

# Maine Home

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+DESIGN



## Cabin Fever

Custom finishings create a cozy home  
in the Woolwich woods

# Maine Home +DESIGN

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# Design Face-Off

One cottage, two different visions—  
an architect itching to renovate and a  
builder who wants to tear down and  
start new

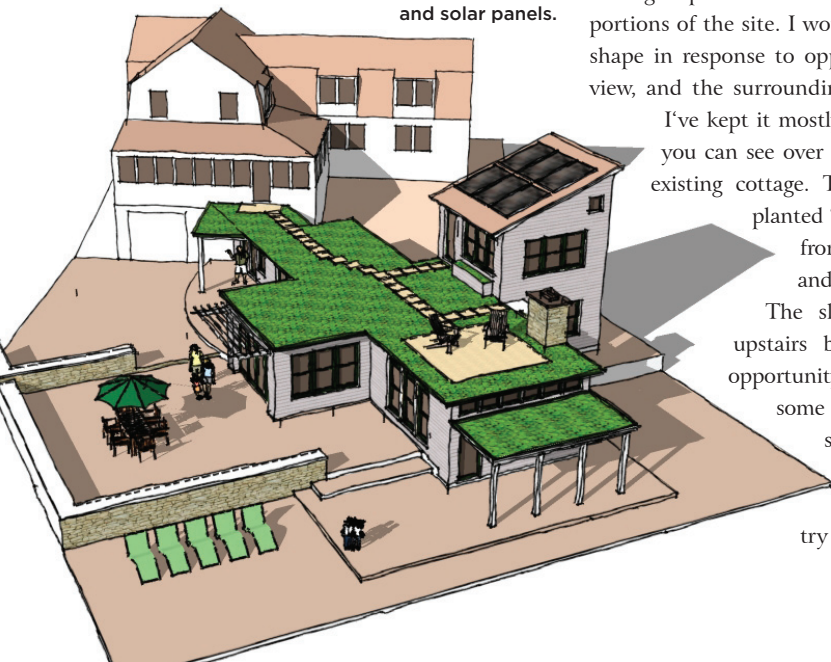
## AIA DESIGN THEORY

Edited by Rebecca Falzano

Photography Trent Bell

When Rory and Linda Strunk decided to sell the 100-year-old cottage on their 4.5-acre seaside property in Cape Elizabeth, they did something unconventional. They asked two trusted design professionals—builder Jamie Goduti of Goduti Building Company and architect Josef Chalats—each to come up with a design concept for the cottage. The rustic 2,000-square-foot structure is in need of some serious TLC. The question has become whether the cottage should be torn down and rebuilt from scratch or whether it should be renovated. Predictably, Goduti and Chalats have two very different ideas. Only time will tell the fate of this cottage, but in the meantime, *MH+D* asked Goduti and Chalats to share their visions.

Architect Josef Chalats's vision for the cottage (below) involves a "green roof" and solar panels.



**Q: JOSEF, IF YOU HAD YOUR WAY, WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH THE COTTAGE?**

JC: My concept is to provide an addition that is suitable for year-round living. The old portion would be used as temperature permits. The existing porch, which is in bad shape and not well built, would be removed and this area would then be used to create a connection between the old and new. The new portion would take a compact approach to living. It would move out diagonally from the back of the building to provide views of the islands, lighthouse, and shoreline. It has to step down, to prevent obscuring views from the existing building and to provide a link to the ground level of the site. It's easy to forget that on a site facing the ocean there are interesting views and light qualities to be had that involve other portions of the site. I would let the house take shape in response to opportunities that light, view, and the surrounding landscape provide.

I've kept it mostly at one story so that you can see over the addition from the existing cottage. The roof would be a planted "green roof" accessible from both the cottage and the kids' bedroom.

The sloping roof over the upstairs bedroom provides an opportunity for solar panels and some sort of multideck sleeping bunks on the interior. I would definitely not try to make an addition



that looks like a continuation or extension of the original. I would let the new piece be recognizable as belonging to the present time.

**Q: WHY NOT TEAR DOWN AND START OVER?**

JC: I think that many people, who could afford to, would tear down the existing house and either put up a large house or, if we're lucky, something that has the sort of architectural integrity and relationship to its surroundings that Jamie would propose for a completely new structure. The existing house could not be considered an architectural gem, yet there is something about its particular spaces, windows, views of the beach and ocean, and the patina of its finishes that is captivating. It has stood by the ocean for the past hundred years and seems to want to stand by it for the next hundred. My approach would provide a place for a family that is truly unique, and impossible to duplicate.



## Q: JAMIE, WHY DO YOU PROPOSE TEARING IT DOWN?

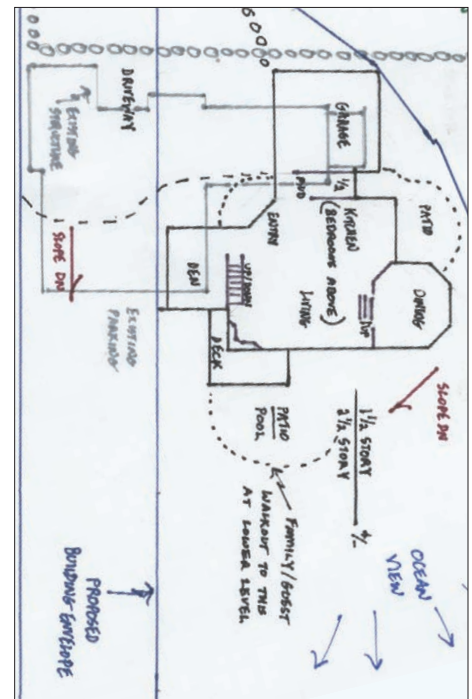
JG: The homeowners asked about turning the cottage into a four-season home. Since the 1980s, the Goduti Building Company has restored many structures. I find it challenging as a builder and often historically rewarding. There were two reasons I was not for restoring this cottage. First, I felt that it does not take advantage of the oceanfront site in function, form, and view shed. Secondly, it would be an expensive rebuild, as it needs a complete overhaul inside and out, including a foundation.

## Q: WHAT DOES YOUR VISION FOR A NEW BUILD INVOLVE?

JG: There are some unique exterior elements of the cottage that I would like to see incorporated into the new build to maintain some of the characteristic flavor of the current cottage. I feel the site would be vastly improved by moving the footprint of a new structure more towards the ocean, allowing for a much improved entrance from the street while simultaneously improving the landscape and yard possibilities, ocean side and street side.

I went to the property one more time before expressing this architectural vision. I wanted to experience the morning sun on the site and soul-search my reluctant conviction to teardown. The scene is quintessential coastal Maine. My goal, for Rory's family or any other prospective owner, is to harness and preserve this environment while comfortably living within it. To achieve my goal for this, I felt the building site must be moved towards the ocean. I would want to minimize the impact that the construction of a new home would have on this property and the adjacent neighbors. The sloping site would allow for a low-profile, cottage-style, multistory structure. There would be single-story portions that would help tie the building to the ground. Some simple landscape and hardscape, utilizing indigenous stone and the natural terracing potential of the site, would provide an eloquent and visually quiet environment around the dwelling. **MH+D**

*For more information, see Resources on page 92.*



Builder Jamie Goduti's vision (above) is to tear down the cottage and build new, moving the footprint of the new home towards the ocean.



Chalat's floor plan for the cottage (above) calls for an addition suitable for year-round living.

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