

matt bachardy building derign

ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

P.O. BOX 2669 MIMBERLEY, TEXAS 78676 512-755-4214 info@mattbachardydesign.com www.mattbachardydesign.com

RIVER HOUSE, west of Wimberley, Texas

My clients have owned this narrow, multi-level, difficult access site along the Blanco River west of Wimberley, Texas since 1975. They camped in a tent trailer on weekends for decades, dreaming of building a home that compliments and works with the site rather than against it.

After much thought and research, they determined the features and materials they would like to build with. The seminal book on planning, "A Pattern Language" was consulted extensively to develop the program for the building. The difficulty of the site was a significant challenge as well. The site has three distinct levels: a flat area on top adjacent to the road (where every ohther house is built), a middle level 40 feet below (most of which is in the flood plain of the river) and a lower level that provides a cypress-shaded park-like area adjacent to the river.

They chose the middle level to be nearer to the river instead of having neighbors 20 feet away on each side, and the logic being that if they were not near the water, they wouldn't go to it very often because of the steep grades from the top to river. The middle level also features a stone retaining wall and steps to the river below the owner built in the late '70's. Two major challenges to building on the middle level concerned access and flooding. The access is by a steep concrete ramp that would not accommodate concrete trucks or any other heavy machinery. Given that the house is constructed of insulated concrete and a steel supported concrete floor on the main level, this required 4 concrete pours, pumped from the street level. The main level had to be set 2' above the 100 year flood elevation as well. This put the decks in the tree canopy, which is ideal for birdwatching, one of the client's hobbies.

Visit the web site my clients created, which tracks the construction in great detail and has many interesting llinks: <u>www.moonmountiangroup.com/home</u>



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P.O. BOX 2669 WIMBERLEY, TEXAS 78676 512-847-0802 VOICE / FAX

SMITH-ZIMMERMAN RESIDENCE PROJECT PROFILE





GENERAL DATA:

 PROJECT WEB SITE:
 WWW.MOONMOUNTAINGROUP.COM/HOME

 All photos and web site development were created by the Owners, Herb Smith and Susan Zimmerman.

 LOCATION:
 BLANCO RIVER FRONT LOT, WEST OF WIMBERLEY, HAYS COUNTY, TEXAS

 TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
 5,278 SQ. FT.

 HEATED AREA:
 2,318 SQ. FT.

Multi-level, industrial contemporary design featuring a modern interpretation of the traditional Texas Hill Country "Dog Run" entrance, with stacked stairways for access to all levels. 3 Bedrooms, 3 full baths, Office. Great room including kitchen and dining. Carport with adjacent workshop. Extensive outdoor decks, patios, planters. Rainwater collection system

SITE PLANNING:

A narrow, restricted access riverfront lot on the Blanco River with heavy tree cover dictated the vehicular access to the building. Site access is by a shared concrete ramp, too steep for large trucks and equipment to navigate. The river side faces due southeast with over a mile of un-buildable flood plain beyond. The 100-year flood plain elevation was determined using a GPS survey. The main level is raised 2 feet above this elevation.

DESIGN FEATURES:

The site's narrow dimensions dictated a vertical design solution. The restricted long distance sight lines to the south-east led to a layout that required interior spaces along the north side of the house to view across the major rooms aligned with the river. At my suggestion, the Owners studied and referred extensively to the book "A Pattern Language" in defining the program for their house.

Prevailing southeast breezes wash over the river and the entire southeast deck and living spaces with pleasant breezes in the warmer months of the year. The site abuts a steep hillside on the north, which helps protect the site from northern cold fronts in the cooler times of the year. The "dog run" entrance is aligned southeast to northwest and is designed to pull ventilation from the entire structure to assist with natural cooling by thermal chimney effect.

Insulated concrete walls and steel superstructure provide sheer structural strength and mass to the building. The ICF walls go all the way to grade to enclose the spaces below the main level to protect the structure from rapid water rises the site periodically experiences. The basement space contains the lift station holding tanks for the rainwater collection system.

Designed for low to zero maintenance: Exterior materials consist of concrete, native limestone, galvalume coated steel, glass and Ipe wood decks – painted surfaces consist of exposed structural steel beams most of which are protected from the weather. Interior finishes consist of stained concrete, cork and linoleum floors, clear coated pine trim, door and window trim, low VOC painted drywall, tile in baths, concrete counter tops.

Exterior doors & windows: Aluminum clad awning, casement and fixed windows; clad slider and swinging doors.

Careful consideration was given to the placement of all windows to promote natural ventilation of the house.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS:

Foundation: Monolithic concrete perimeter beams and column pads on grade. Main floor: 2 1/2" concrete over Vulcraft decking and bar joists. Exterior walls: 6" core ICE Block insulated concrete forms @ grade up to main level, light gauge Berridge Space Frame prefabricated steel stud panels @ upper levels. Interior walls: Light gauge Berridge Space Frame prefabricated steel stud panels. Ceiling insulating panels: EPS foam panels installed between the webs of TJI engineered wood I joist rafters. Structural beams, deck framing: Wide flange steel beams, 16 gauge "C" joists. Roof structure: TJI rafters over heated spaces, steel framing over unheated areas. Roof decking: 5/8" plywood radiant barrier roof decking.

MECHANICAL SYSTEMS:

Air Conditioning system: (3) zone 2 speed 14.0 SEER rated heat pump systems with thermidistat controls. The system runs on low speed most of the time, but will increase capacity when occupant load increases.

Hot water heating system: 85% efficient gas water heater provides domestic hot water.

WATER SYSTEM:



Water supply and wastewater disposal are critical issues in this part of Texas. The Owners are committed to conservation in resources, energy and water.

Water Supply: Rainwater is collected from all of the roof area of the building. The collected water is piped from around the complex to a lift station under the main level on the south-east side of the house. Unique German-made roof washer / leaf filters prevent large debris from entering the 3,000 gallon lift station tanks. The tanks provide enough intermittent storage capacity to receive and hold periodic bursts of rainfall to allow the transfer pump to operate at its rated capacity without losing water to overflow. The transfer pump moves the collected water uphill through a sand filter. The collected rainwater is then stored in a 15,000 gallon fiberglass cistern. The stored water is pressurized and sanitized at the house for domestic use. The existing water well is used is used for irrigation and also provides a back-up indoor water supply if necessary.

Septic System: A standard absorption septic system disposes the waste water.





view from the south-east





view from the north-east

Rivenide Revidence

exterior perspective views







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view from the north-west





view from the south-west

Riverride Revidence

exterior perspective views







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Riverside Residence

main level floor plan



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