

EXCELLENCE IN DESIGN | BALTIMORE

CREATIVE COLLABORATION

At SPIRE Architecture, uncovering clients' requirements for authentic living is the genesis of bespoke renovation projects and personalized new construction



“If a client tells me they want to drink coffee every morning while on their deck overlooking the bay, then we’ll design what is needed to put espresso machine on the second floor rather than in the downstairs kitchen,” says Craig Martin, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP, principal of Annapolis-based **SPIRE Architecture** (spirearch.com). “We just have to run the water line in the right place.”

“Design is about considering how someone interacts with a space,” continues partner Kurt Shepard, AIA. “Whether it’s incorporating accessibility features or selecting materials tailored to clients’ lifestyles, it shouldn’t be a one-size-fits-all approach.”

Before merging their respective firms to create SPIRE in 2013, Martin and Shepard were teaching architecture at the Anne Arundel Community College when a colleague mentioned the two had “great synergy.” After a successful 10 years in business, in 2023, this beach house near the South River joined the duo’s visionary residential portfolio.

A 2800-square-foot ‘summer cottage’ perched on a steep hillside, the project posed several design challenges—an environment in which SPIRE thrives. Renovating the old cottage for a D.C. couple with contemporary sensibilities and a senior parent, the architects collaborated closely with a local contractor Tim Ball of **Annapolis on the Level** (onthelevelannapolis.com) and interior designer Kate Lindsay with **Kate Lindsay Design**, (katelindsaydesign.com) to emphasize the clients’ favorite features—including striking riverside views and gentle lighting from north-facing windows—while staying within their budget.

Elevating the home with increased functionality, refined finishes, and charming modern touches—like the stair tower that invites the outside in with its sweeping glass exterior—the SPIRE team never forgot who it was for. SPIRE’s focus on residential architecture was intentional. A home is a big investment, and this work humbles us,” says Martin. “We can really touch people’s lives.”



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Plentiful windows reflect beautiful riverside views and a **vertical glass** in the stair tower accentuates an upward feel. A **covered patio** makes for year-round use. Contemporary lighting and **breakfast bar style seating** at the island make living and accessibility easy in the kitchen. A glass balcony provides more ways to gather and an **expanded view** at the waterside balcony.