

CASE STUDY



AFFORDABLE EMPLOYEE HOUSING, ASPEN POLICE DEPARTMENT

ASPEN, COLORADO

ARCHITECT CHARLES CUNNIFFE ARCHITECTS (CCA)
INSTALLER SHAW CONSTRUCTION
MARKET SEGMENT MULTI HOUSING, APARTMENTS
BUILD TYPE NEW CONSTRUCTION
USE FAÇADES
YEAR 2018

TRESPA PRODUCT TRESPA PURA NFC®
FLUSH SIDING



FINISH MATT



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SNOW OR SHINE, TRESPA PURA NFC® WITHSTANDS THE HARSHTEST WEATHER CONDITIONS

Nestled between the majestic peaks of the Elk Mountains in the heart of White River National Forest, Aspen, Colorado is one of the most luxurious ski resorts in the world. Living in a world-class mountain town definitely comes with its perks, such as fresh alpine air, breathtaking sceneries and spectacular pistes just around the corner. But Aspen's high quality of life has a serious price tag: skyrocketing house and rental prices. That is why the city is making efforts to provide affordable homes to its employees. Let's take a look at the recently built Affordable Employee Housing units of the Aspen Police Department, designed by Charles Cunniffe Architects (CCA).



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– Architect Charles Cunniffe

Aspen is one of the priciest real estate markets in the United States. In this city of luxury second, third and even fourth homes, the average house price in 2018 was about \$5,000,000. This excludes most full-time residents from living in the city or owning a home. For employees and local business owners, the people who are crucial to the local economy, it is almost impossible to live where they work. Affordable housing projects, run by the city or private companies, help to provide employees with affordable housing within a reasonable distance from their workplace. In this case, the units of the Aspen Police Department are specifically slated for police officers and city employees.

Architect Charles Cunniffe has extensive experience with affordable housing projects in Aspen and surroundings. “We’ve done projects in Snowmass, Telluride, and other mountain areas. The main difference between affordable housing and other projects? Greater concerns about budget. Also, the scale has to be appropriate, so it can be affordable. When it

comes to materials, while always nice, we also look for durability, low maintenance, long-lasting, and sustainable.”

Cunniffe has been working with the City of Aspen since the 1980’s and completed a large variety of city projects. The design of the new police station started several years ago, when the City asked CCA to design a modern city hall with multiple facilities. “We proceeded to design a civic center that included the police

facility. When some historic houses at the site of the police station had to be moved, we were able to incorporate affordable housing into the project.”

The new housing units are located in an 8,220 square-foot (764 m²) freestanding building in downtown Aspen, on the same property as the police station. Both, the two-story (above grade) police station, and the three-story housing building are part of

a podium construction; they are on top of an underground parking garage for the police and emergency personnel. There are eight housing units of various sizes, from a studio to three-bedrooms. Thanks to the abundance of large-scaled windows all around the building, all units provide stunning views. The units on the north look at Red Mountain and the untouched beauty of Hunter Creek, paradise for hikers and bikers. On the South, there is Aspen Mountain – Ajax, for locals – and on the East you can see the impressive Independence Pass.

The exterior of the housing building is clad with 8,000 square-feet (743 m²) of Trespa Pura NFC® PU02 Classic Oak. “Each of the surrounding buildings has its own colour palette, so we wanted to have something that would fit in softly, but not look like any of the others,” Cunniffe explains. “Some of the buildings have soft green or greyish siding. The Classic Oak looks good with the Aspen Police Department’s brick and with the wood siding utilized on the adjacent housing complex.” ▶



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— Architect Charles Cunniffe



Although located on the same property, the police station and the housing units each have their own look. “The police station is in the process of receiving its LEED Gold designation as well as a WELL Building certification,” says Cunniffe. “It has extensive glazing, high windows, ample natural light, and features brick and stone. When choosing siding material for the employee housing units, we looked at a variety of options.” An important consideration were the high altitude and demanding climate. Thanks to their advanced technology, Trespa Pura NFC® siding solutions are built to withstand harsh climatic and environmental conditions for many years. Sun, rain and snow have no significant effect on the surface. “There is usually lots of sun, periods of dry, and sometimes wildfires so we have to consider all of those things when we design. We chose Trespa Pura NFC® for sustainability, durability and weather resistance.”

For CCA, sustainability is always a key part of the design process, and this housing project in Aspen is no exception. “We’re looking

to achieve LEED Gold as a certification. Sustainability and low maintenance are some of the key requisites. We also used solar panels and alternative energies and we’ve oriented the building to be as passive as possible. But its primary function is to provide good and affordable housing for city employees, and to not burden them with the extra costs of maintenance and cleaning. The siding material had to be durable and long lasting so that the building wouldn’t become expensive to maintain.”

Cunniffe had not worked with Trespa Pura NFC® products before, but is happy with the end result in the Aspen housing units. “The product was new to us, we hadn’t learned much about it until this project. But it looks good, everybody is pleased with it. We’re considering it now in a housing project in Snowmass, as well as for the sheriff’s office in Norwood.”

CHARLES CUNNIFFE ARCHITECTS

CCA IS A PROMINENT ARCHITECTURAL FIRM WITH A LONG HISTORY OF RESIDENTIAL, MUNICIPAL AND COMMERCIAL PROJECTS IN COLORADO AND THE WESTERN U.S. ORIGINALLY FROM NEW ENGLAND, CHARLES CUNNIFFE ARRIVED IN COLORADO IN 1979 TO WORK ON THE RENOVATION OF ASPEN’S LANDMARK HOTEL JEROME. IN 1981 HE FOUNDED CHARLES CUNNIFFE ARCHITECTS (CCA), WHICH NOW EMPLOYS TWENTY PROFESSIONALS AND COMPLETES 40-60 PROJECTS EVERY YEAR.

CONTACT US

TRESPA INTERNATIONAL B.V.

P.O. Box 110, 6000 AC Weert
Wetering 20, 6002 SM Weert
The Netherlands
www.trespa.com

TRESPA NORTH AMERICA LTD.

350 Fifth Avenue, Ste 4610
New York, NY 10118
United States of America
Tel: +1 800 487-3772
Info.NorthAmerica@Trespa.com

TRESPA UK LTD.

35 Calthorpe Road
Edgbaston
Birmingham, B15 1TS
United Kingdom
Tel: 0808-2340268
Info.UK@Trespa.com

VISIT US

TRESPA DESIGN CENTRE WEERT

Wetering 20
6002 SM Weert
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 (0) 495 458 845
TDC.Weert@Trespa.com
www.trespa.com/us/tdc

TRESPA DESIGN CENTRE BARCELONA

Calle Ribera 5,
08003 Barcelona
Spain
Tel: +34 (0) 93 295 4193
TDC.Barcelona@Trespa.com
www.trespa.com/us/tdc

TRESPA DESIGN CENTRE SANTIAGO

Eliodoro Yáñez 2831
Torre A - Local 1
Providencia, Santiago
Chile
Tel: +56 2 4069990
TDC.Santiago@Trespa.com
www.trespa.com/us/tdc

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