

# MICHIGAN BLUE

MICHIGAN'S WATERFRONT LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

## Coastal Treasures

Now & Later: From snowy pursuits to warm-weather dreams

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# Expanding Their Horizons

A Livingston County couple takes the leap from using their cottage part-time to creating a full-time residence right next door

By Khristi S. Zimmeth | Photography by Jeff Garland

**W**hen it comes to lakefront lots, less is definitely not more. Steve and Catherine Boston already owned a small cottage on Lakeland's Zukey Lake, but when the home next door became available in 2013, they set their sights on their future and decided to purchase it, too.

The 1901 residence (one of the first ever built on this Livingston County lake)

had a more secluded lot and more expansive frontage than what the Bostons already owned, but unfortunately, the home next door hadn't aged well. "It had been patched and patched and patched," Catherine says of the dated structure, which had been added onto a number of times through the years. After two decades of enjoying their weekend getaway, the couple made the move to the lake after their youngest child graduated high school, and thought the second property might

offer them more of what they wanted in their "forever house."

The lot may have been better, but the interior's small rooms and dark paneling were a long way from the open and contemporary design the Bostons envisioned, Catherine says. After having lived in homes with more traditional architecture, the couple was ready to embrace change and a "simple, clean aesthetic with a modern feel," she explains.

Hours of surfing the internet turned up





**Both pages:** The newly built interiors of the Bostons' home are a far cry from the formerly dark, enclosed spaces. The couple was after a clean, simple aesthetic, and they sure got it.



the perfect team for the job in architects Brad and Theresa Angelini, and project designer Don MacDonald, all of Angelini & Associates Architects, an Ann Arbor-based firm. "Their projects had a lot of light and we really liked what they were doing overall," Catherine says. "We had one meeting and it just felt right."

One of the first questions the Bostons asked the Angelinis was whether the original structure was salvageable. The response? An unfortunate and adamant no. The couple's initial plan was to renovate, but it quickly became apparent that starting from scratch made more sense. After going back and forth with the township and two different designs, the Bostons ended up with a project that was 90 percent new-build, Theresa explains. "We had to keep 50 percent of the front wall and part of the side wall that's over the lake setback (in order) to be grandfathered in; otherwise, we were going to have to move the home back from the lake 13-plus feet.

The surrounding homes are also at the original setback, so if we had to follow the new 50-foot setback, the home would have very limited views."

Using the old cottage as a partial footprint, the revised plan called for a new three-bedroom, three-bath, approximately 3,200-square-foot design inspired by the gable-fronted white cottages found throughout the nearby chain of lakes. The living spaces and master suite all have expansive views of the lake, while a glass-walled stairway brings natural light into the kitchen and upper hall, Theresa explains. Living, dining, and kitchen spaces are open to each other and designed to maximize lake views as well as flow onto the deck. Keeping the interiors "white, white, and whiter," according to Brad, ensures that the spaces are bright and light-filled year-round — a priority for the homeowners.

The lake is never far from the home, both in proximity and in



**This page:** The kitchen and dining areas are designed to maximize views to the outdoors.  
**Opposite page:** A glass-walled stairway brings natural light into several spaces.



philosophy. “Interiors take their cues from the never-ending shifting of light and reflection from the lake surface outside,” Theresa says. Described as “an exercise in clean lines,” the open kitchen includes white flush cabinet doors, cast concrete aggregate counters, and white walls contrasted with warm, stained quarter-sawn oak floors. The main floor office nearby can easily be converted into a future first-floor bedroom should the Bostons need it.

Furnishings from Restoration Hardware in shades of white leather and textured linen combine with family pieces

that include an Eames lounge chair, a Nelson bench, and artwork inherited from Steve’s father, who once worked in automotive design, as well as wood models from Steve’s family. Catherine credits Aletha Israels from Restoration Hardware in Troy for helping her successfully integrate old and new. “I didn’t want it to look like a catalog,” she explains. “Aletha helped me pull it all together.”

The new house sits above a sandy beach area on Zukey Lake and makes the most of 75 feet of lake frontage. Outdoor spaces include a large lakefront deck, par-

tially covered near the barbecue to allow for shade and intimacy, and an inviting circular fire pit. Theresa says the house is “intended to glow like a lantern beacon,” and “serves as a lighthouse for the family when seen from the lake at night.”

Working with builder Johnson Brothers Construction, the innovative two-year project was finished in 2020. After the first plan was rejected by the township for too many variances, the house size decreased by 500 feet — something Brad Angelini says was ultimately an improvement. “The house is very lean and mean,” he says.



**This page:** The new house features outdoor spaces that welcome with entertaining opportunities aplenty.

**Opposite page:** A hallway on the second level showcases automotive design-themed artwork (calendar pages) by Steve Boston's father.





**Both pages:** The home's abundant windows frame beautiful skies, which are stunning year-round. The second-floor master bedroom is a favorite vantage point for the homeowners.


"When it got smaller, it got better." Others agreed; the firm and the project won a Huron Valley American Institute of Architects design award, with one judge remarking: "Well-organized site use ... feels much larger than it is."

As new year-round residents, the Bostons have enjoyed getting to know the lake in every season, but admit spring and summer are still their favorites. "The Rails to Trails (path) is just 20 steps away," Catherine points out. "You can bike, run, or walk the trail, and it feels like you're up north." The all-sports lake's location on the chain of lakes also means that "you can pack the boat up and go from one end to the other."

Then there are the sunsets, which are framed by the home's abundant windows

and are stunning year-round. "They're just so spectacular that you can't help but be pulled in," Catherine says, adding that the master bedroom window is a favorite vantage spot, as is the upstairs atrium where she likes to read. "We're also at the fire pit more than I would have ever imagined," she says. The couple's original cottage next door is now used as a guest house, a second home office, and a workout space.

Their "forever house" is everything they hoped it would be, and then some, the Bostons say. "We really do love it, no regrets," Catherine insists. "I can't think of a single thing we're not happy with."

Theresa Angelini says that's exactly what the team had in mind. "In this house, every day is a vacation." 





## BUYER'S GUIDE

### ARCHITECTS AND INTERIOR DESIGNERS

Brad and Theresa Angelini, Angelini & Associates Architects, Ann Arbor, [angeliniarchitects.com](http://angeliniarchitects.com)

### FAMILY ROOM

**Backsplash** – Royal Mosa, Bright White, Beaver Tile & Stone, Michigan Design Center, Troy

**Ceiling Paint** – Benjamin Moore, Aura

**Fan** – Minka-Aire

**Fireplace** – Mezzo 60, Heat & Glo

**Flooring** – Mirage, Sweet Memories Collection, Maple and Nougat, ProSource, Ann Arbor

**Lighting, Floor Lamp** – Restoration Hardware, Troy

**Rug** – Restoration Hardware, Troy

**Sofs** – Restoration, Troy

**Table, Coffee** – Restoration Hardware, Troy

**Tables, Occasional** – Restoration Hardware, Troy

### HALLWAY

**Artwork** – Vintage 1962 Calendar, Robert Boston

**Ceiling Paint** – Benjamin Moore, Aura

**Flooring** – Mirage, Sweet Memories Collection, Maple and Nougat, ProSource, Ann Arbor

**Flower Pots** – West Elm

**Lighting, Chandelier** – Nelson Cigar, YLighting

**Lighting, Floor Lamp** – Crate & Barrel, Novi

**Rug** – Wayfair

**Table, Side** – Vintage

### KITCHEN

**Appliances** – Sub-Zero and Wolf

**Bar Stools** – Restoration Hardware, Troy

**Cabinets** – Grabill, Glacier White

**Ceiling Paint** – Benjamin Moore, Aura

**Chairs, Dining** – Bacco Chair, Design Within Reach

**Chest, Wooden** – Vintage

**Countertop** – Concrete, Line Studio, Detroit

**Flooring** – Mirage, Sweet Memories Collection, Maple and Nougat, ProSource, Ann Arbor

**Lighting, Bar** – Noble Pro LED, AFX

**Lighting, Table** – YLighting

**Shelving, Display** – Grabill, Glacier White

**Table, Dining** – Hanover, Woody's Wood Bench

**Window Treatment** – Hunter Douglas, Nationwide Floor & Window Coverings

### SITTING AREA

**Ceiling Paint** – Benjamin Moore, Aura

**Centerpiece** – Goldner Walsh Garden & Home, Pontiac

**Chairs, Armchairs** – Restoration Hardware, Troy

**Flooring** – Mirage, Sweet Memories Collection, Maple and Nougat, ProSource, Ann Arbor

**Rug** – Restoration Hardware, Troy

**Table, Coffee** – Restoration Hardware, Troy

### STAIRCASE

**Ceiling Paint** – Benjamin Moore, Aura

**Chair (with Ottoman)** – Eames Lounge Chair, Herman Miller

**Flooring** – Mirage, Sweet Memories Collection, Maple and Nougat, ProSource, Ann Arbor

**Railing** – Feeney, Goodrich Brothers Inc.

**Treads** – Custom, Latvala Steel Co.

**Wall Treatment** – Halquist Stone, Belden Brick, Lannon Buff Stakledge

### EXTERIOR

**Building Materials** – Exotic Brown, Artisan Lap Siding, Trim

**Electrician** – R.A. Lee Electric, Pontiac

**Excavation and Stone Work** – Wolverine State Concrete, Dundee

**Fire Pit** – Johnson Bros. Construction Manta Ray Fire Pit, Woodland Direct

**Framer** – J.F. Binder Custom Framing, Ann Arbor

**Heating and Cooling** – CMR Mechanical, Dexter

**Landscaping** – Todd's Landscape, Hamburg

**Manufacturer** – James Hardie Siding, Boral, Theromory

**Paint Color** – Benjamin Moore, China White and Night Horizon

**Paint, Interior Trim and Door** – Benjamin Moore, Aura, Satin, White Dove

**Paint, Interior Wall** – Benjamin Moore, Aura, Eggshell, White Dove

**Painting** – So Unique Painting, Chelsea

**Plumbing** – John Kline Plumbing, Milford

**Stone Wall, Interior and Exterior** – Wilkerson Building & Masonry, Grass Lake

**Trim and Stair Rail System Installer** – D&D Trim Works

**Windows** – Signature Bronze Cladding, Marvin Windows

### ADDITIONAL PROJECT CONTRIBUTORS

**General Contractor** – Tom Johnson, Johnson Brothers Construction, Ann Arbor

**On-Site Contact** – Bill Johnson, Johnson Brothers Construction, Ann Arbor

**Project Designer** – Don MacDonald, Angelini & Associates Architects, Ann Arbor

**Project Manager** – Jake Johnson, Johnson Brothers Construction, Ann Arbor

**Project Team Member** – Jacklyn Melfi, Angelini & Associates Architects, Ann Arbor