

VISION HOUSE

The model for realistic, sustainable new housing.



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Kit of Parts

The design for the VISION House Orlando provides flexibility and creative living options. **By Cati O'Keefe**

Infill development often requires creativity because of the unusual or small lots available for building. This was the case with this year's VISION House:

Veteran builders Jon Pleveich and Kim Foy of Southern Traditions Development brought in Ed Binkley, AIA, president of Oviedo, Fla., to make the most of the challenging lot.

"In any design project, you need to identify the market, decide who the house is for, and then consider budget," Binkley explains.

As important to Binkley, though, was to design a house that reinvents what is expected of a long, narrow lot. "A lot of homes are predetermined. You can tell what will happen in a 20' wide house when you walk in the front door," he says. "You expect to see walls."

Binkley treated the space like a loft with multifunction spaces rather than breaking the spaces into discrete rooms. "I wanted the house to 'explode' so you could see through it," he says. "One way you can make a house feel larger is if you can see the outdoors from certain vantage points." The strategic placement of windows brings daylight into the house. "It's follow the light syndrome," he adds. "People will follow the light into and through the house."

The kitchen is the center of the space, with living spaces radiating from it, including to outdoor entertaining areas that visually expand the 3,000-square-foot house.

Binkley's concept of a "kit of parts" for the house's design is what gives it flexibility. "I looked at it like a shell that we could do anything we wanted to. You could get rid of every interior wall and use folding doors or rolling walls and screens to divide the space—you could personalize it for how you live." **GB**

Behind the VISION

Green Builder Media's VISION House Series presents realistic, sustainable new housing and retrofit models appropriate for today's economy.

The VISION House Orlando 2011 is a new home that Green Builder Media is constructing with partners Southern Traditions Development <http://www.southerntraditionsfl.com>, Ed Binkley Designs <http://www.edbinkleydesign.com>, and Designs by Pat Gaylor <http://www.patriciagaylor.com>. The project will incorporate the essentials of sustainable design and construction and will incorporate education and training for building professionals and consumers about green building products and techniques, as well as broader aspects of sustainable living.

Visit the VISION House Orlando '11 pages regularly during the course of the project for updates, case studies, videos, articles, and other important information. To learn more about green design and construction, visit Green Builder College (www.greenbuildercollege.com <<http://www.greenbuildercollege.com>>), our online educational platform, which offers a comprehensive curriculum about sustainable development.

The upstairs is an extension of social space. Another area in the relatively small house that offers a different experience and place to enjoy the outdoors. The 576-square-foot retreat over the garage can be a recreation room, guest quarters, or home office.

The hobby and laundry are placed in a central location halfway up the stairs. The room has openings to the stairwell, which adds daylight to the stair well and loft area that overlooks the stairs.

The master can be either in the back of the house (as shown) or flopped with the two bedrooms at the front of the house to have more connection with the street if desired.

A convenient side entry with powder room and mudroom makes unloading groceries quick and easy, and provides a private, casual entry point to the house.

Scaled down, enclosed, and intimate, the chat room provides a quiet place to converse while at the same time be part of what's going on in the house.

Defined outdoor eating and living areas are important enough to be furnished like the interior, which makes them more inviting. The space overflows to the motor court, which is a nice area for parties or showing a movie against the garage wall.

The central kitchen is a galley to make cooking more efficient. It is designed to encourage people to congregate around the space like they would in a bar in a restaurant. From behind the island, you can see 180 degrees into the living areas.

The dining space can be switched with the living area.

The front porch is not a token space. Wide enough to accommodate chairs and a table, it connects the inhabitants to neighbors on the sidewalk.

