

# Glorious Sunset

A Long Island cottage damaged by Superstorm Sandy was reincarnated by its LEED-accredited owner.

The homeowner/designer hopes to inspire others in her neighborhood to take advantage of the tax incentives in building a greener home.

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The cottage in the  
Pre-Superstorm Sandy days.



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JANUARY 2016



At the home's new height, safely out of potential flood waters, the family can enjoy an even more magnificent view than they had before.

In 2012, when Superstorm Sandy tore through the Caribbean and up the East Coast, the U.S. property damage left in its wake was estimated at \$62 billion. Millions of people living in New York and New Jersey were negatively impacted and faced with the choice of either abandoning or rebuilding their homes.

Among those affected was Kim Erle, a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) accredited professional, who lost the 1940s Southampton beach cottage she purchased just three years prior to the storm of a century.

Standing five feet above sea level for decades, unscathed by past hurricanes, the cottage that Erle, her husband, and their children enjoyed as a weekend sanctuary was declared "Substantially Damaged" by the town. In order to comply with the new building codes, their home would have to be torn down, rebuilt, and elevated to more than double its previous height to 12 feet above sea level.

Because state aid and insurance reimbursements were scarce for funding rebuilt homes [that

were not primary residences] due to overwhelming demand post-Sandy, Erle decided to replace the destroyed cottage on the same lot with a new building she dubbed the "Sunset Green Home" project.

The challenge was to have her family's new home achieve LEED Platinum status, which was no small feat. With LEED Platinum certification, the home would qualify for significant tax breaks following Southampton's recent adoption of substantial green building tax incentives. In fact, Erle's Sunset Green Home was the first project to register for LEED certification specifically in response to those incentives.

"We want to serve as an example for our neighbors who also wish to build sustainable homes and earn the tax breaks," explains Erle, who is also a registered investment advisor in New York City.

Given the opportunity to craft her home from scratch, Erle decided to create a "Beach Modern" aesthetic. Her goal was to incorporate natural materials to create spaces that are open, airy, light, and unfussy.

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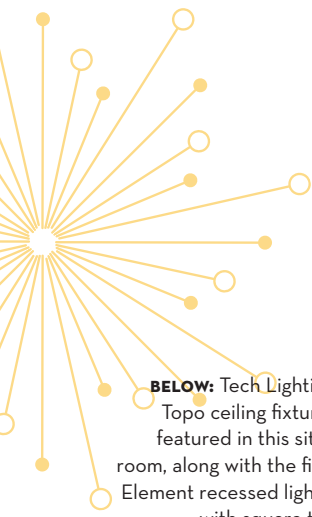


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**BELOW:** Tech Lighting's Topo ceiling fixture is featured in this sitting room, along with the firm's Element recessed lighting with square trim.

**BELOW RIGHT:** Feiss' Khloe pendant is illuminated with LEDs on the interior of the fixture. Many of Erle's visitors are impressed by how beautiful LED lighting can be.

#### GETTING STARTED

While attending last year's International Builders' Show in Las Vegas to see the latest ground-breaking building products on the market, Erle approached Generation Brands' President and CSO Matt Vollmer to ask if Generation Brands would be interested in participating in Sunset Green Home.

"I found the project compelling — not only because Kim and her family lost their home to Hurricane Sandy, but also because Kim aimed to demonstrate to her neighbors how the community can rebuild. As you know, the devastation there was incredible and the surrounding homeowners needed — and many *still* need — examples of hope and resilience," Vollmer states.

To help achieve Platinum LEED status, Erle and her builders set the goal that "almost every light in and outside the home be LED-centric, or at the very least, offer LED lamping," she recounts.

"There's a special quality to natural light along

the coast — and we sought to bring the same qualities indoors by layering lighting of various color temperatures and intensities," Erle comments. "The clean lines and natural colors of the lighting choices remind us of the coastal environment around us from sea-inspired blown glass fixtures and driftwood-inspired wood trim to finishes in gray, white, and beige reminiscent of the color variations found at the beach."

#### LIGHTING THE WAY

Guiding Erle in selecting the right fixtures to achieve the looks — and efficiency — she desired was New York City-based lighting designer Shoshanna Segal, founder and principal of Luminous Flux, LLC. Erle chose most of the fixtures herself, working in concert with the team from Generation Brands. For the interior, she specified Tech Lighting and Feiss products, while for outdoors she decided on LED fixtures from B-K Lighting and Teka Illumination.



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LEFT PHOTO: ELEMENT BY TECH; RIGHT PHOTO: FEISS

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**ABOVE:** Tech Lighting's Quinton pendants were used above the kitchen island and outfitted with the company's award-winning Alva bulb-like fixtures that replicate vintage Edisons.

**RIGHT:** Tech's ELEMENT recessed lighting provides ambient illumination above the living room window without obstructing the view.



"I wanted a statement piece that combined energy efficiency with the home's Beach Modern design aesthetic."

— Kim Erle

For the indoor spaces, Erle wanted to create multiple layers of light through a wide variety of downlights and decorative fixtures that would complement Sunset Green Home's clean and somewhat modern aesthetic. A combination of 46 ELEMENT LED downlights — using both round and square trims — plus fixed, adjustable, and wall-wash models did the trick.

"Our use of ELEMENT LED downlights provides maximum flexibility, while the adjustable lamp positioning manages the trade-off between maximizing light output versus minimizing glare," Erle explains. "There's flexibility for swapping out light engines from below the ceiling as technology evolves, and there are multiple trim options. We specified 3- and 4-inch square trim downlights throughout the main rooms for design consistency. The bathrooms have 3-inch round trims to match the round sprinkler heads and ventilation ducts in the ceilings," she adds. "Overall, they provide general illumination in concert with the decorative lights and helped us achieve our LEED certification goal since each uses only one-fifth the energy of an incandescent lamp without compromising light output."

For the LED decorative fixtures, Erle chose 28 sconces, flush-mounts, and pendants from Tech to further layer the light in the home and in the adjacent pool house.

Proving that LED decorative fixtures do not compromise style, Erle chose three large-scale Quinton line-voltage pendants in clear glass above the kitchen island. The organic bulb-shaped pendants are hand-blown in Poland and feature Tech's LED Alva pendant inside, which has the look of filaments laser-etched into the optic crystal "bulb."

Another 10 decorative LED luminaires from Feiss were placed in various rooms, including a colossal 48-inch Khloe pendant in the foyer, which exemplifies an LED-centric fixture design not even possible with traditional lamping. "I wanted a statement piece that combined energy efficiency with the home's Beach Modern design aesthetic," Erle says. "What amazes our visitors is how beautiful LED fixtures can be."

#### THE RUGGED OUTDOORS

In considering the exterior lighting that would support the project's aggressive energy-efficiency goals, Erle opted for LED fixtures, but needed

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**BELOW:** This stacked stone wall with Teka fixtures illuminating the way enhances the natural beauty of the landscape.

**BELOW RIGHT:** Inside the pool house, the lighting is provided by Tech's Admiral Simple fixtures with nautical flair.

ones that could withstand Southampton's harsh weather elements of salt air and punishing storms.

Her solution was bronze-finished fixtures from Teka Illumination that coordinated with the home's window trim. The Beacon wall-mount fixture was installed above the garage, on the pool house, and on the pool deck. For the porch with the best view, 12 Screen wall-mounted fixtures are in place. Nearby, 8 copper Arcade Full Shield luminaires are installed on a retaining wall made of sustainable, manufactured stacked stone which runs along the driveway. "I liked that they're made from enduring metals to resist corrosion and will develop a beautiful patina over time," Erle notes.

For landscape lighting, she selected B-K Lighting's Delta Star and Night Star II fixtures as well as for highlighting trees, the flag pole, and the main stairs into the Sunset Green Home. "Now that we're 14 feet above sea level, it's important to provide bright illumination on our stairs so visitors may enter the home easily and safely," Erle

comments. "As for the rest of the outdoor area, I wanted lighting that would complement the native landscape. In accordance with the LEED green building program, we have minimized our disturbance of the site and have large areas that remain naturally vegetated."

#### THE RESULT

While quite a time-consuming and research intensive undertaking, building a home that achieves LEED Platinum status was well worth the investment for Erle.

"We are incredibly happy with the home," she states. "We hosted 19 family members from as far as California and Massachusetts for a three-day celebration at Thanksgiving and really gave thanks that we are back in our home after a three-year absence."

One of the aspects that Erle is most proud of is the lighting. "The decorative lighting really makes the house. We've had so many people compliment us on our choice of fixtures — from the nautically inspired Admiral Simple sconces from Tech in the pool house to the dramatic Khloe LED pendant in the entry foyer and the cottage-style Livingston flush-mount fixtures in the pool house and main house," she remarks. "What each of the fixtures has in common is a simplicity of form typical of a beach cottage, but something special in terms of size, color, or material."

Having a new home that melds nicely with the environment as well as serves as inspiration to fellow residents in the neighborhood who want to join in energy conservation is yet another accomplishment in this success story. ❖

"The decorative lighting really makes the house."

—Kim Erle



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