



Quality Craftsmanship | Stowe, Vermont

# the craftsman.

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Kate Carter

By Kate Carter

This modern home plays off the alpine appeal of Stowe's early ski homes. Designed by McLeod Krell Architects, the footprint has four quadrants, each taking advantage of subtly different natural woodland surroundings. The quadrants have a simple roof form above, terminating with an angled prow that draws aesthetically from traditional A-frames that once dotted Vermont's landscape. Each prow creates a sheltered area for an external living space, an outdoor shower, a parking area, and a loading area.

"I provided the architect, John McLeod, with a small order," said the owner. "I knew I didn't want extra bedrooms or a basement. I had been coming to Stowe to cross-country ski and had rented homes that had all

that. For my own home I wanted it to be compact, with no wasted space that I wasn't going to be utilizing. I outlined a living room, kitchen, bedroom, mud room, and a light-filled, airy workspace/pottery studio."

Early on, the owner and McLeod visited the site on snowshoes. McLeod felt there was so much more than just the view to the south, and came up with the general concept and courtyard idea.

"I had seen two modern homes by Sisler Builders in the process of interviewing architects, so I had the comfort that Sisler was up to the task of constructing a non-traditional building," the owner said. The house was a work in progress, taking a year to design and another year to build.

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## Renovations *cont. from page 1*

In hindsight, the owner came to realize and appreciate how much precision was required when building the home. “Everything had to match up exactly, there was no room for error. Everyone on Sisler Builders’ team understood that and brought it to fruition. Working with project manager Bryan Kelley was a treat. He didn’t miss a thing and there were so many little elements. Steve Sisler had his own insights and was a pleasure to work with, and Kelley was on site daily with his own ideas.”

Sloped ceilings throughout are paneled with beautiful, warm-toned, grain-matched Siberian larch, the world’s hardest softwood. Sisler Builders’ custom woodworking team played an important role, fabricating the modern, maple wood living room built-ins, kitchen cabinets, and floating built-ins that flank the bed’s headboard.

“I realize a one-bedroom home is unique in Stowe,” said the owner. “It took me awhile to get there, but a circle of ski friends does not get bigger as you grow older. Besides, I was building in Stowe, where there are so many housing options, so friends and family have plenty of places to stay.”



The owner says his favorite part of the house is the living area, where he spends most of his time. “I also love the bed tucked into the cozy niche, and the carport was a nice surprise.”

Monochromatic floor tile conducts radiant heat and a high-tech efficient wood fireplace adds warmth and ambiance. Roof-top solar panels offset electric usage. Concealed door hinges and architectural quirks at trim/plaster interfaces accentuate the home’s sleekness. As the owner requested, there is a designated place for everything.



*Cover photos: The home's exterior captures a modern look based on the traditional alpine ski home. Clockwise from top: A well-laid-out kitchen and natural light from the courtyard offer an enjoyable cooking experience. Custom built-in shelves and drawers, created by Sisler Builders’ woodworking team, flank the bed’s headboard. Floor-to-ceiling firewood storage creates a neat and modern look. Photos by David Sandberg, Esto.*



Keith Wagner of Wagner Hodgson Landscape Architecture designed the low-maintenance landscaping, which consists primarily of river birches and landscape pebbles in square areas between the quadrants, and an iron-fenced courtyard on the north side of the house. The trees soften the exterior's angular elements.

The owner is delighted with his Stowe home, and on days when driving to ski is not in the cards, he can easily access the nearby snowmobile trail for unlimited cross-country skiing, an unexpected bonus to the property's location.



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*Clockwise from top: A workroom currently being used as a pottery studio and ski waxing space, has ample light and concrete floors for easy upkeep. Adjacent to the front door is a concealed door clad in hemlock siding that offers access to the mudroom. The board-form concrete stairs provide for a finished surface while maintaining a simplistic look. The south-facing 16-foot double door slider lets natural light and fresh air fill the living room. Photos by David Sandberg, Esto.*

## In the News

**Baby boom**—Site Supervisor Blake Cote and his wife Liz Gleason recently welcomed their second son, Miles Cote, born December 13, 2021. We are happy to welcome this new addition to Blake's family and look forward to play visits in the future.

**Baby footprints**—Sisler Builders is working hard to reduce our carbon footprint, and one of the ways we are accomplishing that is a transition to renewable energy vehicles. We already have several hybrid vehicles in our fleet and are expecting two electric trucks to join them soon.

**Construction job opportunities**—We recently launched a new page on our website: Careers. We have an immediate need for a business manager, and we are always looking for talented carpenters, energy technicians, site supervisors, project managers, laborers, and interns. To learn more about these positions and submit a resume, please go to [SislerBuilders.com/careers](https://SislerBuilders.com/careers).

**New tool**—Our custom woodworking shop has a new, state-of-the-art computer-aided table saw that will improve precision and productivity.



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## Ask the craftsmen.

### What kind of return on investment will I get with an energy retrofit?

Nearly 60 percent of Vermont homes are heated by propane and fuel oil. These products are the most price volatile and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing the consumption of these products saves homeowners money and helps reduce harmful emissions.

Since 2007 Sisler Builders has had a Building Performance Institute-certified energy professional on staff. Mike D'Muhala has performed over 1,000 home energy audits. He has provided energy coaching to hundreds of existing homeowners interested in saving money and reducing their carbon footprint.

In new construction projects Sisler Builders has implemented his expertise and sophisticated building practices to consistently deliver new homes with ACH 50 values under 1, which is 3 times better than the national standard. This translates to increased comfort, reduced operational costs, and reduced CO2 emissions for the occupants of those buildings.

The best way for existing homes to get a 30-percent return on investment (ROI) is to weatherize and energy-optimize your home. When fossil fuel costs were lower, the typical ROI for weatherization projects was 5 years, yielding 20 percent. With these elevated energy costs, it's conceivable that 30 percent is achievable. You can't get that from a bank, a CD or, in most cases, the stock market. Your house will be more comfortable, your use of harmful hydrocarbons will go down, you will spend less on heating each year, and increase your home's value by having demonstrably lower operational costs.

Our planet is letting us know the time is now to reduce our carbon emissions. Sisler Builders can help you do that and save money.

*Send your building question to  
Ask@SislerBuilders.com.  
We'll answer it in our next newsletter.*

