

**Business**

## Take 10: Designing homes - and building relationships

By **Sean F. Driscoll**

Posted Feb 15, 2018 at 4:40 PM

Updated Feb 18, 2018 at 6:37 AM

EAST HARWICH — Now in its 22nd year, the architectural and building talents of Polhemus Savery DaSilva can be seen up and down the coasts and countryside of Cape Cod and southern New England.

But if it's a home or commercial space that looks like all the others on the block, it's probably not theirs.

"That's our focus — unique and special places," said Aaron Polhemus, president and CEO. "Everything we do is custom. We're not just replicating something that had been created before or shifting something that had been done before. We're really drawing from whatever someone might like and something that fits in the context of where we're working."

Polhemus is the son of founding partner Peter Polhemus; he joined the firm full time in 2005 and has been at the reins of the company since 2016.

"I always enjoyed construction and appreciated architecture as well," he said. "What I was most drawn to was the challenge of putting things together and, ultimately, constructing things."

The company is a fully integrated firm, meaning they employ architects, builders, landscape architects and property management staff to handle all aspects of home construction and maintenance. It's become an expectation from their clientele, many of whom are building multimillion-dollar homes while living full time across the country or even the world.

"More and more in today's world, the clients are looking for a tighter process. They like to be able to come to one source that can bring them through the whole process," he said.

**What is the most important thing your business does?** It's really creating special buildings, special places. Everything we do is special in some way. I think that's what keeps us focused.

**How long have you been in business?** Since 1996.

**What did you do before?** I went to school and did some work on my own, some general contracting-type work and did a couple of projects on my own before coming back here full time.

**How big is your staff?** 45 employees.

**How has the market changed since your business started?** Clients expect us to work with them from start to finish and beyond. The large majority of homes and projects we complete, we take care of now. It's not just designing and building it, it's maintaining and servicing it, or over the years remodeling it. It's this long-term relationship commitment.

**What are your plans for your business's future?** Continue to develop our people, our team, and in doing so continue to strengthen and develop our business.

**What's your most memorable moment with this business?** A good number of very similar moments, which are every time we turn over a project, we do a final walkthrough with our clients and they look at us and say "Wow, this is fantastic, this exceeds our expectations." That's where it's most profound for us.

**What is something people would be surprised to learn about your business?** That we are currently doing work throughout the state and in Rhode Island. Though we are a Cape-based firm, we are doing work up to the North Shore, out to the MetroWest, throughout the South Shore and as far as southern Rhode Island. We recently opened a satellite office in Hingham, so our firm is committed to working throughout coastal southern New England

**What's the biggest challenge about having a business on Cape Cod?** The Cape is a great place, but one of the things we all recognize as a challenge is housing. It's particularly challenging finding young people who are willing and able to work here. That's tough for businesses like ours that rely on having experienced managers and people with management experience.

**What's the best thing about having a business on Cape Cod?** The Cape's a very special place. To be able to live and work in an environment where so many people work to live for a small portion of the year, we get to enjoy the Cape as year-round residents.

— Follow Sean F. Driscoll on Twitter: [@seanfdriscoll](https://twitter.com/seanfdriscoll).



**SIGN UP FOR DAILY E-MAIL**

Wake up to the day's top news, delivered to your inbox

---

**MOST POPULAR STORIES**

---