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Home & Garden



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home of the month

February's profile of a well-designed living space

See the floor plan plus photos of all of the Home of the Month entries online at www.newsobserver.com Key word: **Architectural**. Next month's home: The Leinbach Residence



the concept

The House at Wood's Edge, built for a family of four, is characterized by an exceptional connection to its site. It mediates between a stand of woods and a meandering meadow. The design reaches out into the land in a series of nontraditional exterior spaces combined with special architectural elements that include a lovely land to forest dock and a memorable double-height porch. The spaces within are clearly articulated by windows, doors, trellises and roof shapes. Even garage spaces, normally the most unsightly element of a large home, are incorporated into the pleasing arrangement of building forms. The house communicates an open lifestyle filled with light and anticipation. On the southwest side of the house here, the house touches the ground. The fireplace serves the outside patio and the screened-in porch. The stair to the left goes up to the roof terrace, exercise and play room.

Throughout the house, it is apparent that great care has been given to architectural details. Perhaps no other element of the house communicates the quality of living inspired by this form of architecture more than the dramatic two-story porch. The screened room and roof overhang are combined with compelling effect. It is inevitable that this porch will become a place of friends and family gathering. A space of careful detailing and exuberant expression, the porch could easily be identified as the living, breathing representation of the inhabitants.

suitable in its Site

finally, it's time to take a look around in our first Home of the Month — House at Wood's Edge.

It's what we've been talking about for months now — Home of the Month, our collaboration with N.C. State University's College of Design to inform, inspire and show you the range of possibilities in constructing a living space that's well thought-out and built with the homeowners' specific living patterns and preferences in mind. Beginning today, and appearing each month, we will profile a different Home of the Month (12 in all) selected from 27 designs by area architects.

Leading today's tour through House at Wood's Edge, which creatively embraces its site's surrounding wooded landscape and rolling hills, will be Marvin J. Malecha, dean of the College of Design.

"A well-designed house is an expression of its inhabitant's way of life and a representation of the design philosophy of its architect. When it is done skillfully, it is a

seamless joining," says Malecha, noting the architect's role in the execution of a successfully designed plan.

But what would a building be without occupants?

"A building absent the residents is simply an incomplete structure. It is when the residents are home that the structure becomes a complete expression," Malecha says.

Homes showcased will highlight design concepts built around such issues as sites, existing styles of neighboring residences, natural light, as well as details and craftsmanship. Malecha and other architecture professionals and graduate students will sum up selection panel reviews and offer their own insights on the designs.

By the end of the series, we hope that not only will you be able to recognize a well-designed house, but you also will have gained some general knowledge that can be applied to any home's design.

Weta Ray Clark

more photos + architect's comments, inside | page 4e



the project

the house at wood's edge

Architect | Ellen Weinstein

Firm | Dixon Weinstein, Chapel Hill

Project Location | Burlington

Heated Square footage | 3,900

Unheated | 1,200

Cost | \$175 to \$200 square foot

Key design concept | Connection to site, pleasurable living



interior

The outdoors theme continues inside. A one-room-wide concept ensures that each space can be flooded with natural light and cross ventilation that reduces dependency on traditional sources of illumination and air conditioning. This house, even on the warmest summer day, can be wide open to allow a cooling breeze to flow through. Similarly, wide expanses of glass allow the sun in winter months to shine into the house at a low angle beneath the cover of the overhang to warm the interior spaces.

Natural wood, an exposed steel truss, an industrial wood-burning fireplace, large panels of glass and a white plaster interior combine for an elegant and understated home environment.

the house at wood's edge

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the connection

"The idea of the pier was that you would be able to interact with the site differently than from the porch" Weinstein says. "You are in the treetops. There's a different character of space. The porch is more for a gathering for people. The pier is more about a solitary experience or visit with the site."



the meeting place

The modern look of stainless steel appliances in the kitchen and dining spaces are softened with wood cabinetry and floors. The back wall of large windows at the right fold back and open into the screened double-height porch, allowing the far end of the kitchen bar to serve the inside and outside living spaces. "The arrangement is efficient, giving several work areas. The house is a house for modern living," Weinstein says.



the architect's aim

The L-shaped home, was created with the needs of the entire family in mind, says architect Ellen Weinstein. There is a main floor "family room" that includes the kitchen, dining, inside living room and outside living room – a screened-in porch. A second family space is on the upper level where a playroom, exercise room, craft room and roof terrace are located. Guest parking is in front of the house. Behind the site wall are the family's two two-car garages.

"The house really developed from the site and the clients' desire to be able to experience the site throughout the day and seasons. The main living spaces with large openings enable views to the landscape beyond while the 40' long pier allows you to experience being in and above the landscape," Weinstein says.



panel's thoughts

The House at Wood's Edge is a vernacular expression. Its design exhibits the qualities of a carefully articulated idea executed by a practiced hand. Each step communicates respect for the land and for a vernacular architectural expression derived from local tradition. It is easy to imagine sitting under the great overhang of the porch on a warm summer evening, feeling a gentle breeze coming out from the woods, sipping a cool Southern specialty. This house is a celebration of a lifestyle.

E-mail Marvin J. Malecha, dean of the College of Design,