Amping up useful square footage and improving an awkward layout, without expanding the footprint of the 1950s Westport Cape, was the client’s charge to architect Ann Lathrop. “Our task was to maintain the form, but give it a new twist, and a new life,” says the designer. Lathrop, whose practice includes building significant energy efficiencies into her projects, went even further. Even though the rehab had a tight budget, the design incorporated improved insulation, super-efficient windows and an HVAC system, and what Lathrop calls “a lot of off-the-shelf products that save energy.” These create a stylish design that will cut the home’s operating costs significantly for the long haul. Lathrop also notes that Connecticut has an ongoing Energy Efficiency Fund from which home owners can apply for rebates when they “green up” a home.

The beauty part of the renovation opened up the house with a raised roofline and windowed dormers front and back, providing the second floor with expanded living space and great light. A standing seam metal roof on the new front porch gives the façade what Lathrop calls “shimmer.” Oversized, somewhat chunky porch posts call attention to the front entry, adding substance and a farmhouse feel to the restyled Cape form.

By flipping the position of the kitchen in the floor plan to create a new great room, the owners can also enjoy a prospect toward the nature center that adjoins their property, further enhancing what has become a refreshed and highly functional space. JO