

Builder/Architect

Shore
Developments
Striving for the 'Wow' Factor



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By Jessica Klarp

It's hard not to slow down as you drive past a home designed and built by the team at Millstone-based Shore Developments. Dennis Maxwell, a third-generation builder, along with his sons, Sean and Jason, and business partner Nick Florio, have established a reputation for constructing eye-catching custom and spec homes that sell in high-end markets, including Myrtle Beach, SC, and Long Beach Island, NJ.

Sean and Jason Maxwell, partners in Shore Developments, specialize in building extraordinary Jersey Shore custom homes. Pictured here in front of a custom home in Loveladies, NJ, on Long Beach Island, the brothers built this multimillion-dollar home on spec! P.S. It was sold before the sheetrock was complete!



Jason Maxwell (left), Dennis Maxwell (middle), Sean Maxwell (right) and Nicholas Florio (not shown) are the owners of Shore Developments.

A fine example of their work now sits on a quiet lagoon in the tony beach town of Loveladies, NJ. The multimillion-dollar, 5,600-square-foot, six-bedroom, five-and-a-half-bath home sold before it was even finished. Its most significant feature is a 28'-diameter circular turret, formed by a ring of Andersen casement windows that are topped with glass block. Its roof is clad with standing seam copper. "When you drive by the house on a sunny day, the light refraction

Right: It's all in the details! Exuding elegance and style, this circular, two-story entry foyer is reminiscent of a magical lighthouse. Decorative Solaris glass-block transom windows with clear perimeter and blue center add architectural interest, and when the sun hits the glass at certain times of the day, the light reflects like the beacon of a beckoning lighthouse. The circular staircase was made with 17 riser, 97-degree oak stair and handrail with traditional pintop newel post, and satin black metal balusters with single and double twists and baskets. Skyward is an octagonal coffered ceiling with 7-1/2" crown molding and below, the floor is finished in Caesar Stone 24"x24" porcelain tile. The Twin Ellipse mahogany 6' x 8' leaded glass doors provide a grand entrance.

Below: The fireplace's maple surround with Zimbabwe black granite and river rock veneer create the focal point in this spacious family room overlooking the water. A coffered ceiling with 5-1/2" crown molding, arches supported with columns and the home theater with surround sound set the scene for many memorable gatherings with family and friends.





Sean and Jason Maxwell designed this kitchen to fit into the house's open floor plan. As the heart of the home, they were careful to include architectural details found elsewhere in the home, such as the arc of the center island, with its Labrador Antique granite countertops and river rock back splash. The Maxwells believe that most people want to feel like they are on vacation in their second homes, so this kitchen includes the luxury of custom Russian-made cabinetry, a stainless Viking refrigerator, Fisher & Paykel double-drawer dishwasher and a pot filler faucet over the stove.

What a place to luxuriate! But it may be difficult to choose between soaking in the Kohler infinity tub, filled from the ceiling above and overlooking the see-through fireplace, or the shower room with a Moen rain showerhead plus four body sprays with three thermostatic control valves for the perfect temperature.



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from the glass block is reminiscent of a lighthouse," says Sean, the older of the two brothers. "That aesthetic in a beach setting made sense to us."

The company, which expanded in 2001 by merging Maxwell & Sons with Shore Developments, endeavors to make each house unique — and approaches design with a sense of adventure. The Loveladies property is packed with surprising details, including a two-story entry that has an octagonal coffered ceiling. Sean says he got the idea while visiting Russia. "When I was touring palaces, I made a mental note to incorporate a coffered ceiling if I got the opportunity," he recalls. It proved to be the perfect accent for the impressive Loveladies



The professional landscaping and brick-paved driveway add tremendous curb appeal to this custom home in Plantation Lakes, SC. A hard-coat stucco system was used on the exterior and Buttercup Blend Spanish "S" concrete tiles for the roof.

home. "The buyers love what a dramatic impact it makes the second you walk in the front door," says Sean. "It really provides that 'wow' factor!"

Though the partners collaborate on the designs, "Our meetings are a creative process where we all make decisions about things such as making the bar area circular or

Natural cherry cabinetry with a chocolate glaze accent, cherry corbels and coral travertine stone backsplash create a warm glow in this handsome, traditional-style kitchen. The 6' x 9' center island is topped with granite, and the dual-fuel 60" range with custom-built range hood and a 6' x 2' light-filled transom above provides the perfect atmosphere for entertaining or family gatherings.



including a hot tub on the roof deck,” says Nick Florio — they have separate roles and responsibilities. Nick focuses on the financing, while the Maxwells manage the construction. “For me, it is an amazing thing to see a house take shape from paper to production,” says Nick.

Aside from the turret and coffered ceiling, the property’s other defining features include Brazilian Ipe wood decking and natural cedar shake on the exterior. “Since these are mostly vacation or secondary homes, we try to give them a different feel from the buyers’ primary residences,” notes Jason. But Shore Development’s homes don’t just look spectacular — they offer state-of-the-art functionality. Thanks to an interactive Smart System, the owners of the Loveladies property can control the lights, thermostat, security cameras and more remotely from their home, office or handheld computers.

It’s these kinds of amenities that make Shore Development projects so sought after, according to Douglas Bard of

Oceanside Realty. “Their houses are appealing and sell quickly because they’re not only well built, but offer these unique ‘hidden’ elements,” Bard explains. “Sean and Jason have traveled around the world, which has emboldened them to build outside of a standard template. They have brought back ideas from as far away as Europe or Morocco and incorporate them subtly and successfully into homes here,” he adds.

Once the team has an idea of what they want to build, they take their sketches to an architect. But they are quick to point out that they are never bound to the blue print. “We always ask ourselves, ‘How can we make it better?’” says Dennis, who, as the veteran builder in the group, is a master at altering the floor plan once the shell is up. Sean notes that it’s common to make adjustments to improve a view or add a feature that lends that “wow” factor they are continually striving for. “They are very hands-on,” says architect Rich Tagland of Studio Tagland Architecture. “Where other

The master bathroom is the perfect place to relax after a sun-filled summer day or blustery fall day at the beach! The Dreamline wall-mounted mahogany vanity with raised glass vessel sinks and glass countertop provides the “wow,” and the corner Interlude whirlpool tub facing the see-through fireplace provides the “Ahhh!” The tile floor is 16" x 16" Baja Cream tumbled marble.



This Surf City custom-built beach house takes full advantage of the ocean views from the octagonal second-floor porch. The exterior was finished with weather-resistant Alcoa Cedar Impressions vinyl siding, Andersen Storm Watch windows, vinyl rails, 10" fiberglass structural columns, mahogany front porch and steps and a 14' octagonal copper bell roof.



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Custom Russian-made cabinetry with cherry basket weave wood veneer gives this gourmet kitchen a clean, streamlined look that is appealing to the eye and efficient in its design. The Vizag granite countertops blend handsomely with the unique solid-glass center island countertop by Think Glass. The backsplash is 1" x 1" Playa Blanca marble, and over the stove is 6" x 6" Playa Blanca with 2" x 2" polished pewter accents.

builders are focused on volume, Shore Developments creates character and inserts distinctive detail into each project. I appreciate that, because the end product makes me look that much better," Tagland says with a laugh.

The most recent series of Shore Development homes on Long Beach Island are, as always, design-conscious, but also put consumer need at the forefront. This often means reverse-living floor plans that place heavily utilized areas, such as the kitchen and living room, where the views are the most breathtaking, or incorporating an elevator or a two-sided fireplace to make owners' lives easier and more luxurious.

The next building frontier for Shore Developments will be to make their houses increasingly more eco-friendly and sustainable. "Creating spaces that people can enjoy and also

feel good about is, to us, the ultimate accomplishment," says Jason.

For more information about Shore Developments, call (732) 792-2779 or visit www.shoredevelopments.com. ■

