

ARCHITECTURE

In Surf We Trust wins architecture award



Photos by Paul Hester, Hester + Hardaway Photographers

Congratulations to Curtis & Windham Architects, which won a 2014 Palladio Award in the category of New Design & Construction - less than 5,000 square feet, for Seaside Avenue residence.

Built between 2011 and 2012, In Surf We Trust was constructed on the last remaining undeveloped lot on Seaside Avenue. The architectural gesture common to the houses on this street is the continuous two-story porch, a feature mandated by the code for this location within the town plan. To differentiate this house from the linear porches and box-like houses we found common to this street, we strove for a more lively interpretation that relates to fanciful building forms characteristic of coastal houses of the Victorian era. With a

vaulted ceiling capped by a conical roof, the elliptical space animates the front façade in a sculptural way that has become the signature gesture of the front elevation. The porch space engages both floors with a gang of curved windows that pushes its curved plane into the house. Though the porch encroaches across building setback lines, the town of Seaside encouraged this design by approving the variance and allowing for experimentation within the code.

Similarly sculptural tower-like forms were used at the corners of

the garden façade. The rounded forms anchor the internal organization of the house while helping to resolve the asymmetrical geometry of the lot and off-axis placement of the separate guest house and beach storage building. The first contains a stair and the second, a porch and second floor sitting room overlooking the garden and pool. Save for some walls around the kitchen, the first floor is an open loft-like space punctuated by four columns that contains a large family room, dining room, and bar. A guest bedroom and master bedroom

suite occupy the second floor, each with access to the second floor of the front porch.

Turned porch columns, exterior shingle patterns, lap board interior, and expressed ceiling structure are features of this house that identify with coastal vernacular examples from along the Eastern Seaboard. The challenge of building a structure that derives its details from traditional light-gauge wood framed houses in a coastal hurricane zone was met with design and construction skill. A continuous steel structure runs from roof to ground, routed through the solid wood porch columns. Windows, too, were engineered to hurricane protections standards, but retain the attenuation and appropriate detailing of a traditional divided light window. The seeming simplicity of detail on the interior is just as rigorously conceived; joints between the horizontal lap boards each align with the treads of the stair and are carried throughout the interior. Rigorous design and construction execution made it possible to build a house that meets structural requirements without compromising the detail and lightness of a traditional coastal house or the exuberance of a new porch form. 🌿



The project will be published in the July issue of Period Homes magazine, along with the other winners. — Annatina Aaronson, Curtis & Windham Architects Inc.