

# TRANSFORMATIONS

By Stuart Silk

Last year the Board of Trustees approved funds for improvements to the Women's and Girl's Locker rooms, last remodeled in 1999. Many deficiencies needed to be addressed in the new design including, low ceiling heights, deteriorating finishes, poor ventilation and unflattering lighting, to name a few. The design process began in the early summer of 2015 and as it got under way, we identified and prioritized the concerns. Amongst the highest priorities were to create a sense of spaciousness and improved functionality.

## The Women's Locker Room

The old locker room was cramped with tightly packed spaces and low ceiling heights and lacked a sense of privacy. We responded by removing the traditional grid of acoustical tiles and exposing the concrete ceiling that supported the floor above. This added two feet to the ceiling height by carefully inserting height where possible to minimize mechanical ducts and electrical conduit. A paneled reception area was added near the entry for gathering and a central gallery was created in the locker room to give it a sense of character. The wet areas including the showers and toilets were grouped together and resized to modern standards. What we came to call the "prim area" becomes the anchor and a place of focus for the entire space. This is fitting as it is centrally located in the space but also used every day by the members. To address the sense of privacy, we organized the lockers into distinct pods. Breaking the changing areas into separate spaces rooms and locating them in three locations provides for an even distribution and added convenience for the members.

## The Girl's Locker Room

Previously, the space was dated with poor construction quality, materials and a very dated color palette. The floor plan was reimagined and reconfigured to maximize the space efficiency to create a bright, clean space for the girls. The overall numbers of lockers were reduced to current usage numbers and the extra space was used to provide for larger changing rooms and an improved quality of space. They also gained a small cosmetic station and an upgrade to lighting and finishes.

## Improved Lighting and Ventilation

The lighting in the original locker room was typical of an older office building with dropped acoustical ceilings and fluorescent lights. Located on a lower floor with no natural lighting and in the confines of an existing structure, our solution to this problem was a combination of direct down lighting and indirect up lighting. Lighting is key to any space and in the lockers rooms, it created a sense of height and bounced off the ceiling to fill the room with light, which was complimented and augmented by a row of elegant chandeliers. Character was added to the space to create a more sophisticated and timeless feel.

Because the original women's locker room was inadequately ventilated, the mechanical system was retrofitted and modified to provide

better airflow from supply to return air fans. As in all renovations, we kept what worked or what we could work with and made new what needed to be made new. This new layout will significantly increase the comfort level with fresh air supplied to where it is needed and will manage the humidity levels in the shower areas creating a fresh feeling and better temperature control. Louvered lockers were chosen to allow better ventilation so that wet bathing suits would dry quickly.

## Create a Sense of Sophistication & Luxury

Our goal from the beginning was to create a tasteful, traditional design evocative of the ageless beach clubs in the summer shore communities one might find along the eastern seaboard. Our Interiors team, working in concert with the heads of the Women's Locker Room Committee, specified traditional louvered lockers, paneled walls, and traditional crown, casing and base details to create the desired look. Thoughtful choices in the selections of the tile, stone, plumbing fixtures, decorative lighting and furnishings reinforced the feel and cemented the sense of quiet sophistication that the entire team was shooting for – without breaking the bank. We also added a number of amenities big and small, including a new steam room, glass doors on the showers (instead of curtains), to name just two. The result is a locker room setting unique in our area for its elegance and timeless qualities.

## Integrate ADA & Comply with Current Code

It was very important to the entire team that both locker rooms reflect current standards of accessibility and user friendliness. These principles, known under the acronym as ADA, were integrated throughout the locker room to insure that all members could use the facilities equally. The location, configuration, and sizes of all the showers, toilets, sauna and newly added steam room, and the changing rooms were all designed to not just look great, but also to remove barriers and improve access and functionality for all physical abilities.

The entire team worked selflessly throughout the process towards a common goal and the results show. The team included the following individuals:

- ▶ STC House & Grounds Committee Chair:  
Chris Aggerholm
- ▶ Women's Locker Room Committee Co-Chairs:  
Mary Sharp and Sarah Peyton
- ▶ STC Representatives:  
Silja Griffin and Robert Thom
- ▶ Stuart Silk Architects: Stuart Silk,  
Andrew Patterson, Jonathan Beech
- ▶ Stuart Silk Architects Interiors Team:  
Julianne Shaw and Janae Klein
- ▶ Simmons Construction:  
Joe Simmons and Robin Fawcett
- ▶ Owner's Representative: James Stewart
- ▶ Photography: Alex Hayden

