as general contractor, a circumstance that initially gave Dauphinais pause. "Typically when homeowners say they want to do the general contracting, we get nervous," he confesses. "Come to find out, he was the right guy for the project."

Given the results—a sunny, easygoing home that's equally comfortable whether the Zaveruchas are enjoying some alone time or welcoming the whole gang—it's clear the entire design team was perfect for the job.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For details, see Resources.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN:

Kevin D. Dauphinais, Sandbox Design Studio

INTERIOR DESIGN:

Susan Zaverucha, Julia Vandal

LANDSCAPE DESIGN:

Patrick Taylor, Dan Gordon, Dan Gordon Landscape Architects



