



The facade reflects the industrial history of the site; a glass bridge creates an “invisible” connection to the bedroom wing.

our club member guests as part of that lodge extension.”

### Cozy, not cramped

Hawks Ledge uses smart design to make the most of a small space. An open floor plan combines the kitchen, living, dining, entry and mudroom into one, casual area. A 5- to 6-foot opening leads into the main level master bedroom and has pocket doors that can stay open to enlarge the main living space. “It’s a simple floor plan that feels rather open, even though there are two separate and distinct bedrooms with full baths each,” says Susan Touchette, project architect.

The large, covered wrap-around porch with an outdoor fireplace extends the indoor living space to the outside. And there are lots of windows — tall and short — all with great views. “We have big, 8-foot windows and doors,” says Banks, “and they connect easily to the wrap-around covered deck outside. In the summer months when it’s pleasant, you can open those up, and it’s kind of hard to tell when you’re in versus out.”

An important goal was to integrate indigenous materials and use local craftspeople. A local blacksmith crafted the wrought iron railings, and the stone work was cut from and by area stone and stone masons. The color and other elements of the wood tie back to some of the historic uses of wood in some of the old tobacco barns.

“We really wanted to be able to tell the story of the his-

**Project:** Live/Work Studio II

**Location:** Pittsburgh

**Square footage:** 2,340 square feet  
(1,710 without garage and basement)

**General Contractor:** Studio d’ARC, Pittsburgh

**Designer/Architect:** Studio d’ARC, Pittsburgh

**Land Planner:** Melrose Design Group, Arden, N.C.

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tory of the specific area in which we reside,” says Banks.

### LIVE/WORK STUDIO II: A little bit steel and soul

Husband-and-wife architects Gerard Damiani and Debbie Battistone built a home/work studio for themselves as a prototype project to demonstrate how you can build affordably in an urban infill. They used unique materials with common construction practices in concert with each other and developed an essentially new building type for the city: a live/work space.

Damiani, founder and president of Studio d’ARC, says they never intended to make this particular project their home, though when they arrived in Pittsburgh in 1996, he began his practice by renovating a vacant upper level of a store front that became his first Live/Work Studio space.

“[With Live/Work Studio II] our interest was to show citizens of Pittsburgh how we can densify our neighborhoods by filling in vacant parcels that were once home



sites," says Damiani. "The stimulus of doing this project was to use it as a model to show clients our sensibilities, how to live in this region."

**Open, modern and functional**

"We made many of the spaces open and interconnected — the living/dining/living area, the studio to the open space below, as well as vistas up to a rooftop vestibule," Damian says. The bedroom walls don't quite touch the ceiling, which allows the spaces to feel visually connected.

It was also important to include a small basement to put their high-efficiency furnace and water heater; the laundry area; and general house and office storage, allowing the main floor living spaces to remain free of unnecessary clutter. A glass floor or bridge connects the studio space to the bedroom wing upstairs. This "invisible" barrier that provides a view to the lower level opens up the space further.

The size and placement of windows allow plenty of natural light. The large second-floor window above the street lets in sunlight from the west that penetrates deep into the interior. There is a large motorized sliding skylight approximately 4 1/2 by 4 1/2 square feet in the center of the roof that

lights the entire home and doubles as a thermal chimney.

"The house is oriented east-west," says Damiani. "The garden side is east; the Cor-Ten or metal façade is west. It allows for the southern orientation of the daylighting to come into the house, and that light is distributed throughout the open floor. It eliminates the need for artificial lighting throughout the day. It's only needed in the evening."

There's a large window on the east elevation that connects the living spaces to the ground level garden. It gets lots of morning light; the window helps bring in daylight into the living room part of the home.

"We chose to make the architecture sympathetic to the region, though not a literal expression of it," Damiani says. "In that respect, if you look at the outside of our house and studio, you'll see it has weathering steel and mahogany siding. The idea is that the horizontalness of the siding ties it to the neighboring houses; the vertical corrugations of the metal address the warehouses that are directly across our street. We are in a part of the city that is both industrial and residential."

The Live/Work Studio II won an AIA 2008 Housing Award. **CB**