



CASE  
STUDY

**Project:**

Sarasota County Fire  
Station #13

**Location:**

Siesta Key, Florida

**Architect:**

Todd Sweet,  
AIA, LEED AP

Sweet Sparkman  
Architecture and Interiors

**Builder:**

Willis Smith Construction

**Project Size:**

10,500 sq. ft.

## GUIDING SIESTA KEY'S ARCHITECTURAL FUTURE: SARASOTA COUNTY FIRE STATION #13

When Sweet Sparkman Architecture and Interiors took on the design of Fire Station #13 in Siesta Key, the first challenge was the limited size of the designated lot. The resolution of that problem leveraged plans used in the construction of the Sarasota County's #12 and #14 Fire Stations, which resulted in a unique 10,500 sq. ft., two-story structure that doubled the size of the original station and significantly expanded the number of first responders who could be accommodated.

Guiding principles for the design, according to architect Todd Sweet, AIA, LEED AP, were durability, sustainability, and livability. Also top of mind was a look that fit into the beach vernacular and the nearby Siesta Key Park and Pavilion, also designed by Sweet Sparkman, while retaining some elements of the Station's heritage.

In just over a year from groundbreaking to the fire department's version of a ribbon-cutting, a ceremonial hose uncoupling, all elements of that vision came to fruition.

The first story houses two drive-through bays for a fire truck and ambulance, as well as an ATV launch port to respond to incidents on the nearby public beach. Also on that level are the decontamination room and storage areas for gear, hoses, etc. Upstairs are living quarters with space for eight first responders. Amenities include separate bunk rooms, a fitness area, office space, a day room, a dining area, and a screened lanai.

In addition to stairs, a brass firepole also connects the upper and lower areas.



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**"It's always satisfying to give back to those who risk so much for our citizens," Sweet said. "Helping make first responders' lives safer and easier is a task we love to take on," he added, "and we're always grateful for the opportunity."**

— Todd Sweet,  
AIA, LEED AP

The sleek exterior of Fire Station #13 was designed for durability and easy maintenance, incorporating cementitious panels that can withstand the beach environment. The panel's alternating grays and whites play on the bright quartz sand of nearby Siesta Key Public Beach and come together to form a modern take on weathered cedar shingle panel siding common in coastal architecture. Inside are low-maintenance, high-durability polished concrete floors.

Replacing the original station built in 1974, the new facility is built to withstand a Category 4 hurricane. It also was designed to merit certification under the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system for green buildings.

As a tribute to the original station, brick from that structure was preserved and reconstructed as interior walls in several locations in the new fire station.

County officials have lauded the research, creativity, and thought Sweet Sparkman put into this and the other county facilities it has designed, noting the teamwork required by all participants – public and private – to meet the myriad goals of such work.

## About Sweet Sparkman

Sweet Sparkman Architecture and Interiors is a multi-disciplinary architecture and planning firm specializing in community-oriented projects and high-end residential, as well as interior design.

**For more information, visit [sweetsparkman.com](https://www.sweetsparkman.com) or call 941.952.0084.**