

From the desk of Peter J. Fusaro



Congratulations to Central HBRA on your successful 70th Anniversary Connecticut Home & Remodeling Show!

"It was our most profitable Show in our 70 year history with attendance of over 13,000," said CEO, Eric Person. "Feed-

back from exhibitors and attendees are that people are ready to do the home improvement projects – they came to the show ready to buy."

Congratulations to Fairfield County's HBRA on their inaugural Luxury Home Tour!

"Over 140 unique visitors toured four beautifully crafted and decorated spec homes from \$2.3 million to \$6.5 million and the event raised over \$4,000 for charity," said CEO, Gina Calabro.

The builders included Doherty & DeLeo and Altamura Homes in Darien, and Argus Development & Karp Associates in Greenwich. Many thanks to Sound Beach Partners for hosting the kick off party. (SEE COVER STORY in this issue)

During the Luxury Home Tour, I asked Ken Deleo from Doherty & Deleo Development to give me his thoughts on the economy. Here's what Ken had to say:

I love Connecticut, almost everything about it, and for many years being a home builder was a great way to make a living.

Currently, with all of the fees that are associated with selling a home, its getting very hard to make a living building spec homes.

The price of new homes is the lowest its been in years, and everything, including land, architects, engineers, permits, building materials, conveyance tax, etc. has been increasing.

I really hope that whoever is the next governor can figure out how to address the financial problems our state is in, because raising taxes isn't the solution . . . The more taxes are raised the more people leave the state.

– Ken DeLeo, Doherty & DeLeo Development

Summer is here! Please join us at our 15th Annual NAHB BUILD-PAC Fiano Family Golf Classic July 10, 2017 played at TPC River Highland Cromwell, CT

2017 Legislative Session

Thank You, Bill Ethier, for the long session and everyone who attended Home Building Industry Day at the Capital. (See photos in this issue.)

The Budget Goes to Special Session - Dominating all other issues this year, again, is the worsening state budget deficit. For all advocates and organizations, it's been tough to break through the "noise" of budget talk. Democrats and Republicans in both the House and Senate, as well as the Governor, have all proposed different solutions to close the growing and already massive budget deficits. Most, but not all, realize that more revenues from higher taxes are not possible or wise. There will be Special Sessions this summer and fall to close whatever deal is made.

Property Tax Exemption Bill dies in Appropriations

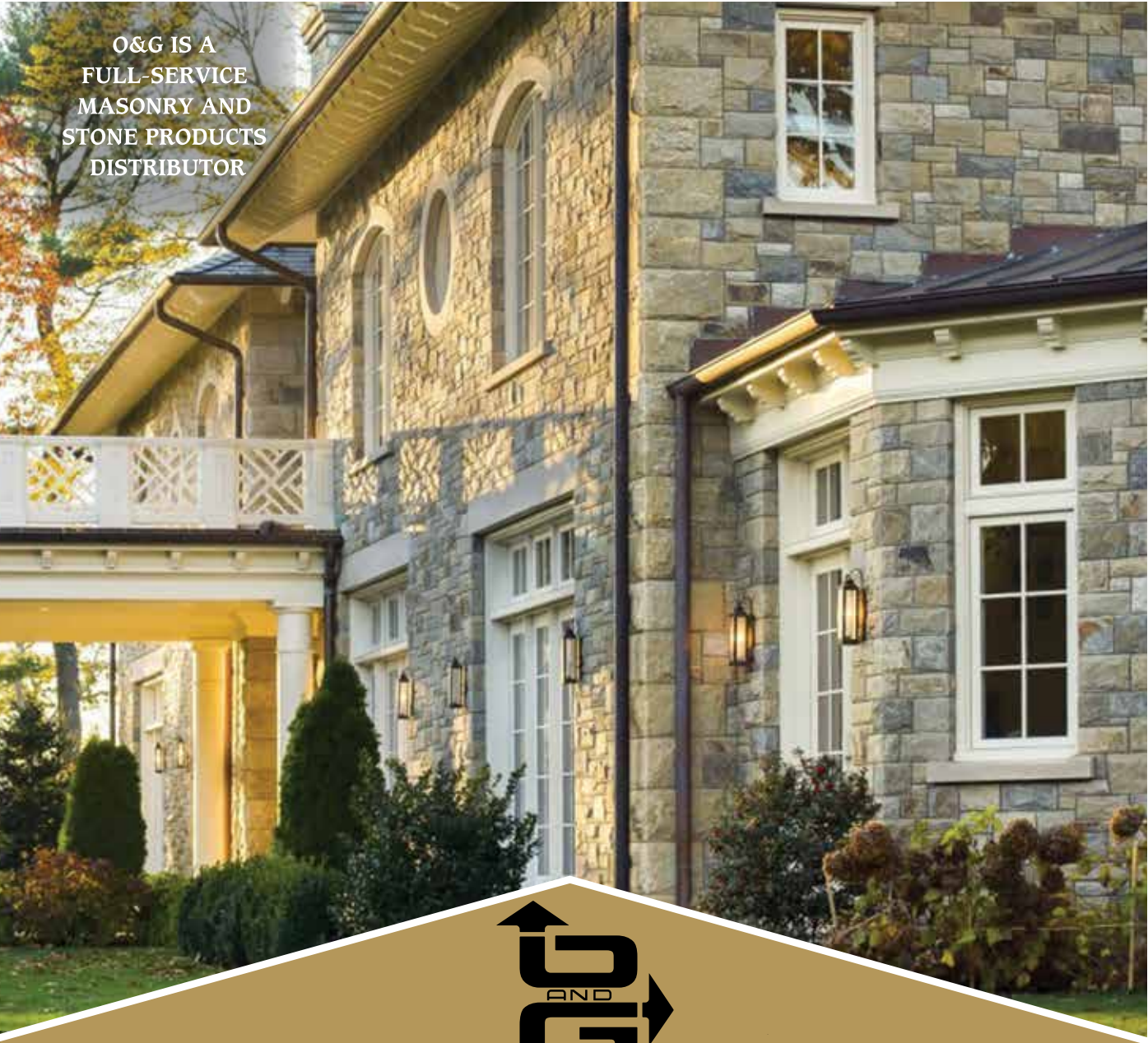
As for the HBRA's top issue, our bill to adopt a property tax exemption for homes under construction passed unanimously in the Planning and Development Committee, but the bill later died in Appropriations. Legislators there on both sides of the aisle were hesitant to place any more burden on municipalities, knowing that various budget versions would reduce state aide for them.

Crumbling Concrete Issue

Competing versions of solutions to the crumbling concrete issue remain in play, and will be held over for a Special Session along with the Budget. We're trying to avoid a requirement to test aggregate or even finished concrete, for the mineral pyrrhotite, because the test is unreliable, and there is no standard method. We don't even know how much pyrrhotite in aggregates or concrete is too much such that it causes the crumbling problem years later. However, knowing that the issue has been caused by too much pyrrhotite in aggregates from one known gravel pit, the logical solution to avoid future problems, for now at least, is to prevent those specific aggregates from being used in concrete batching.

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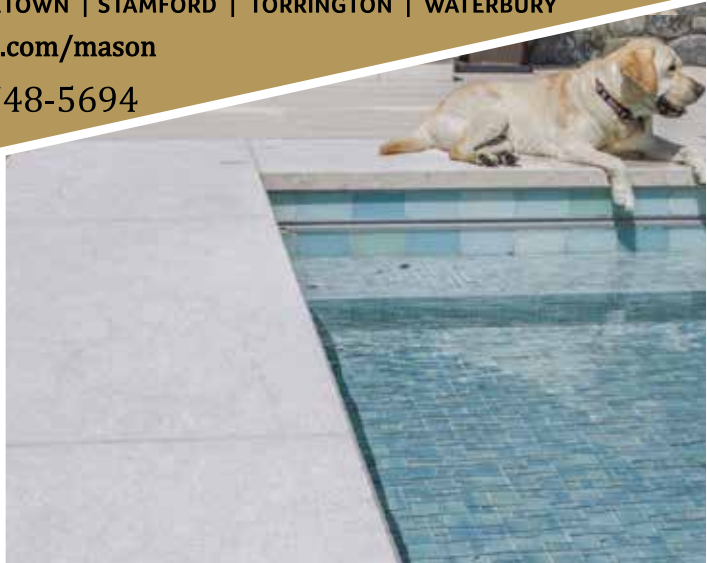
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A Senate bill that would help fund a fix to existing foundation problems by placing a \$12 charge on everyone's homeowners insurance policy statewide has met resistance in the House. At this time, everyone is waiting for the House Speaker's proposed solution. Fortunately, the Speaker has kept Bill involved in negotiations and our concerns in the forefront. One HBRA solution the Speaker is considering is a training program for contractors, so more builders can help fix impacted homes.

Dept. Of Public Health Regulation of Wastewater

Effective July 1, 2017, developments with 7,500 gpd of wastewater flow will be regulated by DPH. Current law threshold is 5K gpd. The difference is a development of 50 or less bedrooms versus 33 or less bedrooms that will be regulated by DPH. According to leading HBRAC developer and affordable housing advocate, Bob Fusari, "The Affordable Housing community considers this a huge victory, and a step in the right direction."

Stay tuned for a report from our CEO, Bill Ethier, after the session ends. Go to www.hbract.org/2017Session to see all the testimony Bill has provided to the legislature this year on our behalf, and where his final report will be posted.

All the best,
 Peter J Fusaro
 CGP,CGB,CAPS,GMB,MCGP
 Chairman & President HBRA of CT

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