

WATERFRONT

WaterFront Real Estate • Charters • Resort Communities



This house on Saugatuck Harbor in Westport, Conn., was designed on spec by a nautically minded architect.



Built with the boater in mind

Westport, Conn., house is accented with 'green' materials and a nautical theme

BY CAROLYN BATTISTA

William Shaffer has designed a waterfront house where people will not only enjoy being near the water, they'll feel like they're *on the water*, aboard a finely finished yacht.

Shaffer, an architect, has designed buildings around the country, including custom waterfront houses for clients in coastal North Carolina; Nantucket, Mass.; and elsewhere. His firm, Shaffer-studio, is based in Westport, Conn., where he grew up. He especially likes designing high-end houses for clients along the Connecticut coast.

He has always designed specific projects for clients, but he has now de-

signed a house to sell. "When you design something 'on spec,' it's much different from designing for a client," he says. "You're your own client, and that opens up unique possibilities."

His spec house, which is on the market for \$5.85 million, sits on a three-quarter-acre lot with 270 linear feet on the "duck pond" on Saugatuck Harbor in Westport. It has a stone-and-shingle exterior, 12 main rooms, 6-1/2 baths, and a three-car garage. Shaffer used high-quality, environmentally sound materials throughout and filled the house with classic nautical details such as several mahogany-

framed round windows that resemble portholes (and that actually open). "In this house," he says, "you'll feel like you're living on a luxury yacht."

He considers the house to be just right for Westport, an affluent but informal community where people love boating and the water; want stylish, comfortable, waterfront homes; and also respect the environment. "In Westport," he says, "blue meets green."

The house is in a neighborhood of yacht clubs with deep-water moorings. Saugatuck Harbor is right on Island Sound, providing ocean access. "But it's protected; houses there don't get the

pounding that you get from the open ocean," he says, and that means fewer maintenance and repair issues. He also notes that the harbor is a place "with lots of activity and sociability."

Shaffer — who likes waves and sea spray — says that working on waterfront houses "is exhilarating," but it's not easy. "Building by the water has become tremendously complicated," he says, citing federal regulations, zoning restrictions and environmental concerns. "Those are challenges."

Following Federal Emergency Management Agency regulations on flood

continued on Page 8

