





*PROJECT BY CCS ARCHITECTURE*

*LEVINE RESIDENCE WATERMILL*

*LONG ISLAND NY*

CCS Architecture Team, with design principal Cass Calder Smith and project architects Yvonne Choy and Taylor Lawson created a new house for the casual lifestyle of the owners and for their kids and grandchildren to visit.

Cass Smith and the Levines have been friends for many years, both personally and professionally. At sixteen years old, Cass worked a summer for Bill who was then a builder in New York. Later, they collaborated on several restaurant projects as 'Sarabeth's' on Park Avenue South in New York City and, most recently, two more venues in Seoul and Dubai. It was natural that the collaboration would extend into the residential realm.

This particular area of Water Mill - 'North of the highway' vs. the more expensive 'South of the highway' - has open fields and is more about farms and horses than the beach. Sarabeth and Bill both wanted a house that was simple and restrained, related to the site, contemporary, and that had an everyday feel.

There were no ideas about a mega-Hamptons house, showing off, or lavish parties. Since the couple had spent some time in the original house, they knew the site and its attributes, which helped to direct the design.

The location of the house on the site and the pool were fine. The basement was in good condition, so the new house was designed to fit onto the old foundation, with a little expansion along one side.

Through a series of design meetings, the outside of the house took the shape of a modern interpretation of a barn through the materials, windows, and detailing. The new two-story, three-bedroom structure measures 1,800 sq feet and is meant to be a compact and efficient house that feels spacious.

The roof of the house is standing seam galvalume, and the walls are vertical cedar siding. The windows are large scale shapes that play off the solid wall planes and overall geometry. The stacked stone fireplace adds a component of verticality and gravitas.

Inside, the space was intended to have a loft feel, with open floor plan plans, a main two-story space, and strategic amounts of natural light.

The main space with high ceilings accommodates the kitchen, dining and living areas, and entry hall while the bedrooms are fitted within the actual two-story part of the building. The master bedroom is on the first floor and the two guest bedrooms are on the second floor.

White oak floors and ceilings, smooth white walls, and painted cabinets add to the feeling of spaciousness and casual comfort. Windows and doors are sized and placed for views, light, and connections to the outside, while a number of skylights bring in light to further render the interior space and balance the light.

The fireplace, which is built on the foundation of the previous one is stacked blue stone, which has a slightly rustic quality that counterpoints to the more refined finishes around it. The team left the original landscape, adding new planting close to the house.

Although a renowned chef, Sarabeth Levine didn't want a commercial chef's kitchen, which was consistent with the direction of restraint. She wanted a medium-sized residential kitchen, but with a twist, so the design team came up with the 'Sarabeth blue' kitchen (Sarabeth's favorite color, also used in her restaurant branding).

CCS Architecture has offices in San Francisco and New York City, is dedicated to architecture and interior design. Since its inception in 1990, CCS has designed a diverse range of public and private buildings and interiors. The firm has gained international acclaim for the architectural and commercial success of restaurant projects, while the uniqueness of residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects.

The work is firmly based in the modernist idiom, where innovation and creativity are balanced by common sense and experience.

Cass Calder Smith founded CCS Architecture in 1990. Partners include Barbara Vickroy, director of interior design, Melissa Werner, director of operations, and Bryan Southwick, associate principal.

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**Details of the Water Mill house designed by Cass Smith for Sarabeth and Bill. They wanted a house that was simple and restrained, related to the site, contemporary, and that had an everyday feel.**

**CCS Architecture Team:**  
**Design principal: Cass Calder Smith**  
**Project Architects: Yvonne Choy and Taylor Lawson.**  
**Contractor: Jeff Gardner**  
**Structural engineer: John Condon, Southampton**



