



David and Donna Feldman of Dmitry & Co. (FAR LEFT) and Erin Keneally of Corcoran (CENTER) chat before the session begins. INSET: A view of a living room/dining room of a Hamptons residence, with interior design by Andrew Thompson of Stephens Design Group.



INTERIOR MOVES

DESIGNERS, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, AND BROKERS DISCUSS TRENDS IN BUILDING STYLES, INTERIORS PALETTES, AND RESPECTING THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN CONSTRUCTING OUT EAST. **MODERATED BY MICHAEL BRAVERMAN PHOTOGRAPHY BY TANYA MALOTT**

Michael Braverman: What trends are you seeing right now in home design?

Alan Schnurman: What I find interesting about the Hamptons is how the types of homes change periodically. When I first started, it was very boxy contemporaries, and then you gradually came into more traditional homes, and now it's very interestingly going back to the modern: flat roofs, stone, concrete, lots of glass, and bringing the outdoors in.

David Feldman: The palettes are changing and aesthetics change with the season. It's always interesting to see the types of antiques, tables, and dining chairs that are finding their way into the homes here. They're not always the same.

Donna Feldman: The Hamptons has started to become almost an adjective in our interior design dictionary. When people are referring to the Hamptons, it's not just a locality; it's a whole scene, a vibe, a certain cachet. When you think of the Hamptons, you're thinking whites and summer and drapes, and there's this fluidity.

Erin Keneally: People's [homes] have traditional exteriors, but we're seeing interiors with a lot of

modern finishings. Palettes have gone to grays—very soft, inviting colors that make the outside pop.

MB: Do you think the rising popularity of modern interiors has to do with the age of the buyers?

AS: We're finding that the people in their 30s and 40s are tending more to the modern, and older generation people are usually used to more traditional types of work. But just like in fashion, youth always sets the trend, and the youth is going more to the simple, modern, all-glass, large spaces.

EK: The younger generation wants the comfortable elegance out here. But I would say that they morphed the traditional with the modern by creating the modern farmhouse. People don't want their "parents'" house and they don't want the heaviness of what the styles were.

Richard Stott: Many summer houses were built simply as summer houses, so most of them had no heat or very little heat, just to take the edge off the spring and fall. But building codes have really changed our ability to do that. Codes have changed everything from the economy to the people who design, buy, sell, and service [homes]. We have a

huge workforce population who come here to service the large homes that we have in the Hamptons.

AS: Richard, in new construction, are you seeing geo-thermal and solar a lot?

RS: I've been into that forever, since the oil embargo in 1974. But, yes, in my practice very much so. The last house we did was not even a wood frame—we built the entire house out of structural insulated panels, so the walls themselves are made out of a combination of rigid foam with the skin on both sides. We didn't have other trades involved, and it's a much more efficient process, and we ended up with an insulation rating about twice what code is.

Peter Cummin: Solar panels are a wonderful idea because they're not noisy; they don't look ugly if they're well designed.

RS: Another reason you see so many solar panels is because the town of Southampton mandates certain energy codes and one of them is a Home Energy Rating System. In the town of Southampton, the larger house you build, the more energy-efficient it has to be. That came about basically because the

building inspectors saw these gigantic homes getting built with 50- or 100-year-old technology and they turned out to be just huge energy hogs. And the people who built them, typically, it didn't matter to them if it cost more money to heat or cool them; it was just another expense. But in terms of the world economy, it makes a difference—and in terms of our environment and our carbon footprint, it does make a *huge* difference. Our chief building inspector in Southampton decided it was time to do something, so he made a code that's very restrictive for energy in large homes.

AS: A majority of the homes that are built today at the high end are geo-thermal homes because of the tax credits that you get. Even though it's more expensive in the building, about a third comes back in tax credits. Unfortunately if they don't extend it, it's terminating I believe next year, in 2016. But there is still an ongoing 20 percent savings on geo-thermal.

RS: There are quite a few subsidies that help us use sustainable energy systems. We put a 1,500-square-foot addition on a 3,000-square-foot house that was finished in 2010. The owners were full-time, year-round people, so we did this addition in a very energy-conscious way. It was a LEED platinum building; the energy bills were cut by more than half. Their 4,500-square-foot house now has a monthly energy bill of about a hundred dollars—and that was a remodel.

MB: How does the need for energy efficiency and eco-friendliness affect design?

DaF: We use soy-based foam in our sofas now. It's actually more expensive, but the quality is much better and lasts much longer. It's a blue foam called XL, and we incorporate that with natural cottons. And all of our pieces are handmade so there's no machine with off-setting gasses. It's artisanal work and locally made in New York.

DoF: There's been a return, too, of wanting to work with people who specialize in whatever they do. Like in Europe, you went to the butcher for the meat

MEET THE PANELISTS

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and the boulanger for your bread; there's been a movement in design where people are looking to specialize in a niche, and consumers are reacting to that because they don't want to participate in the disposable economy. There's a longevity factor that people are looking for.

RS: Another reason we see more consciousness about what we're putting into our homes is because modern homes are designed to be much tighter than ever before. Old building technology allowed air to move through a house pretty easily; now that HER rating that I mentioned before requires us to test how tight the house is. And they do that by closing all the doors and windows, and putting a big fan in one of the doors. They reduce the pressure inside the house and walk around and see where the house leaks. A really modern house can limit the amount of air that's exchanged down a reduced pressure of 50 pascals. It's a technical term, but what it means is, your house is really, really tight and when a house is built really tight, we have to be careful what we put into them because if we use paint with high VOCs in them or carpet underlayment and furniture plywood that has volatile organic compounds or formaldehydes in them, it can make us really sick.

MB: What does all of this mean to our readers?

PC: People fail to ask enough questions as far as the environments is concerned because there are so many chemicals we commonly put on lawns to kill weeds

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Alan Schnurman's listing at 233 Hedges Lane in Sagaponack. RIGHT: Schnurman (LEFT) chats with Michael Braverman.



A sustainable steel ski house, designed by James Merrell Architects, is being handled by Holly Weinberg.

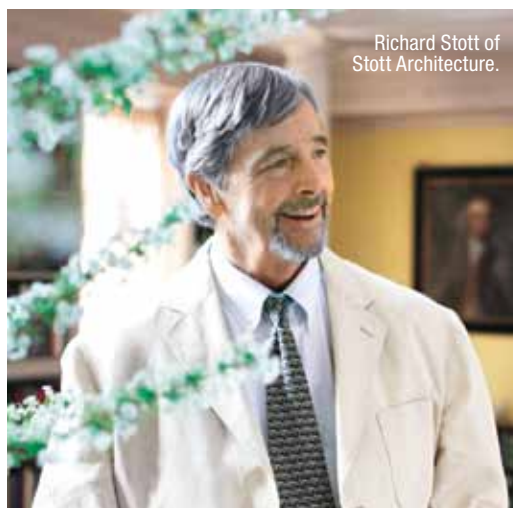


“THE YOUNGER GENERATION MORPHED THE TRADITIONAL WITH THE MODERN BY CREATING THE MODERN FARMHOUSE.”—ERIN KENEALLY



A Travis Tinker property features a clean-lined contemporary kitchen designed by Farrell Building.

that are terrible. Flowers from Colombia are loaded with pesticides usually so you're breathing this, eating this. I'm extremely sensitive to that issue so I put my clients on an organic schedule. It's criminal to do anything else. We have to be aware and move ahead and continue on with design. Human beings are creative and any change in materials leads to new designs. You've got all these recycled materials; it's a wonderful opportunity for new designers.



Richard Stott of Stott Architecture.

MB: If I were going to buy a house now and furnish it, what would I build that would look good in five or 10 years from now?

AS: I build houses for the market, and the market today is more traditional outside and more modern inside. When you have the classic cottage or the classic traditional on the outside, you know in 10 years that will still be the fashionable style, yet other styles may come and go.

EK: Would you agree that traditionals are easier to do? If you do a modern house, you have to do it just so... Traditionals people will buy them even if they have to make modifications.

RS: They're equally as difficult. It takes expertise and knowledge and care to put the details into the design, whether they're very simple, clean lines like a modernist house or whether they're pieced. Everyone's got to be working together because if the traditional house doesn't fit the landscape that it's on, it's not going to be successful.

MB: What kind of furniture would I have in this house?

DaF: The interiors would still have the classic Hamptons interior but at a more restrained and edited level.

DoF: Linen, natural fibers are very important. Long, sculptural pieces that bring the conversation in and is easy to gather around; it's casual. You're not going to put a silk-velvet on a living room sofa in the Hamptons—perhaps in your nook in the library... You're not going to see high, French polished tables, but you're going to see the antiques, the weathered concretes, the weathered oaks, linens, skirts, drapery.

DaF: The sofa you would have in your home is on the deep side—single, deep cushion, very lounge-y, back cushions, elegant arm. You can have it with a skirt. It can be softer, more relaxed, or with a wood base—a touch formal, but still not Park Avenue formal.

DoF: Approachable designing. I think that's what would be in the Hamptons. They now have the eco-friendly Scotchguard that everyone gets on, and I highly recommend. I want to do everything white.

AS: I was in a house that was all glass, and you press a button, glass walls come down into the basement and screens go up to give it a whole airy flow for those beautiful days that you want to catch the Hamptons breezes.

MB: We've heard about the trends, but what are you truly passionate about?

AS: Real estate to me is creative. I feel like an artist. To create an environment, to create a home, to create something that is beautiful, to work with an architect, to work with a builder, to work with interior designers, to work with hardscape landscapers, it's spiritual.

PC: Gardening has been my activity since I was about four or five. My mother always knew I was going to be some kind of a gardening person. If I had to do it all over again, I would do it exactly the same way.

DoF: I'm inspired by the designed we create. I feel like I contribute to the social fiber when I know that these pieces will one day become antiques because they've been built to have lasting power.

RS: My passion is design. I just love when a client says, “We came out this weekend but we like it here so much, we never want to leave.” That's the most gratifying part of my job. I really do love making places that people want to spend time in and never want to leave. There's nothing better. **H**