

# Restrictive Muse

## STELLE ARCHITECTS

Frederick Stelle is inspired by restrictions that some projects hold. Thinking outside the box, he creates residences for his clients in the Hamptons that carry his signature modern aesthetic.

# ARCHITECTURE LEADERS *TODAY*

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**HOUSE BY THE POND**

**Landscape Design:** Landscape Details

**Engineer:** Soil & Structure Consulting, Inc.

**General Contractor:** Greg D'Angelo Construction Inc.

**Energy Consultant:** Home Energy Solutions

**Environmental Planning:** Interscience Research Assoc.

# SEE THROUGH DESIGN

STELLE ARCHITECTS DESIGN WITH  
A SLEEK, SUSTAINABLE, MODERN  
BENT, INSPIRED BY SITE.

Story by **Amanda Stevens**

Photos by  
**Matthew Carbone, Frank Oudeman  
and Michael Moran.**



Photos by **Matthew Carbone**

July/August 2012





Photos by Frank Oudeman



**F**rederick Stelle grew up in a “big, nineteenth century house on a farm” down the road from Edward Larrabee Barnes, one of the most renowned architects of his time. Still, Stelle wasn’t sure what he was going to do.

“It was totally a visceral kind of thing to me,” Stelle said about his decision, when faced with one, to choose a major at Syracuse: architecture. “And as I got older and older, I realized [Barnes] was a major player, and he became kind of a mentor to me.

Now, Stelle is the president of Stelle Architects, where he focuses on sustainable energy and materials not to mention really cool-looking buildings with beautiful views of various waterways. These buildings are always inspired by the site: Stelle said clients come to him for his unique style, but the limitations of every building site helps shape a new house by forcing creativity.

“The way we design and build is the reason people come to us,” Stelle said. “Working within

limitations is, in some ways, a challenge and, in some ways, an inspiration.

“I have no problem working within limitations. It causes the creative juices to flow. The worst thing is a blank piece of a paper.”

Take, for example, *The House by the Pond*. Constructed on a point between a pond and wetlands in Water Mill, New York, the house presented Stelle with two significant challenges: how to keep all that brackish water from making its residence inside the house and how to dim the traffic’s noise pollution from a nearby road. Not only did his solution solve both his problems, it added another 2,000 sq. ft. to a nearly 4,700 sq. ft. house. That solution was raising the entire house.

This created a basement level under the main house, which was already comprised of a one-story wing and a two-story wing.

“There’s almost 50 percent more space just in that basement level, and it’s inexpensive space,” Stelle said. “It’s both a good thing in terms of the



**PECONIC BAY RESIDENCE**

**General Contractor/Builder:**  
Atlantic Collaborative Construction Co. Inc.

**Interiors:** Betty Wasserman Art & Interiors

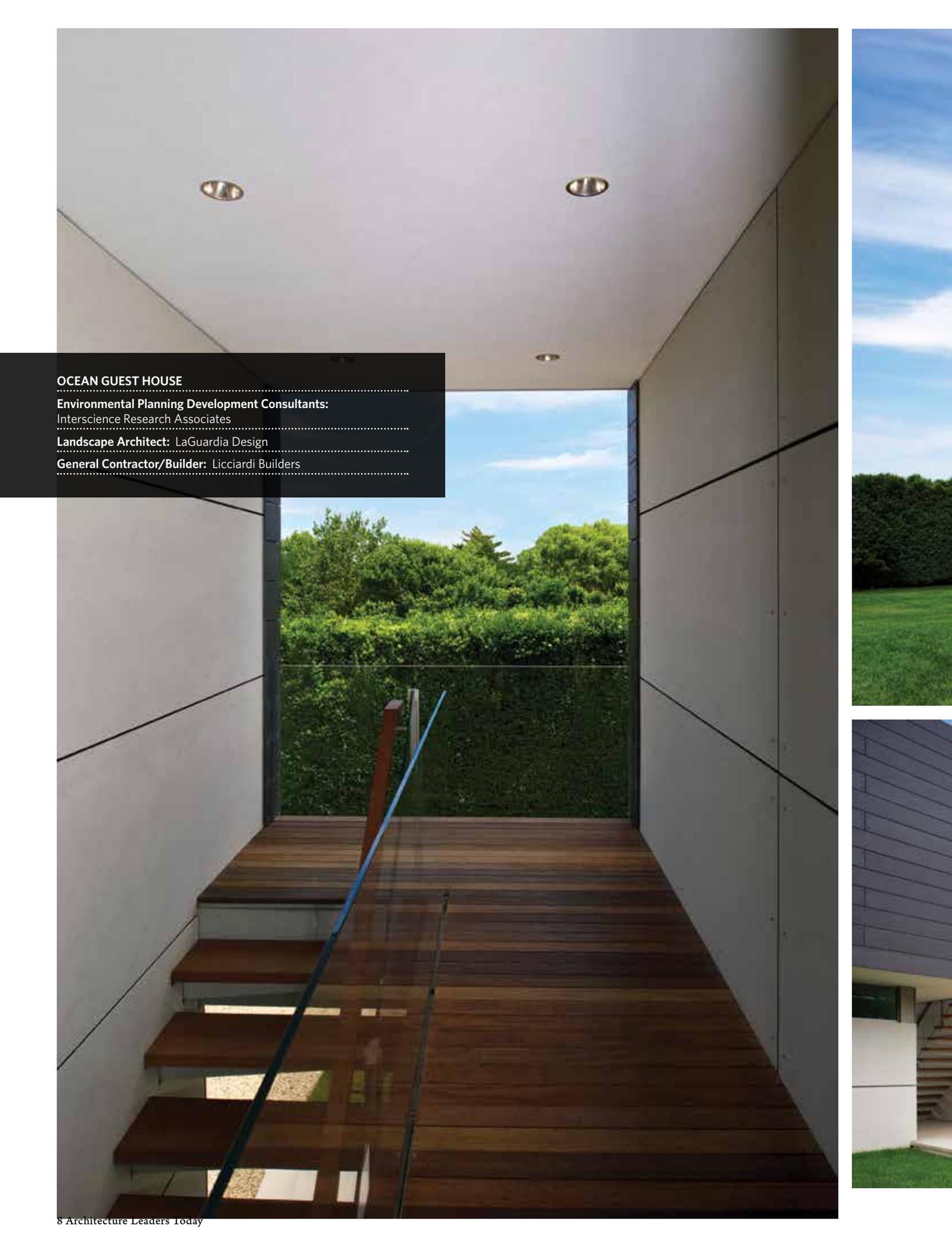
**Engineer:** Consulting Engineers, Corp.

**Landscape:** Joseph W. Tyree





Photos by Michael Moran



**OCEAN GUEST HOUSE**

**Environmental Planning Development Consultants:**  
Interscience Research Associates

**Landscape Architect:** LaGuardia Design

**General Contractor/Builder:** Licciardi Builders





Photos by Matthew Carbone

"I have no problem working within limitations. **It causes the creative juices to flow.**

The worst thing is a blank piece of a paper."



## Landscape Details

[landscapedetailsinc.com](http://landscapedetailsinc.com)

Landscape Details is a full service landscape company that designs and installs some of the most notable landscapes on the East End of Long Island. Owner Michael Derrig works with discerning clients and renowned landscape architects to consistently realize their visions. The level of service and professionalism brought to each project is unparalleled and expected when you work primarily in the Hamptons.

Michael Derrig's aesthetic is evident throughout some of the finest estates on Long Island. A Registered Landscape Architect, he established Landscape Details, Inc. in 2000. Derrig works closely with landscape architects, architects and designers regardless of scale. He can also custom design any client's plan.

Listening carefully to his clients and bringing his expertise and creativity to each project, Derrig and his team consistently deliver cohesive, beautifully executed landscapes — both modern and traditional. See ad on page 194

budget and use of the footprint.”

Simply raising the house, he was able to include a garage, playroom, exercise room, nanny's bedroom and outdoor shower in a corridor that floods with light.

Another challenge presented by houses in the Long Island area is the abuse weather pounds into the materials: salt, wind, rain and heat. Which is why he chose anodized aluminum doors, windows and trim as well as cedar wood panels along the outside of the house. The aluminum will weather the storm, and the cedar will weather with the storm, becoming a more rustically regal coloring as time moves on.

“Nothing looks as cool to me as a weather-beaten house. It's a little bit like a really well made coat that can just take great abuses and weather, and you look on the inside and the lining is made of some beautiful material”, Stelle said. “And I think the end result is that the house is pretty cool.”

In addition, Stelle was proud to exceed the requirements of the energy star rating system by using a geothermal heating system, which heats and cools the house by pumping 50 degree water into heating pumps then circulating it around the walls of the house. Since this uses natural material, it's more energy efficient.

He also used this heating and cooling system in his Peconic Bay Residence in Sag Harbor, NY,

which overlooks the bay from within a grove on a bluff. Stelle also laid this house with “darker floors, grey wood floors and grey bluestone floors, which absorb the heat from the heat gain, and with all the windows open, you get great cross ventilation.” Stelle said though he used “a lot glass” in this house and the House by the Pond

Using natural materials to control the heating and cooling of the house is what helped this one also exceed the energy star rating system while still keeping the clients' requests in mind: to have a lofty, open-space house.

“We employed a strategy we employ a lot of times: for you to be able to see through the house before you enter it,” he said. “It's more like a loft divided than it is a house of separate rooms.”

These client requests are part of what makes the job both so interesting and so fulfilling to Stelle.

“The three legs a project stands are is that it is financially rewarding, that you enjoy working with the clients, and you end up with a great result, he said.” I think we achieved all three here.”

Sometimes, though, he's presented with a project almost free of constraints and stripped of the usual restrictions. In those times, like when he created the eponymous Ocean Guest House in Bridgehampton, New York. A small house he called a “jewel,” the Ocean Guest House is a unique piece of architecture for a few reasons, not the



Photos by **Matthew Carbone**



**THIS PAGE:** Exterior Stairs. The stairs are both industrial and traditional in style, with the warmth of wood and coolness of steel in the design.

Photos by **Matthew Carbone**

least of all being the fact that the living room is not enclosed. Just a roof to keep its occupants dry.

"These littler projects tend to be freer because they have less constraints placed on them, so you can play it a little bit more in terms of how the geometry works out and how the architecture is resolved," Stelle said. "That's why this house looks more like a model. In a way it's like a fashion model: a beautiful object."

In fact, the house is such an architectural marvel, Stelle said there was recently a publication writing about how difficult it can be, with today's technology, to tell the difference between a

rendering and a photograph of a house. The story ran with a photo of the Ocean Guest House as the example. Which shouldn't be surprising: the house is simply peculiar at first sight.

For one, it lacks wood of any kind, opting instead for a plethora of zinc. Makes sense: zinc "is a fairly inert material, so in terms of flashing and co-existence with salt and wind and sun and sand, it's a very good material," Stelle said. Materials like copper or even stainless steel will begin to weather heavily in the harsh environment.

Secondly, the house acts as a "lantern" in the evenings, as light floods out of it into the surround-

ing grasslands, lighting up everything so one can clearly see the ocean from the upstairs balcony.

"The way the house looks at night is very important to us," Stelle said. "The house is sort of a lantern."

Which makes sense. After all, he said he was drawn into the business from an aesthetic perspective. And that's where he plans to stay. He said Barnes, "was considered one of the giants of 20th century modern architecture," and he can only be left to wonder if he will fill the shoes of the man he called his mentor. *ALT*



Photos by Matthew Carbone

## SIMPLY THE BEST

### LICCIARDI BUILDERS STAYS ON TOP

Story by Amanda Stevens Photos courtesy of **Stelle Architects**

If you are thinking about renovating your existing home or want one custom built to your specifications, Licciardi Builders are the contractors to call. From remodeling your kitchen or bath to building the home of your dreams, they will give you and your home the personal attention it deserves.

“The experience we bring to the table is what sets us apart — my father and brothers all work with me,” Owner Joe Licciardi said and who happens to be second generation woodworker in the Hamptons, NY. “The thing about working in this area is that if you communicate well, are honest with your clients, diligent with your work and offer quality service, you will always have appointments filling your book.”

Licciardi and his crew believe it's about truly learning their customers' needs and tastes and then delivering a product that exceeds expectations. And have achieved this, most recently through a collaboration with Stelle Architects on the 109 Surfside Residence, Hamptons, NY.

“We really enjoyed working on this project with Stelle and the clients

had great vision,” Licciardi said. “All of the siding was shipped over from Germany. The doors and windows are custom made as well as the flooring. This project really showcased our best skills.”

Let Licciardi Builders and their highly trained contractors handle any of your addition or renovation needs. The contractors can assist you with any interior or exterior home remodeling project. Licciardi Builders is available for all your home improvement projects, from kitchen and bathroom remodels to additions.

Whatever the renovation needs, their general contractors will provide client's with the highest quality work at a competitive price. Licciardi also believes a well-informed and collaborative process is the best for all parties involved, ensuring the client will meet with lighting designers, architects, interior designer and engineers.

Additions and Renovations Services Include kitchen and bath remodeling, roofing, garages, porches, great rooms, game room, basement renovations, attics and custom decks. **ALT**