

# CONNECTICUT BUILDER

The Magazine of the Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut

Summer 2018  
Interactive Digital Edition



**William H. Ethier**  
HBRA of Connecticut CEO 1993-2018

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MID LEFT & FAR RIGHT: Peter Cadoux Architects  
BOTTOM CENTER: Beinfield Architecture and Clarity Home Interiors

# CONNECTICUT BUILDER

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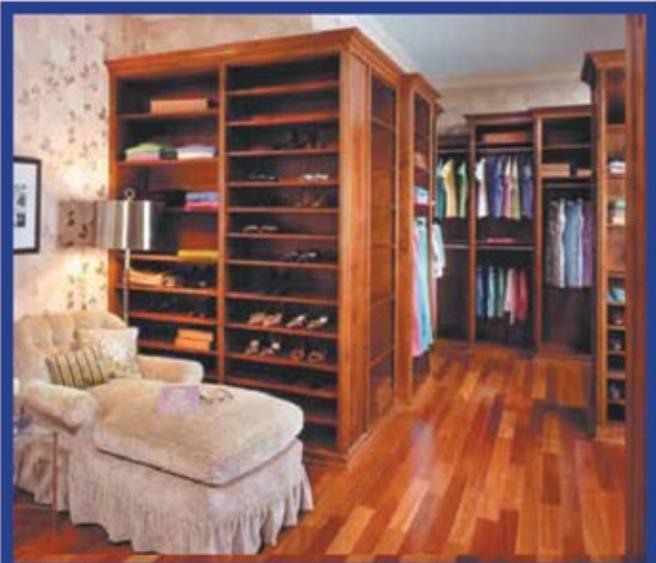
**On the cover** - On June 7th, more than 100 friends, family and dignitaries gathered at the Wallingford Country Club to recognize Bill Ethier for his 25 years of service as CEO of the state HBRA.

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## Connecticut Builder

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## From the desk of Peter J. Fusaro



The 2018 CT Legislative Session ended on May 9th, and Bill Ethier provided this summary of critical legislation passed and defeated:

“This legislative session can be summarized as a status quo event. Everything we opposed did not pass or it was

amended to resolve our concerns. On the other hand, the priority bills we wanted also did not pass.

Our policy statement at the beginning of the year said, “do no more damage to Connecticut’s economy and help us lead Connecticut back to economic strength.” So, while some would say, no more damage done is a successful legislative year, it is at least half a victory. However, it does not overcome the state’s need to move the regulatory and tax needles in a positive direction.

Housing permits plummeted over 17% for all of 2017 compared to 2016, and 2016 was down from 2015. We’re headed in the wrong direction. We need the legislature to improve the regulations and taxes that specifically impact housing construction because without housing leading the way, Connecticut’s economy will not recover.

We did defeat legislation that would have hurt our industry, from a new fee on subdivisions to purchase more open space to an ill-conceived inclusionary zoning proposal that would have mandated most multifamily projects statewide to set aside a percentage of units at affordable levels.

But we did not get our top three priorities: property tax relief for homes under construction, positive pro-housing changes and simplification of the state’s zoning enabling act, and positive changes to how advanced treatment wastewater systems are regulated.

Effective advocacy, consistently and professionally delivered by the HBRA of CT, is so important in order to achieve the victories we did get. With more political involvement by our members, we can transform a status quo session into real positive changes in our regulatory and tax environment and move CT forward.”

After 25 years serving the Connecticut HBRA as an outstanding CEO and lobbyist extraordinaire, Bill Ethier retired on June 1st. HBRA members throughout the state gathered on June 7th at the Wallingford Country Club to celebrate Bill, and thank him for his leadership and friendship over the years. Please see coverage of Bill’s retirement party in this issue under State Association News.

A search committee of HBRA leaders, ably led by incoming President, Chris Nelson, spent several months interviewing potential candidates to replace Bill. I am pleased to report that Jim Perras has been hired, and has taken on the role of new CEO of HBRA CT. Jim is an attorney with over 20 years of government experience. He has worked in a number of senior advisory positions to legislative leaders and state agency heads. Jim was most recently employed with the law firm of Wilson Elser, LLP, where he represented a diverse array of clients with complex issues before the state legislature and government agencies. Welcome aboard, Jim!

As the summer approaches, I want to encourage all to attend the 16th Annual NAHB BUILD-PAC Fiano Family Golf Classic on Monday July 9th at the TPC River Highlands in Cromwell. You will have the pleasure of playing 18 holes on this amazing PGA championship course, followed by a gourmet dinner reception under tent.

Help the HBRA of CT retain our #1 standing in the country for a BUILD-PAC fund raising event. For questions, call BUILD-PAC Trustee and Golf Committee co-chair, George LaCava at (860) 632-7863.

All the best,

Peter J. Fusaro  
CGP, CGB, CAPS, GMB, MCGP  
Chairman & President HBRA of CT

## 2018 Housing Trends



Look who's driving the housing market! We know all about empty nesters, BUT for years, builders and realtors have been agonizing over when millennials were going to leave their parent's basement and start buying homes. Well, the tide has turned. According to Zillow's 2016 Housing Trend Report, almost half of U.S. homebuyers are under the age of 36. Millennials are beginning to make very similar decisions to their parents - the kids, the house in the 'burbs and the SUV.

*Hillcrest Village*, in Southington, built by Verna Builders and very adeptly marketed by Calcagni Rea Estate.

### Millennials and empty nesters have a lot in common

Both age groups like new construction & opt for amenities over home size . . . and their favorite features are a laundry room, a mud room or drop zone, plenty of closets, lots of open gathering space, and luxury finishes like granite or quartz counters, and stainless steel appliances.

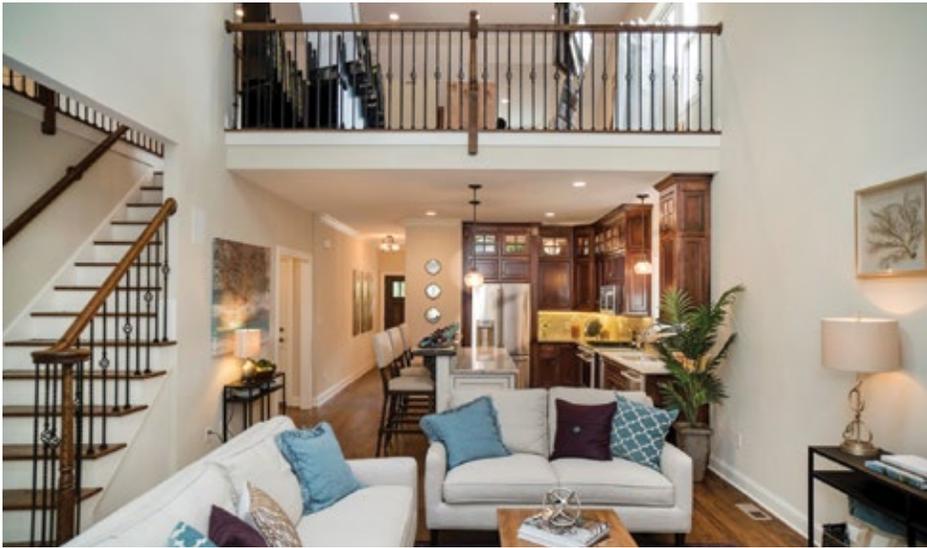


Ashish & Fairy Dahria

### Meet Ashish & Fairy Dahria, age 32

They are Millennials and Indian. Ashish works for ESPN & Fairy works for Cigna, and they just bought their 1st home at





**AFFORDABILITY & LOCATION are the keys to market success TODAY!**

The vast majority of today’s homebuyers are extremely price sensitive. BUT they also want to live in the right towns, and quality schools have become more important than taxes. The right towns in Hartford County: Glastonbury, Simsbury, Avon, West Hartford, Suffield, Rocky Hill and Southington.

**Asian buyers are important segment of the market**

Asians, and in particular those of Indian decent, are key to new construction market, because they value home ownership & education. If you sell to one Indian buyer, they will bring you more buyers, because the Indians are proud of their purchase, and they promote it to others.



Hillcrest Village home



This young Indian couple purchased a home at T&M’s South Windsor Woods. A whopping 61 % of South Windsor Woods buyers are Indian, and another 9% are Asian/Chinese. If you get one Indian buyer, they will bring you more buyers. They’re proud of their purchase, and will promote it to family & friends.



Terri and Steve Eddings

Meet Terri and Steve Eddings, who moved to Hillcrest from Colorado to get closer to their newly married son – a major reason for empty nester relocation! As with many CT communities, Hillcrest Village buyers are split right down the middle between millennials and empty nesters. In fact, several parents of millennial buyers have followed their kids & bought at Hillcrest to be close to their grandchildren!

*(continued)*



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## 2018 Housing Trends

(continued)



### It all starts with the school system.

*Quality schools are more important than taxes today.* That's why the website Niche.com is so popular. According to Niche, the Best School Districts in the Hartford area are Glastonbury & Simsbury and the Best Places to Live are West Hartford, Avon and Simsbury.

T&M Homes has four new communities this year – 2 Single Family & 2 PUDs – and they are all in the RIGHT towns.

*Rocky Hill Estates* is a compact 14 single family homes starting in the hi \$300,000's

\*\*The town of Rocky Hill is doing the unheard-of in Connecticut - building a school to accommodate growing enrollment, mostly from Asian families.

T&M analyzes & value engineers their floorplans. \*NOTE the popular features their 2,400 Colebrook model includes: a mud room off the garage, both a WIC and WIP, laundry room off den & two walk-in closets in the master suite. There are even walk-in closets in secondary bedrooms, and you can never have enough closets. The Grand Plus version adds a 4th BR for a total of 3,000 sf. All bases are covered!



**Glastonbury Glen** – a PUD of 18 detached homes, starting again in the hi \$300,000's, offers the same models as Rocky Hill, and that always includes a ranch model. Here's a smaller ranch at 1,628sf. NOTE mud room, separate laundry, WIP, 2 WIC in MBR.

(continued)

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## 2018 Housing Trends

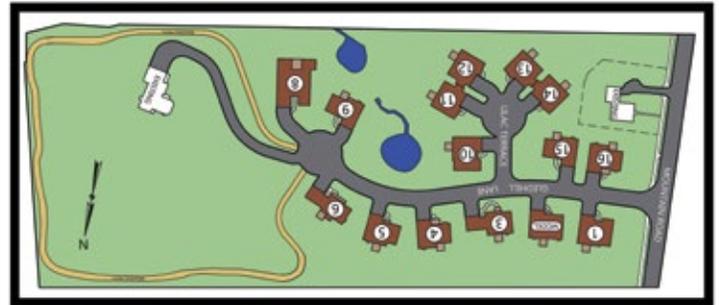
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Finally, T&M is building *Gledhill Estates* in West Hartford – an upscale 15 lot PUD on 8 acres, the former Gledhill Nursery. The 3,600 sf model home includes a large kitchen/breakfast nook, open to large FR; formal DR, home office, spacious master suite, three additional bedrooms, 5 ½ baths, and a partially-finished lower level with entertainment and exercise rooms. \*Priced upper \$600,000’s to \$900’s. – 8 deposits pre-construction

Bill Ferrigno, Sunlight Construction, is tapping into Affordability & Location with his new community, *Cambridge Crossing* in the top tier town of Simsbury – a mix of single family detached and patio attached homes, a walk to town and Farmington Rails & Trails, starting at \$359,000, with 18 homes specially priced at under \$300,000 for those who qualify under the Incentive Housing Zone.

Johnny Carrier is building *Yorkshire at Farmington*, 94 Townhomes within walking distance of UConn Health Center and 3 miles from West Hartford Center and West Farms Mall. Starting in the low \$400’s, with open luxury kitchens, first floor living options & a clubhouse with lower level billiards & English pub.

By Carrier has a NEW 12 lot single family in the heart of Glastonbury, another top tier town. *Wendell’s Woods* has first floor masters and ranch models with prices in the \$700,000’s.



Groundbreaking Ceremony



In New Haven County, Kenny Horton has this new HOBI winning five story Whitfield building at 66 High Street in the sought after shore town of Guilford - 2 blocks to the Guilford Green. It features elegant elevator foyers, luxury interiors, and balconies overlooking marshland. He’s set a new luxury price pt. in Guilford, and recently sold a combined 2 units to downsizers for \$2.3 million.

(continued)



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## 2018 Housing Trends

(continued)



In Fairfield County, Danielle Bijanada & Glenn Tatangelo of Love Where You Live are successfully selling location and lifestyle at the *Village at Southport*. Cracker jack new construction listing agent, Denise Walsh of William Raveis uses a Southport lifestyle video on the Village

at Southport website and social media, including Pinterest events, to appeal to empty nesters. The 16 attached condos are a stone's throw from I-95, but a walk to Southport Village. Danielle began construction in August and Denise Walsh has SOLD 11 of 16 at \$1.2 - 1.5 million.

The open floorplans push all of the right buttons, with plenty of glass, dark powder coated window & door frames, quartz mitered slab counters and what they call a Terrace Level rather than a walk out basement.

## Impact of Technology



Today homebuyers can drive around a neighborhood with Zillow running on their smart phone, and see what's for sale and for how much; what has sold and at what prices; take a virtual tour, learn the price history and find out what the real-estate tax is.

Steve Temkin pays \$525/mo. to be a featured community on Zillow, and an enhanced contract at \$1000/month, gets them 40,000 impressions spread among Zillow, Trulia and Facebook. The Facebook "stalking" ads are for Facebook users who search on Zillow and Trulia. T&M has found that concentrating on these sites rather than general online advertising is a better use of marketing dollars, and a brief video tour greatly increases the number of Zillow views. A drop down menu on T&M's website contact form allows site visitors to select Zillow as the source of how they heard about a T&M home or development. (Zillow has begun buying & selling homes. See article In Builder News this issue.)

Another great tool to use for online promotion is virtual staging, which helps online & social media promotion of a second model without the expense of real staging, or as virtual stager and photographer Jim Fuhrmann says,



Jim Fuhrmann virtually staged this loft option in T&M's South Windsor Woods townhouse

A sales agent can use his or her smart phone or iPad to show a potential buyer several virtually staged options for different flex rooms as they walk through an empty home or model.

- Jim Fuhrmann,  
New England Web Services,  
West Hartford

(continued)

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## 2018 Housing Trends

### Housing as a Service

*44% of the homes you're selling to Millennials may be the home they retire in.*

That's a scary proposition. . . But why not look at it as an opportunity to build long term relationships thru an annual maintenance contract vs. good will services you're offering free of charge! Look at every new home you build as an opportunity to develop a lasting, highly-profitable relationship with the buyer, because they are going to need maintenance services, upgrades, additions or remodels for their home.

A number of custom builders in Fairfield County provide maintenance and remodeling services ex. Hobbs Inc. has a subsidiary, Hobbs Care. However this can be done in



all price ranges. In Hartford County, Kent Pecoy offers maintenance and remodeling services as a separate profit center. Peter Sciarretta, Hemingway Construction, offers added services to his clients with the flexibility to choose a *price per season, per year, by the hour or on demand*. The Hemingway Home Program overcomes some homeowner's hesitancy to commit to a contract.

**Builders Take Note:** If you look at a first-purchase new home on a piece of property as an opportunity to have a lasting, highly-profitable relationship, not only with the buyer, but with the resident who'll need services, upgrades, additions, replacements, remodels, etc. on that home, perhaps through an entire adult life, you're in a different more resilient business! ■

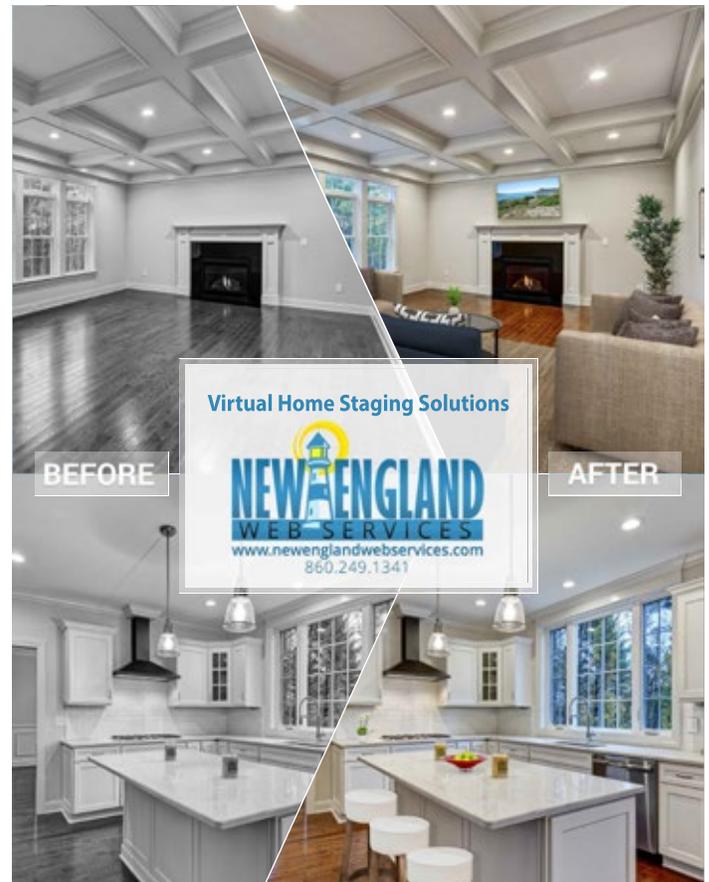
### Virtual Staging (continued)



Jim Fuhrmann virtually stages the HBRA House of the Year for Sunlight Construction



Virtually staged breakfast room/LR in Avon House of the Year



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# The Biggest Kitchen & Bath Trends This Year



This striking SBP Homes kitchen features Wolf and Sub Zero appliances, including a wine refrigerator and freezer column from County TV & Appliance.

This HOBI winning Westport kitchen by Bluewater Home Builders is designed with channel board ceiling and quartz double islands.

According to NKBA Design Trends Report, homeowners want clean, minimalist, modern kitchens and baths – but with a touch of luxury.

## Kitchens

In the kitchen, amazingly, white and gray continue to dominate; quartz has officially taken over as the countertop of choice; and there is a preponderance of hardwood flooring!

We are seeing a big trend in large format porcelain or sintered slabs for backsplashes.

- Tyra Dellacroce, CT Stone

“If you take into account both new construction and remodeling, quartz countertops are leading natural stone by close to 70% vs. 30%!”

- David Trachten, Viking Kitchens



This gray & white kitchen features a modern Neolith Iron Copper backsplash and Calacatta Gold honed 3cm counters from Connecticut Stone.

(continued)



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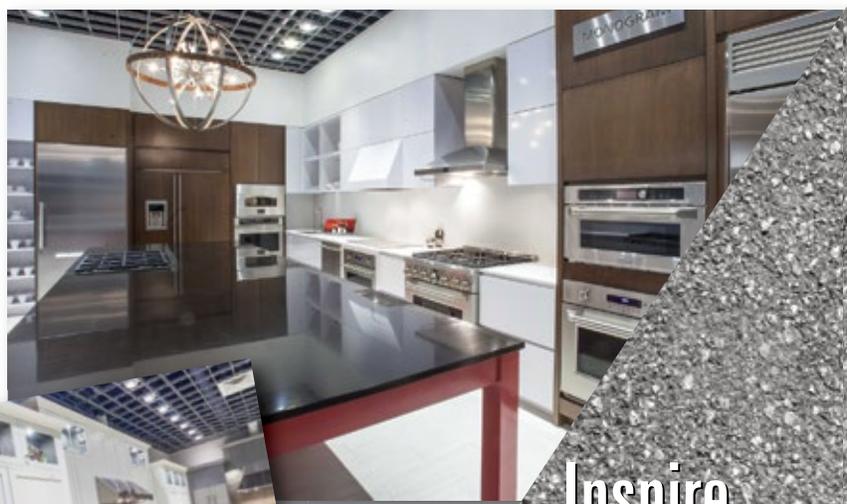
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## The Biggest Kitchen & Bath Trends This Year

(continued)



This gorgeous kitchen is in the Spec Home of the Year by VAS Construction and is equipped with stainless steel Thermador appliances from Aitoro Appliance.



Sunwood Development is building the single family development, Bridgewater in Northford, CT. The dark wood floors in the model kitchen contrast with soft white and grey painted cabinets. Special features include staggered height for the mullioned glass door corner cabinet, the use of detailed island turnings and a convenient buffet area separating the kitchen and the family room.

**Designer:** Nicole Woodsby, Viking Kitchens

**Cabinets:** HomeCrest, Brenner, French Vanilla perimeter, HomeCrest, Brenner, Willow Island

**Counters:** Cambria Quartz, Berwyn



This classic white custom kitchen by Viking Kitchens, features Ultracraft Cabinetry in the Breckenridge door style with Arctic White paint, which contrasts with the dark cherry wood island. A custom range hood with an open display, showcases the homeowner's extensive glass and ceramic collections, and is flanked by full length glass cabinetry. Panels conceal the dishwasher and refrigerator for an integrated look, and a detailed coffered ceiling, inlaid with beadboard, adds to this kitchen's visual appeal.

**Builder:** Creative Builders

**Designer:** Josh Wood, Viking Kitchens  
josh.wood@vikingkitchens.com

**Cabinets:** Ultracraft with Breckenridge door

(continued)



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## The Biggest Kitchen & Bath Trends This Year

(continued)



This custom home, built by Gateway Development, overlooks Long Island Sound in Milford. To maximize the warmth of the space, the beauty of the views, and the light from the available windows, the design of the kitchen centers on the main island.

Generous counter space leads from the integrated Subzero refrigerator, to a La Cornue range, past kitchen windows that frame a unique black stone farm sink, and then around to a family dining area. The island is Alleanza Quartz White Statuary Honed. Generous storage is provided by Greenfield cabinets with Jackson doors painted in Surfside, which also frame the wine cooler. A specially designed nook provides extra storage and uses the backsplash tile pattern to echo the design theme.

**Builder:** Gateway Development

**Designer:** Stacey Trachten, Viking Kitchens [stacey.trachten@vikingkitchens.com](mailto:stacey.trachten@vikingkitchens.com)

**Cabinets:** Greenfield, Jackson door finished in Surfside

**Counters:** Alleanza Quartz, White Statuary Honed



In appliances, freezer columns and French door and wine refrigerators are trending, and the most popular built-in cabinet accessory is a pull-out waste/recycling compartment. Single handle and pull down faucets are the rage.

“In a recent study of those who visited a Clarke showroom over the past three years, 69% of homeowners report that ‘functionality’ is the top consideration when selecting kitchen appliances,” reports Marco Barallon, corporate showroom manager for Clarke, New England’s Official Sub-Zero/Wolf Showroom and Test Kitchen in South Norwalk.



“So, while the look of stunning appliances in a kitchen design is important, the way an appliance performs and enhances food preparation is really what drives new trends and appliance selection. That explains why more people add a Wolf



(continued)



*The Townsend Collection by American Standard.*

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## The Biggest Kitchen & Bath Trends This Year

(continued)



Convection Steam Oven to their kitchen design than any other appliance. Other options that we see being enthusiastically embraced are induction cooking (with Wolf offering both Induction Cooktops and Induction Ranges) and custom food preservation, where homeowners can configure just the right amount of refrigeration and freezer space, as well as wine storage, to suit their lifestyle. By selecting various Sub-Zero sizes and styles, you can create everything from small point-of-use stations to stunning design statements with these food and beverage preservation appliances.”

### The Trendiest Baths

In the bath, it's white freestanding designer tubs, handshowers, towel warmers and more quartz! Porcelain tile is most popular for floors and walls, with brushed nickel, satin nickel and chrome the go to faucets. Shower lighting, recessed fixtures and sconces are all popular and radiant heat flooring is a must!

“We are seeing many new trends in bath design,” said Frank Webb Home Director of Showrooms, Dan Lorenz. “Customers are asking for a more relaxed, less fitted, look in their bathrooms. That’s reflected in many requests for free-standing tubs, which offer a new elegance to this part of the home.

“Our managers across all 40 Frank Webb Home showrooms share that customers come in every week with Pinterest boards filled with photos of bathroom furniture.

They are requesting vanities that are painted, and have furniture legs with no toe-kick. Yet, inside those pieces, are strategically planned storage options, because while homeowners want a relaxed look, they also want to eliminate



clutter. Many of our manufacturers offer special shelving, storage compartments, charging stations and nightlights built into their cabinets and vanities. These days it's just as important to plan what is inside the vanity or cabinet as how it looks on the outside.”

Bender marketing director, Tanya Weinberg, described these bath trends for 2018:

### Natural Material Mix-up

Combining natural materials such as stone and wood, is the top trend for bathrooms in 2018. This bathroom design trend can complement almost any bathroom style, from modern to traditional.



Bender woodstone

(continued)

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## Trends from Bender

(continued)

### Floating Cabinets and Vanities

The arrangement of the various units such as vanities, wall units, shelves, and mirrors can help you to create an interesting and dynamic bathroom design.



Bender floating vanity

### Vanity Lighting

One big trend in 2018 is the lighting schemes of bathroom vanities. To make it work, there are a lot of lighting techniques, dimmers, and fixtures that are going to be used to provide that relaxing and luxury feeling you've always wanted.



This HOBI winning master bath by Bluewater Home Builders is designed with a built-in floating vanity painted in gray blue & a statuary marble wall & floor with blue gray veining.

### Bathroom Colors

Bathrooms are moving into more colors and creativity. We are seeing more dark colors on bathroom cabinetry with darker cabinets paired with lighter countertops. Blue is the favorite color choice for the bathroom designs in 2018. Blue color brings calm and clarity to the bathrooms; has a calming effect; and is reminiscent of sea and sky.

### Bathrooms Overtake Kitchens as Most Popular Remodeling Project

The kitchen is king among the spaces with the most impact on a home's identity. But having a beautiful bathroom is just as, if not, more important for many home owners. In fact, bathrooms overtook kitchens as the most popular remodeling project, according to a new NAHB survey. NAHB has released the results highlighting the most common remodeling projects to kick off National Home Remodeling Month in May.

“Small-scale renovations are slowly becoming just as popular as large-scale projects, as seen with bathroom remodeling becoming more common than kitchens,” said 2018 NAHB Remodelers Chair Joanne Theunissen, CPG, CGR, a remodeler from Mt. Pleasant, Mich. “Home owners are finding cost-effective and shorter-timeframe upgrades can also add comfort and value to their homes.”

In the survey, remodelers reported the most common projects in 2017:

- ▶ 81% did bathroom remodeling
- ▶ 78% did kitchen remodeling
- ▶ 49% did whole house remodeling
- ▶ 37% did room additions
- ▶ 30% did window/door replacements ■

# Great Builders and Great Windows Go Together



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## Builder News

### Townhome Sprinkler Rule Defeated



**G**reat news! On May 22nd the proposed mandate to include fire sprinklers in townhomes was unanimously rejected, when 50+ HBRA members wearing safety vests outnumbered fire Marshalls 5 to 1. The Regulations Review Committee adopted new codes without this extra burden of sprinkler systems on home builders.



Tony Denorfia testifying

The effect on housing affordability and this home builder’s argument won the day:

“There is nothing cost-effective or life saving about mandating fire sprinklers in new construction townhomes, when 88-90% of residential fires occur in homes that are 30 years or older. New homes and townhomes are built with better fire stopping materials, better electrical systems and better egress, as well as hard wired, battery back-up and interconnected smoke detectors.”

“It’s a big win for our industry and for affordable homeownership by eliminating \$10,000 worth of added cost to homeowners.”

- Johnny Carrier

Thanks to the lobbying efforts of our CT HBRA CEO, Bill Ethier, and the countless members statewide who made phone calls, sent emails and showed up in person, we were successful in defeating this costly mandate which was expected to add \$10,000 to the cost of a new townhome. (See HBRA Central CT News)

### How About This Spec Home Listing for Getting Attention! “Now Accepting Cryptocurrency”



It’s a typical Westport real estate listing:

“5 beds, 4.5 baths in 4200 sq ft on a quiet cul de sac street close to train, shopping, restaurants in a town that offers a progressive lifestyle.”

But the rest of the write-up for the 5 Ridgewood Lane home is unlike anything you’ve ever read:

“Currently accepting CRYPTOCURRENCY... Blockchain Homes presents its first residential property to be offered for purchase in cryptocurrency. Bring your Bit Coin or Ethereum to the one and only Westport, Connecticut modern farmhouse designed and inspired by the crypto climate – a cutting edge lifestyle.... Diversify your portfolio and be the first to make a Blockchain Home purchase.”

So how much does it cost? “250BTC or 3,030ETH.”

Realtors and builders may be saying, “Now I’ve heard everything!” and “Wait until Zillow gets a hold of that listing.” But think again! The New York Times has been running articles on How Blockchain Can Revolutionize the Real Estate Industry!

*(continued)*



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## Builder News

### Criscuolo Design Build Turns a Ranch into a Stunning Farmhouse

Anthony Criscuolo, Criscuolo Design Build, transformed a small Easton ranch into this one of a kind Country farmhouse.

Criscuolo added a new second level with two bedrooms, a Jack and Jill bath, a dressing area with his and hers vanities, and a new open concept staircase leading to a second floor hall with large bonus playroom overlooking a pond.



## Builders & Suppliers Talk About the Market

### Peter Sciaretta, Hemingway Construction (Greenwich/Darien market)

We're finding that to reach younger clients, social media, and in particular, Instagram, is a powerful tool. We ask our custom clients to put together a Look Book online with photos labeled "What I hate; What I like and What I love!" . . . We're living in a world where people do what they want, regardless of realtor or builder advice. They are looking for "the deal" and it's affecting the market. For example, one couple who wanted to retire, had no patience in selling their \$6 million home, so they sold it at the ridiculous price of \$2.8 million. Then Zillow uses it as a comp. \*\* There's a real opportunity to create an app that corrects the faulty comp analysis in the market.

### Nort Wheeler, Mystic River Building Company (New London County)

Our goal is to be homeless when it comes to inventory. New London County just completed a housing assessment. Electric Boat will be hiring 14,000 employees and 8,000 are retiring. The millennials are looking for rentals and 500 units will be needed per year thru 2020.

### Tony Denorfia, A.A. Denorfia Building & Development

We're building in the \$450,000-650,000 range in Southington. . . apartments went really well last year. . . we're about to start 45 more apartments at \$1,800 for 2BR 2B – reasonably priced.

### Joel Grossman, Calcagni Real Estate

Our shining star is Pierpont in North Haven, We've sold the model and 10 duplexes starting at \$349,000. Long term interest rate locks are becoming important in this rising interest rate environment.

### Paul Harris, Cole Harris Homes

We have two waterfront spec homes with dock and pools in Darien that will be on the market this summer at approx. \$8 million. Our company, Archtype, has presold a 4,500 sf home in our Clocks Lane enclave in Darien, which will be completed in July.

### Bob Sprouls, Bluewater Home Builders

We are about to start 2 new custom homes, one in Greenwich and the other in Westport. And, in the next month we'll be starting a new spec home at 27 Soundview Avenue, which is directly across from Compo Beach.

### David Trachten, Viking Kitchens

We are now offering a broad range of closet systems with our new display room installed on June 13. Viking Kitchens is supplying the third phase of Chris Nelson's Highcroft project (96) units, and we just went to contract for 130 units in Granby, Granby Apartments, as well as a new project with Metro Construction for an additional 70+/- units. In Steve Temkin's (T&M Homes) Gledhill Estates in West Hartford, there's a whole new level of finish.

*(continued)*

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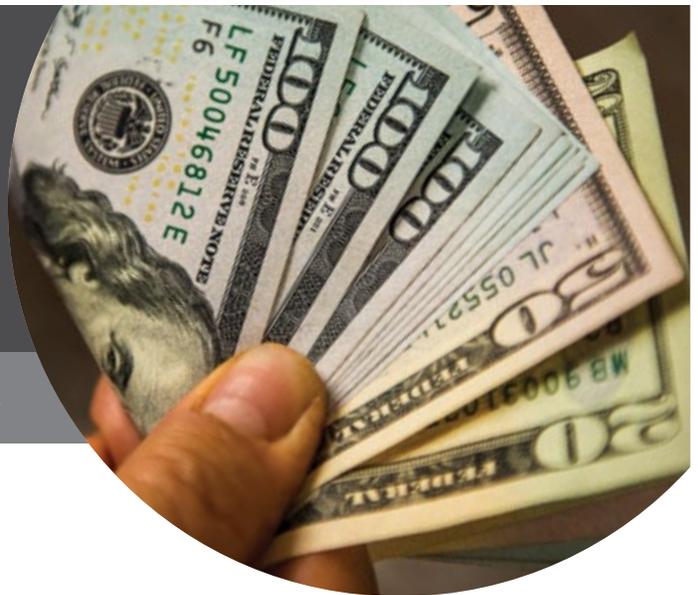
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## Builder News

### Farmington Is Experiencing A Wave of New Development

Farmington is on the cusp of another growth spurt, one where new development of apartments, condos, senior-living spaces and medical offices predominate.

The affluent, Farmington Valley town, just seven miles west of downtown Hartford has a resident population of approximately 25,000, but its daytime population swells to 32,000 — the result of commuters who arrive daily to work at UConn Health, Jackson Laboratory, Carrier, Otis Elevator and Stanley Black & Decker.

Farmington is highly regarded for its diversity of employment in manufacturing, health services/medical research; its many recreation options; its quality schools, and one of the lowest property-tax rates in the state, at 26.68 mills — courtesy of a large commercial tax base, achieved with the foresight of town leaders who more than a generation ago created an industrial park to house commercial employers, to shoulder the property-tax burden. Farmington does not offer tax or other incentives to lure companies.

“Our philosophy is that our economic incentives are our low taxes.”

Kathy Eagen  
Farmington Town Manager

Those elements have combined to reignite a fresh wave of planning and construction, but with nearly all of Farmington's developable acreage built out, Town Planner, William Warner, says the focus is to allow commercial developers much higher density in certain areas of the town.

Among projects underway or planned are 94 townhomes within walking distance of UConn Health Center, a 12-unit luxury condo community on the former Chuck's Steak House site in Farmington Village, the town's historic section; an assisted-living facility with companion seniors-only apartments on Route 4; and an upgrade of the town's sewage-treatment plant.

In addition, Newington landlord, Reno Properties Group, is planning to build apartments on the site of an historic home behind Starbucks on Route 4/Farmington Avenue.

Johnny Carrier, By Carrier Inc. is design building Yorkshire at Farmington, a 94 unit luxury townhouse development, a walk to UConn Health Center and 3 miles from West Hartford Center and West Farms Mall.

With Jackson Lab's arrival in October 2014, there is a need for more apartments, and recently, a West Hartford church listed an undeveloped 18.5-acre tract on Farmington Avenue, opposite UConn Health and Jackson Laboratory. With barely 8 percent of the town's developable land left, Farmington Avenue Baptist Church's parcel could draw a high price tag, observers say.

Robert Wiener, developer of West Hartford's successful Blue Back Square residential-retail-office development, is eyeing a makeover of a strip fronting Farmington Avenue/Route 4, in the Farmington Village district. Wiener subdivided the tract, keeping the Farmington Avenue frontage and selling the rear portion that once held Chuck's Steak House to Tolland builder/developer, PAC Group LLC.



Pennington kitchen family room

PAC is currently completing a 12-unit luxury condo community on the site, which overlooks the Farmington Country Club. Designed by Farmington's own Jack Kemper, and listed by Berkshire Hathaway New England Properties, this stunning community features a gorgeous two story glass and stone entry foyer, an elevator for easy access, covered parking for two cars per residence, separate storage, and an open air patio with a fire pit. *The Pennington* features 12 two and three bedroom condominiums ranging from 1,635 - 1,945 square feet. Prices range from \$699,900 to \$1,150,000.

The town's vision is to turn the Village into a more pedestrian-friendly, walkable area. “It's an unusually charming and desirable place,” said Wiener. “They're really smart and clear-thinking about what they want to happen in the Village, and I want to be a part of it.”

(continued)

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## Builder News

### Floating zones

To streamline the development process and respond to market demand, the town's planning and zoning officials adopted an "innovation floating zone." It allows for a mix of uses envisioned in the town's plan of conservation and development, including expanded corporate headquarters, health- and biomedical-related research and development in a live-work-play environment. A similar "medical office research floating zone" benefits health- and bioscience-related entities in the health center neighborhood.

According to Town Planner, Warner, a key feature of both is that they give design and construction flexibility to developers to deliver what the market demands while adhering to residents' desire to preserve their town's character. The town

also has eased its "lot coverage" requirements for certain types of construction, allowing for denser development.

A 9-acre shopping plaza at 230 Farmington Ave., opposite UConn Health and Jackson Lab, is targeted for redevelopment into possibly apartments and more retail by area developer, Geoffrey Sager, of Metro Realty. The site is targeted for a mixed-use redevelopment of possibly 200 high-end apartments and three multi-story retail/office buildings. Some of the apartments may feature "micro units," built to appeal to workers at Jackson Lab and UConn.

**State Budget Challenge** - A \$1-billion state package to upgrade-expand the UConn Health campus ultimately attracted Jackson Lab, but the biggest

challenge facing Farmington is the state's fiscal crisis, which threatens state funding to cities and towns for education and other services.

The state's proposal to have all 169 cities and towns contribute millions to stabilize the state teachers' retirement fund "is unfair to every municipality in the state of Connecticut," said former state Rep and ex Farmington Town Council member, William Wadsworth.

Farmington's fiscal 2018 property tax rate of 26.68 mills is among the lowest in the state, and No. 2 after Windsor Locks for the lowest in the Greater Hartford region, according to the state Office of Policy Management's online mill-rate data.

## Zillow will begin buying and selling homes using agents

Zillow executive Errol Samuelson announced a major new business initiative for the real estate tech giant: Zillow will finally expand its Zillow Instant Offers program to Phoenix and begin buying and selling homes with its own money there and in Las Vegas, putting it in direct competition with iBuyers like OpenDoor and OfferPad — the latter of whom Zillow also partners with on Instant Offers.

Zillow Instant Offers, which launched last year in Orlando and Las Vegas initially, lets prospective homesellers visit the Zillow website to receive an offer on their home from iBuyer investors, including companies such as OfferPad, as well as a professional home valuation and comparative market analysis (CMA) from a licensed real estate agent. The home seller can then choose to take the instant offer from the investor and receive all cash for their home, likely at a reduced rate, or list their home on the open market with an agent and potentially get a higher sale price.

The company projects that it will have somewhere between 300 and 1,000 homes in its inventory by the end of 2018.

Like it or not, through its partnerships with brokers, agents, MLSs and now real estate investors, Zillow has made itself an integral part of how real estate is transacted in the United States.

Just as the MLS acts as the conduit from individual brokers/agents to the broader real estate community, Zillow has made itself the conduit from the real estate community to the consumer online. It will continue to innovate on real estate data — its purpose, uses and how consumers interact with it — because it seems to be in its nature to do so. As a publicly traded company, Zillow must return shareholder value, and at some point, turn a profit. ■

## Lumber Market Update

by Frank Sanford, Sanford & Hawley, Inc.  
Quality Building Materials Since 1884



**T**aking a look back over the past year and a half lumber and panels markets have been on a nearly constant climb. There have been some pauses and small drops, but very minor compared to the increases. In this longer than usual update, I'll take a look at some of the causes and remedies that may change the situation.

### What happened?

Since January of 2017, Douglas Fir is up 43%. KDSPF is up 62%. Douglas Fir plywood is up 42%. OSB is up 47%. Since the writing of my last column in late January 2018, Douglas Fir is up 7% after dropping 7% during the month of March. KDSPF is up 16% after a small drop in March. Plywood is up 8% and OSB is up 25% also after small drops in March. KDSPF is currently at an unusually small discount of 5% to Douglas Fir.

Prices were starting to move up in early January 2017 before tariff rumors began to drive prices higher at a faster pace. This is a supply driven rally much like we saw in 1992-1993 when logging in Pacific Northwest National Forests was curtailed due to the Spotted Owl. The initial thoughts of most in the lumber industry was that prices would jump up in anticipation of the tariff and then settle back down as had happened many times in the past. In fact prices jumped up 20% by April 2017 when the 19.88% Countervailing Duty went into effect. In June an Anti-Dumping Duty of 6.87 was added. The total duty was reduced to 20.23% in December of 2017. Meanwhile prices continued to increase due to constraints on supply. These included the continuing cutbacks in British Columbia caused by the last decade's Spruce Budworm infestation, record forest fires in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, major hurricanes in Texas and Florida, shortages of railcars and trucks. I'll discuss these causes further in the following paragraphs.

### British Columbia

British Columbia has been the dominant source of SPF as far back as the 1960's. Most land is owned by the government of Canada and is leased long term to sawmills who must log and manage it in accordance with strict government regulations designed to create jobs in rural areas and manage the forests for the long term benefit of all. Everything worked well for many years until the Spruce Budworm decimated many

millions of acres over the past ten years. Then the Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) was increased to salvage as many dead trees as possible. Now the AAC is being reduced to a lower sustainable rate to allow the forests to recover. Production fell last year by 4.5%.

British Columbia will be producing significantly less SPF for the next thirty to fifty years.

### Forest Fires

Forest fires cause two problems. In the short term, they close forests to logging, even to the point of not being able to haul already cut logs. This in turn can cause mills to curtail or cease production when they run out of logs. In last years severe forest fire season some mills closed because of the proximity of the fires for safety reasons. In the long term, the AAC will be reduced in severely damaged forests. This year is forecast to be another bad fire season. Fires are already burning in several areas.

### Hurricanes

Hurricanes can impact timber supply depending upon where they make landfall. Again there is a likelihood of increased salvage harvests followed by a reduction in the AAC. Last years hurricanes did not have a major impact on timber production in the south. Hurricanes also impact demand with the first surge being plywood and OSB to board up before and after the storms hit. Last years hurricanes did not have a major impact on the plywood and OSB markets. There is a longer term increase in demand following hurricanes and other major storms as damaged structures are repaired or rebuilt. This is ongoing in Houston and Florida. We'll have to wait and see what this year's hurricane season looks like.

### Transportation

Most lumber shipped from the West Coast and some from Eastern Canada travels by rail most of the way to its final destination. A severe shortage of rail cars developed in British Columbia this winter. It started with winter storm delays and compounded itself over time. A month ago mills were quoting three weeks to have lumber ready to ship and then another three weeks wait for a car to put it on. This problem is beginning to be resolved. The railroads are buying more cars and locomotives and hiring more train crews.

The U.S. required truckers to use electronic logs effective January 1st 2018. These logs eliminated the ability to stretch

the rules as was common practice with paper logs. I once received a trailer of lumber from Idaho in four days driven by a single driver. I'm not sure how many log books he used. Most Canadian truckers are refusing to enter the U.S. since electronic logs are not required in Canada and they don't want to buy or use them. There is also a shortage of truck drivers throughout North America.

The transportation issues will improve, but will continue to be a problem for quite a while.

Now to move on to some positive news that will increase lumber and panel supplies over time.

### Go South Young Lumberjack, Go South

To paraphrase Horace Greeley, I say "go south young lumberjack, go south."

As you can see in the table below the future of the North American forest products industry is in the south, eight of the twelve new mills or improvement projects announced this year are in the south. Of the remaining projects, one is in Maine, one is Michigan and two are in Eastern Canada, three of these are upgrades. The only older project in the table is Vicksburg Forest Products whose new mill starts production in July. Ninety percent of the published volume is in the south, with 7.5% in Maine and 2.5% in Canada. There were no announcements from western Canada. However in the Pacific Northwest, Boise Cascade recently announced the closing of its Elgin, OR lumber mill built in 1960.

All of these new or expanded mills are expected to be in production by December 2019. The additional 1.7 Billion Board Feet of lumber will help to alleviate the current shortfall in supply.

Where will all of this production go? Some of it will be consumed in traditional Southern Yellow Pine markets such as treated lumber in the northeast and Midwest. Some will stay in the south as framing and treated lumber. Some will go to the traditional Southern Pine export markets in the Caribbean. Some will go to new export markets such as China. Southern Yellow Pine exports to China are already increasing sharply. The Canadian companies who have already invested in the south are leading exports to China to make up for the shortage of western SPF. I believe we will soon be seeing Southern Yellow Pine framing lumber in Connecticut. There will be small increases in production in the northeast and midwest as well as in eastern Canada. But these are smaller production areas with slower growing forests and less potential for growth.

Domestic lumber production increased by 4.2% in 2017. And will increase further in 2018 and 2019. This increased production should help to bring prices back down.

### Lumber Imports

Lumber imports are also increasing, primarily in European Spruce species. While these are generally very nice in appearance, strength varies significantly from species to species and all are weaker than domestic and Canadian KDSPP.

Owner	Location	Volume	Notes
Vicksburg Forest Products	Mississippi	100 Million Board Feet	July 2018 Startup
Georgia Pacific	Georgia	350 Million Board Feet	
Canfor	Georgia	275 Million Board Feet	Canadian Company
Hunt/Tolko	Louisiana	200 Million Board Feet	USA/Canadian J.V.
Rex Lumber	Alabama	240 Million Board Feet	
Biewer Lumber	Michigan	Not Published	
Charles Ingham Lumber	South Carolina	70 Million Board Feet	
Westervelt Forest Products	Alabama	250 Million Board Feet	
Pleasant River Lumber	Maine	120 Million Board Feet	
White River Lumber	Ontario	40 Million Board Feet	
Blanchet	Quebec	Not Published	Mill improvements
Angelina Forest Products	Texas	Not Published	
Canfor	South Carolina	Not Published	Mill Upgrade

(continued)

## HBA Northwest News

Local Leadership Breakfast presented by Litchfield County Board of REALTORS Legislative Committee and HBA of Northwest was held on March 28th at Chatterley's in Torrington. More than 50 people attended to hear from Mayors and First Selectmen about real-estate development in their communities.



HBA Northwest turns out to defeat sprinklers in townhouses at Legislative Review at the Capitol. L-R Sheila Leach, Alan Temkin, Steve Temkin, Andrew Ugalde, Bill Prokop, Joe Duva, Mary Anne Sok, Rose Yurgalevicz and Joline Osterhout

HBA of Northwest would like to welcome aboard the following new members:

### Fine Home Contracting LLC

David Perrotti  
70 Spruce Brook Road , Plymouth CT  
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### Northern Improvement Company, LLC

Richard Weigold  
148 E. Albert St., Torrington CT  
860-307-0965

### Pella Windows & Doors

Addam Bogart  
220 Monroe Tpke, Monroe CT  
203-650-1188 ■

## Lumber Market Update

*(continued)*

Be sure to refer to the appropriate span tables if you use these. Imports of framing lumber are still insignificant compared to the volumes from Canada.

### What is the NAHB Doing About Lumber Prices

I spoke with Alex Strong, an NAHB lobbyist about their strategy on lumber prices. The NAHB is employing a two-pronged strategy to have free trade with Canada on lumber and to increase domestic production.

The NAHB is continuing to lobby Congress and the Trump administration to eliminate the tariffs. In this supply driven market eliminating the tariffs today might not drop prices 20% as it should, but it certainly wouldn't hurt. We've used Canadian lumber to make up our domestic production shortfall for over 50 years and that's not going to change.

The House of Representatives passed the Resilient Federal Forest Act of 2017. Some parts of it have passed the Senate in the Omnibus Spending Bill and in the Farm Act this year. This bill would increase logging in the National Forest System land primarily in the Pacific Northwest. These lands yielded 10-12 billion board feet of lumber for decades until the Spotted Owl crisis caused volumes to drop to 1.5 – 3.3 billion board feet. Volumes have remained at this level for the last 25 years. Increasing logging would help the health of the forests and reduce forest fire risk by thinning smaller trees. Growing forests produce oxygen and store CO2. Dead trees release CO2 and consume oxygen. Any increase in production would help to reduce prices in the long term. Production increases will take several years by the time logging contracts are bid, awarded, logged, new mills built and labor hired and trained.

**Please support the NAHB's efforts.**

### Conclusion

Lumber prices will not go up forever. Nor will they stay this high forever. It does not look like they will decline anytime soon. We may see prices continue to rise for much of this year. Nationally demand continues to increase, and it is unlikely that supply can increase at the same rate. There is substantial OSB production coming on line this year which should limit price increases in OSB and plywood. ■

## Shrinking Supply Could Spell Trouble for Spring Markets

Buyers are eager, but low inventory leads to declining home sales

By John Tarducci, MIRM, Senior Vice President, New Development Services, William Raveis Real Estate, Mortgage & Insurance



The brutal winter blizzards have ended and the sun is finally (mostly) shining, which can only mean one thing: the spring market has arrived. Realtors emerge from the long winter ready to list new inventory--the weather is finally conducive to open houses (no booties! clear walkways! longer days!) and with hungry buyers across the Northeast, all signs point to a healthy spring market. Except one. During the past several years of market recovery, inventory has been steadily declining. This has led to quicker, more aggressive offers and frequent bidding wars. But, the market has been able to keep pace, by providing enough available homes to sustain the number of buyers. So, even with Months of Supply continuously dropping, Unit Sales have kept rising. Until now. It appears supply has finally caught up with demand, and the result is clear: there simply aren't enough homes on the market to meet the overwhelming number of buyers.

According to the National Association of Home Builders, 17 percent of respondents to a recent poll said they are planning to buy a home within the next 12 months. Additionally, 45 percent of respondents to the same poll are looking to buy an existing home, 41 percent are looking at either existing or newly built homes, and the other 13 percent are looking specifically for a new home. However, the question that hasn't been answered is what homes they will be buying. There simply isn't enough existing inventory to accommodate that high number of potential buyers.

Interestingly, the biggest gap in terms of market availability is in lower-cost, entry-level homes, while one of the biggest pools of buyers entering the marketing are millennials looking for, lower-cost, entry-level homes. There continues to be a wide disconnect between market demand and market availability. As builders continue to focus on homes intended for buyers moving up in house, first-time home buyers find themselves with limited options. This is compounded by the fact that rents continue to rise across the country--according to CNBC, in 2017 rents rose nearly 3 percent, making it even harder for first-time buyers to save down payments at all, never mind larger ones for more expensive homes.

For builders, this market trend, which at this point is less of a trend and is now just the market, opens up opportunities. Historically, when inventory is low, buyers flock towards new construction. And for first-time millennial homebuyers, inventory is low. Boomers aren't downsizing as expected--instead of moving to smaller homes or retirement communities, the largest generation of homeowners are instead choosing to "age-in-place", bucking the very market trends that analysts rely on. Now, instead of selling their starter homes, which would be perfect entries into the market for millennials, much of what is available on the market is simply out of millennials' price range.

So, what exactly are millennials looking for in a first-time home purchase? One of their biggest requirements is a boon for builders: move-in ready homes. Most millennials, according to

Business Insider, don't want to deal with the hassle or cost of a fixer-upper. Additionally, they're looking for open floor plans and high-end kitchens--spaces to entertain and host friends and family. Another key feature millennials tend to look for is a dedicated space to use as an office. With telecommuting increasing in popularity, this generation is focused on how they can work from home while maintaining a high level of productivity. They're also focused on location--many millennials want to have easy access to the amenities of a city, so easy access to transportation and major hubs is important.

With the hugely untapped market of millennial first-time homebuyers looking to purchase starter homes, this leaves open a chance for builders to fill a desperately increasing need. As was said in a late-1980s classic film: if you build it, they will come.

### Q1 2018 By the Numbers Housing Permits Rise in Q1 2018

To start the year, permits saw a 33.8 percent increase, after finishing 2017 down 7.1 percent. The total number of permits increased from 773 in Q1 2017 to 1,034 in Q1 2018.

The largest gain was in 3-4 Unit permits, which rose 175 percent, followed by 5+ Unit permits, which increased 83.6 percent. An increase was also seen in 2-Unit permits, which grew by 27.3 percent, while 1-Unit permits fell in Q1, down 8.9 percent from 407 to 371 year-over-year.

On a county-by-county basis, the growth was driven entirely by three counties: New Haven at 246.6 percent, Hartford County at 128.46 percent and New London at 32.26 percent. Meanwhile, Windham declined 42.86 percent, Fairfield declined 36.8 percent, Litchfield declined 25 percent, Middlesex declined 24.62 percent and Tolland declined 4.62 percent.

### First-Quarter Unit Sales Decline in Single Family Marketplace

In Q1 2018, Single-Family Home Sales in the state of Connecticut decreased 5.7 percent, from 6,561 to 6,187 year-over-year. On a county-by-county basis, decreases were seen across the state, including: Windham County at 12.1 percent, New London

### 2018 vs. 2017 -County by County - Permits Issued First Quarter Comparison with only 104 municipalities reporting

County	2018 Total	2017 Total	% Diff
Fairfield	237	375	-36.80%
Hartford	281	123	128.46%
Litchfield	3	4	-25.00%
Middlesex	49	65	-24.62%
New Haven	357	103	246.60%
New London	41	31	32.26%
Tolland	62	65	-4.62%
Windham	4	7	-42.86%
Total	1034	773	33.76

Data Source: US Census Compiled by DECD Research

(continued)

## Shrinking Supply Could Spell Trouble for Spring Markets

County at 6.9 percent, Hartford County at 6.9 percent, New Haven County at 6 percent, Fairfield County at 4.8 percent, Tolland County at 3 percent, Middlesex County at 2.9 percent and Litchfield County at 1.6 percent.

Averages Sales Price for single-family homes in Connecticut increased 2.6 percent through Q1 2018, from \$361,606 to \$371,077. Increases were seen in Windham County (17.7 percent), Tolland County (15.7 percent), New London County (9.5 percent), New Haven County (6 percent), Middlesex County (3.6 percent), Hartford County (1.6 percent) and Fairfield County (0.1 percent). Litchfield County experienced a year-over-year decrease of 7.7 percent.

To round out the quarter, Average List Price increased 3.6 percent, Months of Supply fell 11.7 percent and Price Per Square Foot increased 4.2 percent.

### Connecticut Condominium Sales Decline in Q1

To finish Q1 2018, we saw Units Sold decrease for condominiums in the state of Connecticut, down 10.9 percent, from 1,765 in Q1 2017 to 1,572 in Q1 2018. This followed a solid end to 2017, where Unit Sales increased 5.4 percent year-over-year. Many counties experienced declines, including: Tolland County at 34.9 percent, New Haven County at 18.7 percent, Middlesex County at 15.7 percent, Hartford County at 7.9 percent, Fairfield County at 6.7 percent and New London County at 4.1 percent.

Both Windham and Litchfield Counties stayed flat this quarter, with a 0 percent change.

Averages Sales Price of condominiums in Connecticut increased 2.1 percent, from \$211,333 to \$215,718. This increase was driven entirely by a 9.9 percent increase in New London County, a 7.9 percent increase in Middlesex County and a 5.9 percent increase in Hartford County. Meanwhile, prices fell 14.1 percent in Tolland County, 2.7 percent in Windham County, 2.3 percent in Litchfield County, 0.7 percent in Hartford County and 0.5 percent in New Haven county.

To round out Q1 2018, Average List Price decreased 0.7 percent, Months of Supply fell 15.6 percent and Price Per Square Foot decreased 2.8 percent.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, shortened supply remains a significant issue that shows no signs of resolving itself. Builders remain pressured by material costs, a lack of labor and fewer viable lots, even while millennial first-time homebuyers are calling for more inventory. In Connecticut, even while permits for new construction increased, all of that construction was in multi-family units--the total permits for single-family homes continued to decline. This indicates no plans for local builders to begin meeting buyer demand for starter homes, leaving a huge segment of potential homeowners with fewer and fewer buying options. ■

## Connecticut Real Estate Market Overview

### Full Year – 2018 vs. 2017 Single Family Marketplace January 1st to December 31st

County	Number of Units Sold		% Inc. / Dec.	Average Sales Price		% Inc. / Dec.	Avg List Price		% Inc. / Dec.	Months of Supply		% Inc. / Dec.	Price per SF		% Inc. / Dec.
	2018	2017		2018	2017		2018	2017		2018	2017		2018	2017	
Fairfield	1,504	1,580	-4.80%	\$741,501	\$741,104	0.10%	\$1,378,790	\$1,290,281	6.90%	6.50	7.60	-14.40%	\$253	\$267	-5.10%
Hartford	1,434	1,541	-6.90%	\$245,999	\$242,039	1.60%	\$341,763	\$334,748	2.10%	4.10	3.90	5.60%	\$124	\$129	-4.00%
Litchfield	422	429	-1.60%	\$278,206	\$301,273	-7.70%	\$624,406	\$634,222	-1.50%	7.90	9.60	-18.30%	\$136	\$152	-10.60%
Middlesex	371	382	-2.90%	\$289,841	\$279,869	3.60%	\$465,814	\$474,433	-1.80%	5.60	6.00	-7.40%	\$144	\$150	-3.70%
New Haven	1,390	1,479	-6.00%	\$245,404	\$231,585	6.00%	\$409,193	\$371,268	10.20%	4.80	6.10	-21.50%	\$127	\$131	-3.70%
New London	551	592	-6.90%	\$255,634	\$233,412	9.50%	\$407,510	\$398,089	2.40%	5.30	5.60	-6.10%	\$133	\$131	1.10%
Tolland	261	269	-3.00%	\$247,337	\$213,714	15.70%	\$293,911	\$292,547	0.50%	4.70	4.90	-4.80%	\$119	\$118	0.90%
Windham	254	289	-12.10%	\$221,165	\$187,864	17.70%	\$265,947	\$246,050	8.10%	3.60	4.00	-9.30%	\$118	\$109	8.70%
Statewide Stats	6,187	6,561	-5.70%	\$371,077	\$361,606	2.60%	\$703,711	\$679,554	3.60%	5.30	6.00	-11.70%	\$168	\$176	-4.20%

## Connecticut Real Estate Market Overview

### Full Year – 2018 vs. 2017 Condominium Marketplace January 1st to December 31st

County	Number of Units Sold		% Inc. / Dec.	Average Sales Price		% Inc. / Dec.	Avg List Price		% Inc. / Dec.	Months of Supply		% Inc. / Dec.	Price per SF		% Inc. / Dec.
	2018	2017		2018	2017		2018	2017		2018	2017		2018	2017	
Fairfield	546	585	-6.70%	\$314,341	\$316,617	-0.70%	\$470,511	\$443,770	6.00%	5.10	6.00	-15.90%	\$207	\$222	-7.00%
Hartford	373	405	-7.90%	\$169,349	\$159,855	5.90%	\$204,987	\$204,479	0.20%	4.40	4.60	-5.10%	\$119	\$122	-2.20%
Litchfield	65	65	0.00%	\$122,585	\$125,412	-2.30%	\$174,722	\$300,756	-41.90%	5.90	7.80	-23.50%	\$89	\$100	-11.00%
Middlesex	75	89	-15.70%	\$168,353	\$156,078	7.90%	\$226,592	\$248,243	-8.70%	5.30	6.30	-15.10%	\$130	\$125	3.90%
New Haven	392	482	-18.70%	\$163,733	\$164,490	-0.50%	\$236,675	\$231,283	2.30%	5.00	6.30	-21.00%	\$123	\$125	-1.60%
New London	71	74	-4.10%	\$173,411	\$157,728	9.90%	\$239,658	\$267,487	-10.40%	6.00	6.80	-12.20%	\$135	\$122	10.40%
Tolland	28	43	-34.90%	\$127,787	\$148,678	-14.10%	\$189,142	\$201,292	-6.00%	6.10	6.60	-8.70%	\$115	\$119	-3.60%
Windham	22	22	0.00%	\$161,380	\$165,844	-2.70%	\$191,124	\$156,958	21.80%	5.00	8.10	-38.60%	\$124	\$122	1.80%
Statewide Stats	1,572	1,765	-10.90%	\$215,718	\$211,333	2.10%	\$301,470	\$303,519	-0.70%	5.00	5.90	-15.60%	\$153	\$157	-2.80%

Information contained herein is based on information obtained from CMLS, CTMLS, GRWMLS and DARMLS and is deemed accurate but not guaranteed

# Business Product News

## CAFD & CT Lighting Hold Outdoor Event on Cinco De Mayo



Owners Dave Director of CT Lighting & Doug DuPont of CAFD in CT Lighting showroom

On May 5th, CT Appliance & Fireplace Distributors enlisted their new neighbor, CT Lighting, as well as Pilgrim Furniture and Crystal Bees, to host an indoor/outdoor event. Both CAFD and CT Lighting are family owned companies. Doug DuPont's daughter, Andrea and son-in-law, Sisto Salzillo co-own and manage CAFD, while Dave Director's sons and a son-in-law work at CT Lighting.

In addition to their spectacular 10,000 sf appliance and hearth product showroom with working kitchens and fireplace vignettes, CAFD showcased its wide variety of flaming fire pits and affordable to luxury outdoor grills with chefs grilling Kobe steak, delicious chicken and sausage for attendees.



Sisto & Andrea Salzillo

Lenny & Joes food truck offered lobster rolls and seafood specialties, and kids were treated to several bounce houses. Damon Scott of Country 92.5 broadcast the festivities.

Dave Director gave CT Builder publisher, Joanne Carroll, a tour of CT Lighting's 10,000 sf showroom with its amazing selection of decorative indoor and outdoor lighting, landscape lighting and even commercially adapted garage lighting. See photos in right column.



CT Lighting showroom. Dave & Todd Director speaking to each other at right



In addition to an antique lighting department, there is a large display wall of cutting edge LED Lighting for today's modern interiors, an electronic shade showroom and an extensive department of in stock exhibited hardware at Connecticut Lighting.

*(continued)*

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Business Product News

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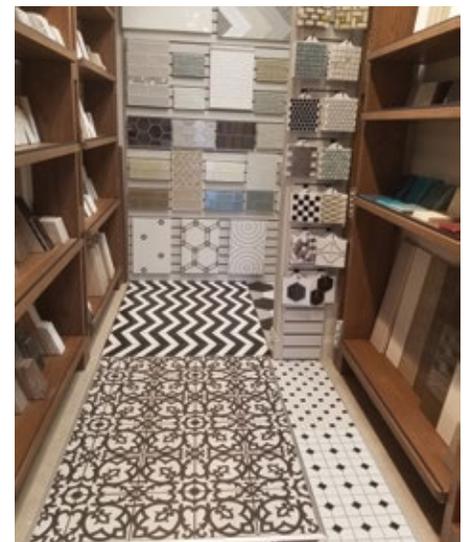
Tile America Opens Stunning New London Showroom



L-R Tile America staff, Lisa Zhen, Jayme Keeling and Jennifer Price with Tile America owner, Brian Knies

In May, Brian Knies held the Grand Opening of his 7th Connecticut showroom. This stunning addition is located at 462 Colman Street in New London, a minute or two from I-95.

An inspiration gallery of eye-catching displays creatively showcase ceramic and porcelain, natural stone, mosaics, glass, wood look and metal tile. Various patterns and types of tile are strategically installed in the floor, and vignettes demonstrate the use of specific tile in a powder room or kitchen.



Tile America Debra Goodwin Artistic Tile

The Grand Opening celebration was sponsored by Artistic Tile, a luxury line of innovative, artisan tile, which is featured by Tile America. Regional sales representative, Debra Goodwin, exhibited samples from Artistic Tile, and provided silk tote bags with goodies for attendees.

In addition to their flagship New Haven showroom, and its newest New London location, Tile America has showrooms in Brookfield, Fairfield, Stamford and two 2018 HOBI winning ‘showrooms – one in West Hartford and the other in Manchester.

(continued)



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## Interstate+Lakeland Lumber Recognized as Fairfield County HBRA 2018 Supplier of the Year

Brian Kurtz accepting Supplier of Year award from HBRA President Anthony DeRosa



Since 1922, Interstate + Lakeland Lumber has prided itself on delivering quality services to the finest builders and architects throughout Fairfield and Westchester Counties. The fourth generation of this ninety-six year old, family-owned business continues to grow and is increasingly taking on leadership roles within the company. This talented group brings with them knowledge, dedication and passion to see that Interstate + Lakeland Lumber continues to thrive for many years to come. With their technical expertise, blended with old school values, this proven combination promises to produce new and innovative strategies to keep the company at the forefront of the building industry. As we look to the future, we retain our commitment to the ideals that have served us well for nearly a century: supplying high quality materials with exemplary services.

## Builders Love the Service and Competitive Pricing At Family Owned Page Hardware and Appliance Company



Page Hardware and Appliance Company is in its 3rd generation of family ownership, and celebrating its 80th Anniversary next year!

Located in the historic district of Guilford, Page Hardware and Appliance anchors the shopping area surrounding the beautiful town Green. Customers are treated to the antique hardwood floors and neighborly conversations you expect to see in an old-fashioned hardware store; yet are surrounded by the modern household products and luxury appliances found at today's trend-setting retailers.

Page is part of True Value Hardware and The New England Group Appliance buying cooperatives, which allows for price competitiveness, while maintaining the small store environment their customers love.

Ken Horton of The Horton Group chose Page for all of the appliances at his luxury condominium/townhouse community, 66 High Street in Guilford, which won the 2016 HOBBI award for Project of the Year.



Horton Group won a 2017 Best Luxury Condominium HOBBI Award for this condo with range and French door refrigerator from Page Hardware

### Customer Service is the #1 priority

The thoughtful, helpful sales people at Page Hardware are highly visible. And you just may happen upon one of the sales associates demonstrating how the appliances perform, a professional chef cooking up a storm, or you can sign up for a popular cooking class for an evening of fun and learning. The store houses a wide variety of hardware, lawn and garden equipment, paint, housewares, and appliances.



Then up a few steps into the impressive appliance showroom, where you can expect to be greeted by a friendly, knowledgeable sales associate, who will show you working kitchen vignettes, displaying the latest in stunning luxury appliances from Wolf, Sub Zero, Thermador, Bosch, Dacor, Frigidaire, Miele, GE and Whirlpool. Cooking, dishwashers, ventilation and refrigeration products are available at all budget levels.

Page welcomes you to visit them at 9 Boston Street, Guilford. 203-453-5267. Text 203-904-2540. [www.pagehardware.com](http://www.pagehardware.com).

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Business Product News

(continued)

Gault's New Interactive Showroom Offers a Digital Advantage



The new Gault Stone & Landscape Supplies Showroom in Westport provides a unique interactive experience for homeowners and the trade alike. A blend of technology and physical displays allow customers to touch and feel actual samples, as well as see them in their finished setting through photography. Customers can utilize touch screen work stations to bring up websites, social media platforms like Houzz, or Pinterest pages for inspiration, and share a photo to a huge 9' X 14' screen to see a project life size!

With over 250 products on display, you will find classic materials, as well as the latest trends showcased on the floors, walls and custom hung racks that create a gallery like feel in the space. And, a special labeling system, allows you to scan and email yourself details, specifications and photos of the products that you choose, so you can refer back to them at any time.

In June, Gault partnered with New England Home Magazine to host a trade event at their showroom. Over one hundred architects, builders, interior designers and suppliers attended and a raffle raised \$300 for Make A Wish!

Gault's showroom is located at 11 Ferry Lane West, Westport | 203.227.5181 | gaultstone.com



Gault staff



Sam Gault & Dave Chevrette



L-R Karen Berkenmeyer & Amy Eisenberg of Karen Berkenmeyer Home, Roberta Mancuso, New England Home Magazine & builder Chris Shea.



Chris Wright & Judy Doyle of Wright Building Company with Christopher Domagala



Tony Aitoro, John Eigo & Lora Mazurak



Jeff Kaufman, JMKA Architects & Connie Cooper Designs



L-R New England Home editor Kyle Hoepner with Kathy & Kristen Sullivan, Gatehouse Partners



Make A Wish Mom Jeanette, Barbara Loughton, Front Row Kitchens & Meredith Donaher, Gault marketing.



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Business Product News

(continued)

**Sunshine Floors Opens Stamford Showroom**

For more than 10 years, Sunshine Floor Supplies, Inc. has proudly provided the finest hardwood flooring materials and products to clients throughout the Northeast. This, combined with their unparalleled service and an ever expanding inventory of pre-finished, engineered and unfinished hardwood floors, stains, finishes, supplies and tools, has propelled them as a leader in the flooring industry. With their retail store and warehouse located at 1957 Main Street, Bridgeport, CT, Sunshine Floors Supplies, Inc. has expanded with a high-end wholesale and retail showroom at 136 Water Street, Norwalk, CT and a fully-stocked supply store at 6 Cheryl Street, Canton, CT.



This spring, they opened yet another new showroom at 147 Sell-eck Street in Stamford – just 2 minutes off I-95. This convenient location stocks over 10,000 sf of flooring products, as well as brand name stains, finishes, tools and supplies.

**And Sunshine can save you money!**



These engineered planks from #ShawFloors are all the same length. When the planks are the same length, waste is cut down on a herringbone installation.

**Visit Sunshine’s new Stamford showroom and save time and money!**

**Sanford & Hawley’s Annual Contractor Night**

On May 31st, Sanford & Hawley held their annual Contractor Night at the Connecticut Trolley Museum in East Windsor. Approximately 350 builders and remodelers enjoyed walking the building material and supply exhibits, set up among antique trolleys and other vintage transportation vehicles, and then feasting under tent on beer, wine and delicious fare from dinner and dessert food trucks.



Builder Mark Stidsen and interior designer, Judith Landers



L-R Frank & Ann Sanford, son Jon, grandson Jake and daughter-in-law Jill Sanford.



S&H Trolley Museum

## William Raveis Grand Re-Opening of Avon Office



Agent Judi McCabe, Bill Raveis & Susan Eastman, Director of Business Development

William Raveis Real Estate founder and CEO, Bill Raveis, and his sons, Chris and Ryan, who are Co-Presidents of Wil-

liam Raveis, were in attendance at the May 31st re-opening event for their newly renovated Avon office. What was intended to be a 3 hour celebration, extended to four and one-half hours, as past & present clients and friends were having a wonderful time. Appetizers and dessert, catered by Pastels in Simsbury, were served to a crowd of over 80 people.

“The office design resembles the best of a real estate office, a Starbucks, Apple store, and a Kinkos. Collaboration areas and easy to use resources make it easy for our agents, who are increasingly mobile with our cloud-based Raveis365 platform, to connect and share the latest on market activity



with each other so we can best serve our clients” said Chris Raveis. “Over the last two years we have renovated most of our offices with similar designs.”

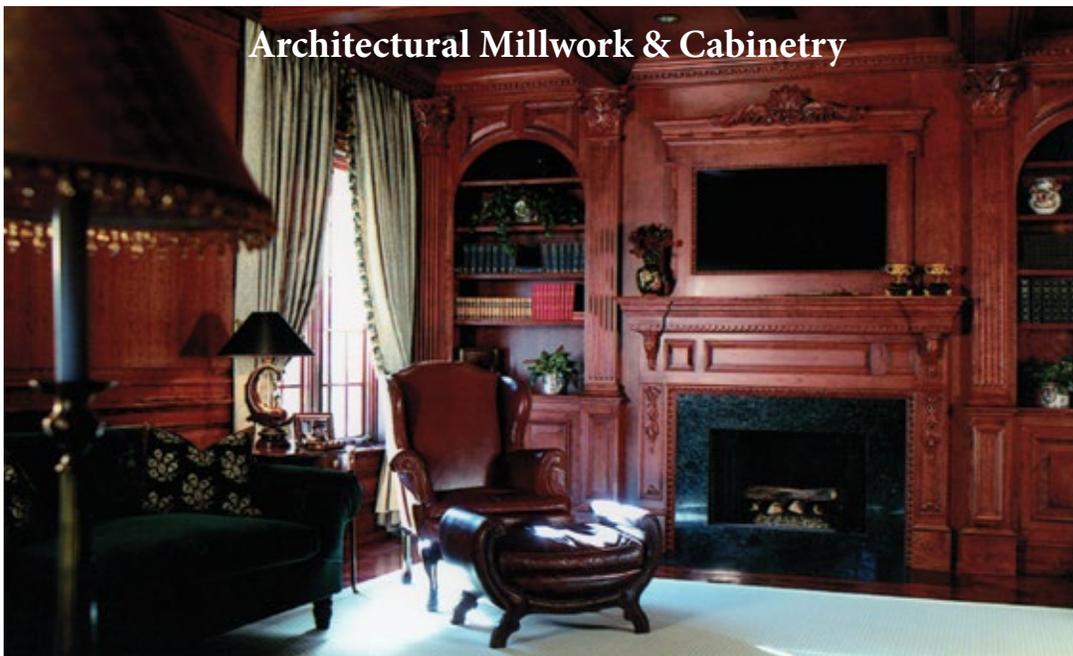
“William Raveis Real Estate is a well-respected and highly accomplished leader in the real estate industry” said Dawn Baker, Sales Manager. “I’m thrilled to be a part of such an amazing company with a strong legacy of success.”

According to REAL Trends, William Raveis Real Estate, Mortgage & Insurance is the No. 1 family-owned real estate company in the Northeast and the No. 8 real estate company in the country. William Raveis’ Real Estate, Mortgage and Insurance divisions have been awarded the Gold Medal distinction by the Commercial Record and by Banker & Tradesman. The firm was named the Most Innovative Brokerage

by Inman News, and has consistently been ranked the best place to work by Fox CT, Hearst Connecticut and the Boston Business Journal. William Raveis has 4,000 highly trained sales professionals in 120 offices in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Maine, Vermont and Florida. For more information, visit [raveis.com](http://raveis.com), or [blog.raveis.com](http://blog.raveis.com). ■

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## Greenfield Mill – A Small Custom Millwork Shop with a Big Reputation



We have been fortunate to maintain a steady flow of quality work, simply through word of mouth and repeat customers.

- Frank Lisi, owner

Greenfield Mill has provided exquisite millwork for leading builders and architects, including Significant Homes, Douglas VanderHorn Architects, Charles Hilton Architects Jones Byrnes Margeotes Architects, Hobbs Inc., Interior Consultants Design Group, Fairfax and Sammons Architects and HB Home Design.

Greenfield Mill has exhibited exceptional workmanship for top HOBI Award winners, including the 2017 Custom Home of the Year, a superb French Normandy designed by Douglas VanderHorn Architects and built by Significant Homes.

Greenfield Mill's signature millwork and trim is evident in the full height paneling and cove molding in the spectacular octagonal living room, see photo on page 48, and as well as the beamed plank ceiling, painted millwork cases and denticulated crown molding, half round pilasters and stained maple edged nosing in the cozy upper hall library nook, below.

**G**reenfield Mill began 25 years ago as a small custom millwork shop in Easton, CT. Today it remains a custom millwork shop, with the same employees that began this journey. Staying small enables Greenfield Mill to give each client the personal attention their project deserves.





A kitchen designed by Charles Hilton Architects



I have a 20 year relationship with Greenfield Mill and keep coming back for more. The millwork and interior trim areas of his business are equally impressive. The pricing is always fair and the workmanship is excellent. Greenfield Mill is a team player and problem solver, and an excellent choice for a builder or homeowner.

– Matt Matthews, Owner  
Significant Homes

The exquisite millwork throughout the 2015 Best Custom Home and Best Entry Foyer was also executed by Greenfield Mill. The home is designed by Jones Byrnes Margeotes Architects and built by Significant Homes on Indian Field Road in Greenwich. The exquisite entry hall, with its detailed millwork by Greenfield Mill, won its own HOBBI award, and the quarter sawn oak paneled Great Room imitates the original 1920's home. See entry foyer at top right col. See great room at left.

In 2014, Significant Homes & Douglas VanderHorn Architects teamed up with Greenfield Mill once again. This HOBBI Award winner was also located on Indian Field Road in Greenwich. The stunning stone and cedar shake custom home features a fabulous cherry paneled library and paneled dining room.

Every Greenfield Mill project represents almost 30 years of custom millwork experience with a commitment to quality widely recognized by contractors, architects, designers and especially... our thoroughly satisfied homeowners."

Greenfield Mill keeps their clients for decades, which is a testament to their dedication to quality, fairness, and extraordinary service. ■

## Two of Connecticut's Leading Builders Are Sold on James Hardie



John Ricci is a highly knowledgeable, hands on builder with 30 years of experience constructing custom homes, residential developments and commercial buildings. His Cheshire based company, Ricci Construction Group, has won industry awards for its custom and remodeled homes, and both industry and town recognition for its green commercial construction.

Fifteen years ago, John Ricci noticed a new exterior siding at a Home Show exhibit.

That's when John began using James Hardie fiber cement siding, and over the past 15 years, he has used a wide range of James Hardie products from HardiePlank® Lap Siding and HardieShingle® Siding to HardiePanel® Vertical Siding, HardieTrim® Boards & HardieSoffit® Panels. See Old Saybrook home above.

### The James Hardie Product vs. Vinyl Advantage

When John Ricci is explaining to a client why he or she should consider a little more upfront cost in exchange for total value when siding his home or commercial building with James Hardie, he mentions five key advantages Hardie offers when compared to vinyl:

1. James Hardie products are built to withstand strong winds. They're more rigid, so there's no waviness over time like you may find with vinyl siding. Vinyl is also susceptible to cracking.
2. Hardie siding looks and feels similar to natural wood, while vinyl may have a more plastic-like appearance.
3. Hardie siding is available prefinished, lasting 10-15 years before beginning to fade, while vinyl siding may fade rather quickly, especially on the side directly exposed to the sun.
4. James Hardie products are considered sustainable (green) in part because of their durability, termite resistance, and ability to handle water, heat and UV radiation.
5. James Hardie siding is classified as noncombustible when tested in accordance with ASTM E136. It has a flame spread index of 0 and a smoke-developed index of 5 when tested in accordance with ASTM E84.

"James Hardie products won't burn," John explained.

When a church garage in Cheshire recently burned down, Ricci chose James Hardie products to side the new garage. He used the same striking red Hardieplank® Lap siding for a 30,000 sf commercial building he recently completed, and Ricci was commended by the town for the building's appealing exterior, which is reminiscent of Cheshire's traditional New England architecture.



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## Two of Connecticut's Leading Builders Are Sold on James Hardie

(continued)



### Installing James Hardie siding

John Ricci considers the application of Hardie siding very similar to traditional siding.

“Color-matched flashing is installed behind the seams. Make sure to keep it 2” off the roof and seal any exposed field-cute edges with touch-up paint,” John explained. “There’s even color-coded caulk available for around windows and doors.”

Jarrett Kravitz, owner of Advantage Contracting, is an innovative young builder with a reputation for problem solving and building high performance custom homes. Back in 2005, Jarrett was looking for a cutting edge product that would separate and brand him as a quality builder, so he used James Hardie products on the first home he ever built.

“Over 10 years later, it still looks like the day I built it,” said Jarrett.



### The Advantage strategy

Jarrett described his approach to convincing customers of the merits of James Hardie siding.

“I give my clients what I call ‘the 4-5 year tour’ to show them how older James Hardie sided homes I’ve built have fared over the years. I tell them that you spend a little more for Hardie siding over vinyl, but it’s like purchasing an insurance policy on your house. And it’s great for resale.”

Jarrett has won several HOBI awards over the years for his beautifully built homes – all sided with James Hardie products. Jarrett builds along the coastline, and he wanted a product that would last when exposed to coastal wind and damp sea air. He says, “James Hardie fiber cement products have nice breathing space, and require so little maintenance.

Jarrett Kravitz recently completed the renovation of an 1840’s farmhouse in Clinton that is so stunning and energy-efficient, James Hardie used it in a television commercial. Jarrett has received 4-5 leads a week from this very effective marketing vehicle, that has reinforced his brand and expanded his exposure as a quality, high performance builder. You can view the video at [www.connecticutbuilder.com](http://www.connecticutbuilder.com). ■





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## Jamie Wolf Design Builds Just the Right House for High Performance & Affordability



The 74 million strong Boomer generation (age 52-74) continues to establish new trends and change the marketplace.

Connecticut Boomers are embracing the net-zero-energy movement and investing in extremely energy efficient homes as part of their retirement plans.

UCONN professors, Paul and Louise Lewis, are participants in this year's Zero Energy Challenge (ZEC), and their motivations came down to four wish list items for their new home:

- ▶ really comfortable
- ▶ right-sized for their current lifestyle and for future aging in place
- ▶ self-sustaining and efficient
- ▶ affordable

And that's exactly what Jamie Wolf of Wolfworks, Inc. designed and built for them.

Inspired by New England farmhouses the 1,600 SF three bedroom home makes the most of every space simply and smartly.

Large windows open to rural views and do double duty by providing free solar heat. There's a master suite on the first floor and the south facing upstairs bedroom serves as a home office for the two biology professor owners.

Located in Mansfield, within walking distance to UConn's main campus, the home features an open concept floor plan, triple glazed European windows, a solar photovoltaic system, extra insulation on every surface and state of the art HVAC systems.

The result: a - 3 Net Zero Energy Passive House designed home. The impressive - 3 HERS rating means this high performance home produces more energy than it uses.

Affordability - Compared to a code built home, it will save the homeowners over \$4,000 in annual energy cost and a capitalized annual savings of over \$160,000.

Affordability of net-zero-energy homes is a significant draw for those approaching or at retirement age and on a fixed income. Another attraction is that net-zero-energy homes also meet several of

the NAHB Aging-In Place Recommendations, such as:

- ▶ Low-maintenance, durable exterior
- ▶ Main living on a single story, including full bath
- ▶ Plenty of windows for natural light
- ▶ Safe electric cook tops (The Lewis' home features an induction stove that's cool to the touch.)
- ▶ Easy-to-read, programmable thermostats
- ▶ Energy-efficient HVACs with air filtration ventilation systems

"The Connecticut Zero Energy Challenge has evolved from exploration to finessing the zero-energy home building process and pushing the envelope with new energy-efficient designs and technologies," said Enoch Lenge, Eversource Energy Efficiency Supervisor. "As a result, these super-efficient homes have become a showcase for future builders and homeowners. They also demonstrate that high-efficiency homes can fit any budget and be the norm with significant rewards in comfort, long-term sustainability and affordability." ■

# Marijuana Pre-Screening & the Safety Risk Dilemma for Contractors

By Kim DiMatteo, DiMatteo Group



The rules are changing when it comes to recreational and medical marijuana use and it's turning HR departments all over the country upside down. From employee handbook adjustments to drug screen analysis – both random and before the hire – it's getting complicated.

Is it discriminatory NOT to hire someone because they screened positive for marijuana? In days past that was an easy answer, today not so much. The bigger issue is the conflict between state and federal legislation. The roll back of the 2013 Obama Cole memo that relaxed federal enforcement of marijuana laws put employers in a position of – “We just don't know where we stand legally.”

When our current unemployment rate sits at an all-time low, the New England market, where finding skilled talent is already tight, adding a zero-tolerance policy can deeply cut into your talent pool.

The rumor around the water cooler at many companies, seminars, and workshops is that the zero-tolerance days of old are diminishing.

Here are some sobering statistics:

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in 2016 28.6 million people aged 12 or older (yes age 12), used an illicit drug in the past 30 days. At the date of the study that corresponds to 1 out of every 10 Americans, but can be as high as 1 in 4 for young adults aged 18-25, who are often a prime pool for seasonal workers, apprentices, and laborers. If you have 10 employees in that age range, chances are 2 of them would not pass a drug test.

What's driving those statistics? Marijuana and the use of prescription pain meds that turn into an ugly overuse and addiction. The opioid crisis is not going anywhere soon.

As of this writing, 30 states and the District of Columbia have laws broadly legalizing marijuana in some form or another. 8 of which, plus the District, have the most expansive laws legalizing marijuana for recreational use.

## The Safety Risk Dilemma

The odds of having a pre-hire or post-hire drug screening showing a positive ding is not IF, it's WHEN. It's the reality of our workplace now. Determining if an employee is a safety risk is obviously the reason drug testing is so important, and as we all know those with drug and/or alcohol issues tend to have attendance issues and force a high turnover in the labor force.

The legal liability for the employer when it comes to discrimination is real, and according to the American Bar Association

(ABA), courts are ruling in favor of medical marijuana users versus siding with employers.

The ABA further noted that companies who have locations in multiple states, need to be aware of the varied rules of those jurisdictions.

Is it an impossible situation for employers? In my opinion, for many it is. While employers need to strive to obey local drug use laws to avoid a discrimination suit, they also need to abide by federal safety laws and OSHA regulations that require the employer to offer a safe work environment. Where is the line drawn? Can someone who is using marijuana for medical and/or recreational reasons operate machinery safely? Climb ladders safely? Be at 100% to support their fellow co-workers in risky work environments?

Darryl G. McCallum of Baltimore MD, co-chair of the Programming Subcommittee of the Section of Litigation's Employment & Labor Relations Law Committee<sup>2</sup>, noted that he feels claims will arise against an employer if a safety issue involving a medical marijuana user occurs in the workplace and it is later revealed that the employer was aware that the offending employee had failed a drug test at the onset of employment. If they didn't hire, they could be open for a discrimination lawsuit. Either way, the employer is at risk for litigation.

**The answer?** Stringent safety protocols, checklists, and eagle eye management. I'm not disputing that there is a place for medical marijuana use; the medical community has shown amazing results for a variety of conditions and diseases. My concern lies with my clients and protecting their assets, ensuring safe work environments, all while allowing them to have an inclusive hiring practice. We indeed live in a very litigious society and the need to be aware of the “What-if's” is important. Protecting yourself from discriminatory lawsuits begins at the hiring desk, we all know that. We aren't wizards, we can't foresee the future. I can promise you that protecting yourself with ample Employment Practices Liability Coverage is no longer an option, it's a necessity.

**What will the future hold?** Again, I can't see into the future but I don't anticipate this issue going away. Those of us deeply embedded in the construction industry simply need to be aware, hyper-focused on policy, process, and procedure to ensure our teams are safe and we remain compliant both on a state and federal level. Only time will tell.

(1,2 source American Bar Association. “Litigation News”, March 15, 2018 “Trend in Medical Marijuana Suits Favors Employees”. Author, C Thea Pitzen )

For more information contact Kim Marie DiMatteo, DiMatteo Group 203-924-5429. ■

## Bill Ethier Retires After 25 Years as HBRACT CEO



Bill Ethier with his wife Lois, their son and his fiancée and Bill's 90 year old mother.

"Bill Ethier has been responsible for shaping the debate; drafting the language for positive legislation; and derailing negative legislation. His "Way Forward: 30+ Changes Connecticut Must Make" is a blueprint that outshines anything put forth by the Governor or legislature."

– Tim Hollister, Shipman & Goodwin

On June 7th, more than 100 friends, family and dignitaries gathered at the beautiful Wallingford Country Club to recognize Bill Ethier for his 25 years of service as CEO of the state HBRA. Joanne Hoerrner did a wonderful job organizing the event and coordinating a video tribute, produced as a courtesy to the association by Jim Fuhrmann.



HBRACT Dir. Of Admin. & Events, Joanne Hoerrner with former HBRACT staff members George Rafael, who is now CCM Director of Finance & Gov. Research & Lisa Kidder, CHFA Director of Communications.



Bill Ferrigno performed the role of master of ceremony with the same skill and wit he does as chairman of the Builders & Developers Forum.



Senator Len Fasano presented Bill with a Proclamation from the State of CT, signed by all senators, and Tim Bobrowske read a Proclamation from HBA Northwest.

"Bill, you have benefitted the businesses of builders throughout Connecticut, and as a result, you have positively impacted the lives of thousands of homeowners. That's an incredible legacy."

– Chris Nelson, HBRACT V.P.

Speakers included former Simsbury planner and friend, Bill Voelker, land use attorney, Tim Hollister of Shipman & Goodwin, NAHB 1st Vice-Chair, Greg Ugalde, who will be sworn in as Chairman of NAHB in February, and Joanne Carroll, who presented Bill with a long overdue 2018 HOBI (Home Building Industry) Award for his outstanding service in representing, advocating for and defending the homebuilding industry in Connecticut.

(continued)

## A High Level Meeting Between NAHB & the White House



If the clout of a Washington trade association is measured by its access to high-level policymakers, the members of NAHB have much to be proud about.

During the week of May 21st, at the 2018 NAHB Spring Executive Board Meeting in Washington, builders met at the White House with Vice President Pence and top administration officials; discussed the housing outlook with the Fed chairman; hosted HUD Secretary Ben Carson at the National Housing Center; and held several meetings with lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

“The fact that NAHB is so respected in Washington, D.C. is that the secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Federal Reserve chair, the Secretary of the Treasury, our U.S. trade representative and the vice president of the United States all want to hear what we have to say,” said NAHB Chairman Randy Noel. “They want to talk about our issues and really get something done. That’s unprecedented, and it shows you the importance of housing.”

### Connecticut Builders Attend White House Briefing

We are lucky to have Central CT HBRA member, Greg Ugalde of T&M Building Company in Torrington, serving as the 1st Vice President of the NAHB Board. He and past CT HBRA President, Norton Wheeler, along with Build-Pac Trustee, George LaCava, EOC President and EO Of Central CT HBRA, Eric Person and Chairman of the NAHB Board, Randy Noel, were among the leaders who met with Vice President Pence to discuss issues of importance: lumber tariffs, labor and land use regulations.

They also heard from White House staff on workforce development, as well as the continued success of the administration to roll back overreaching regulations. The House of Representatives is expected to pass the Dodd Frank Regulatory Relief

Act, which will loosen the regulations on community banks. This should help builders gain project funding the old fashioned way, through community banks.

### Regulatory Relief a Top Priority

On May 23, HUD Secretary Ben Carson spoke to the Executive Board at the National Housing Center and reaffirmed the administration’s support for regulatory reform.



HUD Secretary Ben Carson addresses NAHB Executive Board as Chairman Randy Noel looks on.

Noting that regulations “act as a stealth tax” on all American businesses, Carson said that one of President Trump’s first executive orders was the “2-for-1” rule which stipulated that for every new regulation that is created, two must be eliminated.

“The president is very committed to your industry and understands you need and want regulatory relief,” said Carson. “At HUD, we think the time is ripe to conform to the president’s agenda on eliminating or streamlining regulations and create a more coordinated regulatory environment.” “Home building is the bedrock of this country,” Carson said. “It is a major mechanism for families to accumulate wealth. Thank you for your dedication for making the American dream come through for so many people.”



L-R EOC President Eric Person, NAHB 1st V.P. Greg Ugalde, Build-Pac Trustee George LaCava & Nort Wheeler



Vice-President Mike Pence addresses NAHB members at the White House. Builders were attending Spring Board of Directors meeting.

## Our Own Greg Ugalde Will Be Elected NAHB Chairman at IBS in February

This year's International Builders Show (IBS) in Las Vegas will be like no other for the home building industry in Connecticut. The President of T&M Building Company in Torrington, a member of the Central CT HBRA, and a resident of Burlington CT – Greg Ugalde, will be sworn in as Chairman of the NAHB and leader of its 140,000 members.

Greg's role as Chairman will bring tremendous prestige, media attention and influence to the home building industry in Connecticut.

## Executive Officers Conference Held at NAHB

On April 23-24, Connecticut local association Executive Officers of Fairfield County, Central CT, Northwest CT and Eastern CT all attended the EO Orientation Conference at NAHB headquarters in Washington DC.



L-R Central CT EO Eric Person, Northwest CT EO Sheila Leach, Fairfield County EO Jackie Bertolone, Eastern CT EO Theresa Mullin & HBRA of CT incoming CEO, Jim Perras. Seated at desk, Greg Ugalde 1st Vice-Chairman of NAHB.

**NEWS:** NAHB staff is now offering a great new resource for local associations: Housing data compiled by state and by Congressional district.

Check out: <http://www.nahbhousingportal.org/states/connecticut/>

## SAVE THE DATE

Don't miss the party at the Hard Rock Café on Thursday February 21st, 2019, and the opportunity to congratulate Greg on this great honor! Let him know your issues and what you feel is critical for NAHB to accomplish during 2019.



L-R Sheila Leach, Jackie Bertolone, Rick Burt, Director of NAHB Executive Officers Council, Theresa Mullin, Eric Person & Jim Perras.

(continued)



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## Home Building Industry Day at the Capitol



On April 3rd, home builders and suppliers throughout the state gathered at the Capitol to meet with legislators; discuss issues critical to the housing industry; and help lead Connecticut back to economic strength.



L-R: Fairfield County HBRA CEO Jackie Bertolone, HBRACK CEO Bill Ethier, Nort Wheeler, NAHB 1st Vice Chair Greg Ugalde, Rep. Vincent Candelora, PR Committee Chair Joanne Carroll, 1st VP Chris Nelson, VP/Treasurer Eric Santini, HBRACK President Pete Fusaro and HBRACK GA Chair Bob Wiedenmann



L-R: VP/Treasurer Eric Santini, 1st VP Chris Nelson, HBRACK CEO Bill Ethier, Rep. Themis Klarides, NAHB 1st Vice Chair Greg Ugalde, and HBRACK GA Chair Bob Wiedenmann.



HBRA Central CT CEO Eric Person and incoming HBRACK CEO Jim Perras



Frank Sanford & Bob Wiedenmann with an attending HBRACK member



L-R HBRACK 1st V.P. Chris Nelson, HBRACK President Pete Fusaro, NAHB 1st Vice Chair Greg Ugalde, Government Affairs Chair Bob Wiedenmann, Senator Martin Looney, Past President Nort Wheeler, HBRACK CEO Bill Ethier & VP/Treasurer Eric Santini.



Bill Ethier, Chris Nelson, Greg Ugalde Glenn of Overhead Door Hartford & Bob Wiedenmann



Larry Fiano and builder Jake Carrier

*(continued)*

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## NAHB Leaders Called on Congress to Adopt a Strong Housing Agenda



NAHB Chairman Randy Noel and First Vice Chairman Greg Ugalde conducted two days of meetings with Republican and Democratic leaders on Capitol Hill to urge lawmakers to keep housing in the forefront of the national agenda.

The NAHB Senior Officers reiterated the importance of housing and homeownership to the economy and stressed that a vibrant housing market is necessary in order to maintain robust job and economic growth.

L-R Randy Noel, Senator Steve Scalise & Greg Ugalde

## Connecticut's Home Building Industry Lost Ground Again In 2017

Connecticut's home-building industry — still struggling to recover from the last recession — lost more ground in 2017, a new report shows, logging a double-digit, year-over-year decline in new construction.

The number of permits issued by towns and cities for single-family houses, condominiums and apartment units fell 17.4 percent in 2017, to 4,547, compared with 5,504 the previous year, according to U.S. Census data released by the state Department of Economic and Community Development.

"There's no way to sugarcoat it, the numbers are dismal," William Ethier, CEO of Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut, said. "The numbers are even worse than we projected."

The number of new houses and apartments fell to the most recent low of 3,173 in 2011 and appeared to be turning a corner with year-over-year gains in the four years that followed. But activity suffered a downturn in 2016 and accelerated in 2017, the report shows.

Home building is considered a leading indicator in economic recovery. According to last month's jobs report from the state Department of Labor, Connecticut has recovered only 80 percent of the roughly 120,000 jobs lost during the Great Recession. The most recent peak for new home construction in Connecticut was 11,885 units in 2005 with a record high of 28,000 in the 1980s.

"We had less than 5,000, that's ridiculous," Liz Verna, owner of Verna Builders and Developers in Wallingford, said. "We do see some activity but not what we should see."

When Verna launched the 98-lot, Hillcrest Village in Southington in 2015, she thought the subdivision of ranches and colonials would be completed in 2019. Now, Verna's looking at 2021 for the homes, which range in price from \$349,000 to \$449,000. Ethier said one stumbling block for builders is a 2012 state statute that allows towns and cities to tax builders of single-family houses on partially completed or not-yet-sold houses. HBRA has been unsuccessful in seeking a repeal, including again this year. The tax, Ethier said, adds considerable "carrying costs" for home builders and becomes a deterrent to construction.

### Number of Housing Units Authorized in 2017

Permit-issuing Places	Total Units	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 and 4 Units	5 Units or More	Demolitions	Net Gain
Connecticut	4,547	2,480	102	53	1,912	1,403	3,144
Fairfield	1,719	765	44	35	875	538	1,181
Hartford	957	455	14	12	476	509	448
Litchfield	142	125	2	3	12	32	110
Middlesex	237	150	4	0	83	25	212
New Haven	750	469	16	0	265	202	548
New London	295	226	16	0	53	35	260
Tolland	313	156	6	3	148	36	277
Windham	134	134	0	0	0	26	108

*Fairfield County led the state's eight counties, followed by Hartford County. (U.S. Census, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development)*

Across the state, builders constructed 2,480 single-family houses, which outpaced the building of 1,912 rental units in developments of five or more apartments. That is a reversal of the trend in recent years in which apartment construction has led the way. Again last year, Fairfield County had the strongest showing with 1,719 units, including 765 single-family houses and 875 rentals in developments of five or more. Hartford County came in second, with 957 units, including 455 single-family houses and 476 rental units in developments of five or more.

**\*\*NOTE:** The number of units approved for building permits does not mean the state's housing stock is increasing by that amount. In 2017, 1,403 units were demolished statewide, resulting in a net gain of 3,144. In Fairfield County, there were 538 demolitions resulting in a net gain of 1,131. Hartford County saw 509 demolitions and a net gain of 448 units.

Ethier said he doesn't see much improvement in the coming year, and he expects Connecticut to lag much of the country in home construction.

"I honestly hate to be a pessimist, but I don't see much change from bouncing along the bottom as we have for 11 years, and I think it's going to continue," Ethier said. "I wish more legislators understood that housing can lead the economy back. Make it a little easier for us to build, and we can help."

# ANNUAL MEETING & AWARDS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2018 AWARD WINNERS

---

**Builder of the Year Award**

The Michaud Group, LLC

**Associate of the Year Award**

Angela Legg, Tile America

**Remodeler of the Year Award**

Hemingway Construction, Peter Sciarretta

**Member of the Year Award**

Judy Doyle, Wright Building Company

**New Member of the Year Awards**

Justin Schietinger, Eastern Metal Works

Leia Ward, LTW Design

**Woman of the Year Award**

Amber Wilder, Elevator Service Co.

**Business of the Year Award**

Bender

**Supplier of the Year**

Interstate+Lakeland Lumber Corp.

**Volunteer of the Year Award**

DeRosa Builders

**John P. Rowins Meritorious Service Award**

Joanne Carroll

**President's Choice Award**

Peter Gaboriault, Bear Paw Builders, Inc.

**Associate Council Awards**

Leigh Overland, Leigh Overland Architect

**Associate Council Awards**

Michael DeRosa, DeRosa Builders

# Fairfield County HBRA Awards



2018- 2019 HBRA of Fairfield County president Anthony DeRosa (far right) with his brother & business partner, Michael DeRosa and their parents.



Associate of the Year Angela Legg & HBRA President Chris Steiner



Max Bender accepting Business of the Year Award from new HBRA President Anthony DeRosa



Michael DeRosa, Kristen Harrington ,Lucie & Anthony DeRosa



New Member of the Year Leia Ward with HBRA CEO Jackie Bertolone



New Member of the Year Justin Schietinger with HBRA CEO Jackie Bertolone



Builders of the Year Rob & Mark Michaud with their parents & wives



L-R Brian Kurtz Interstate Lumber - Supplier of Year, Amber Wilder of ESCO - Woman of the Year & Judy Doyle of Wright Building Company - Member of the Year.



Remodeler of the Year Hemingway Construction Michael Sciaretta & Doug Horn with HBRA Pres. Chris Steiner.



Professional Women in Building Council

(continued)



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# Fairfield County HBRA Awards



Volunteers of the Year, Michael DeRosa  
Aleighen Bunkers & Anthony DeRosa



Joanne Carroll accepting John P.  
Rowins Meritorious Service Award  
from Fairfield County HBRA V.P. Kim  
DiMatteo



Peter Gaboriault accepting the President's  
Choice Award from outgoing  
HBRA President Chris Steiner

Michael  
DeRosa  
accepting  
Associates  
Council Builder  
award from co-  
chairs Steven  
Roth, Elevator  
Service  
Company &  
Pete Battaglio,  
Hocon Gas



Architect Leigh  
Overland accept-  
ing the Associate  
Award from Associ-  
ate Council chairs  
Steven Roth & Pete  
Battaglio

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## Builders and Architects Gathered at Clarke's Showroom in May

*If there are architects, builders will come!*



Sarah Iannarone & Clare Michalak, Fairfield County HBRA

In an effort to get architects more involved in the association, Fairfield County HBRA CEO, Jackie Bertolone held an Architects Night at the Clarke showroom with a CEU course for architects prior to the May meeting. Will Contento presented the course on HEW 505 Code Compliant Exterior

Systems for Wood Framed Building Envelopes. AIA executive director, Gina Calabro, partnered with HBRA, and invited her Fairfield County AIA members to attend the CEU and GMM for free. It was a true partnership all around. At 6PM, twenty-five architects joined Fairfield County builders and suppliers for an evening of great networking!



L-R Angelo DiMeglio, Ed's Garage Doors, Tyra Dellacroce, CT Stone, architect David Moore, Brian and Dave, Marsillo's Appliance, Rob & Marc Michaud & Mike Wood.



L-R Tony Aitoro, Buddy Ontra & Lora Mazurak



Aleighen Bunkers DeRosa Builders & Leia Ward, LTW Design



Amber Wilder, Elevator Service Co. & Angels Legg, Tile America



Peter Sciarretta, Joanne Carroll & Steven Roth

## Aitoro Appliance Hosted the April General Membership Meeting



L-R Aviel & Ozzie Suarez, Karen Bradbury and Tony & AJ Aitoro



Read Smith of Key Insurance, Kim DiMatteo, DiMatteo Insurance Group (2nd from right) & Dana Drugo, Daigle & Travers Insurance Agency (far right), presenting Acadia Insurance royalty check to Fairfield County HBRA CEO, Jackie Bertolone and Fairfield County HBRA President, Chris Steiner.



L-R Aleighen Bunkers, Emilia Ferri, Birgit Anich, Read Smith, Judy Doyle, Buddy Ontra & Hannah Klotz.



L-R George Pusser, Cornerstone Contracting with Amber Wilder, Elevator Service Co. & CEO of HBRA, Jackie Bertolone.

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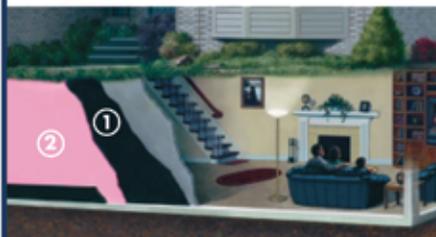
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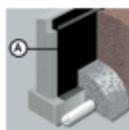
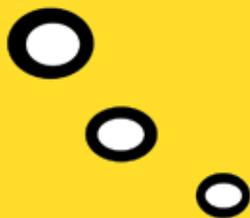
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\*See TUFF-N-DRI user for full details on the 30-year performance warranty. \*\*Builder magazine Brand Use Studies ©2009, Tremco Barrier Solutions, Inc. TUFF-N-DRI® is a registered trademark of Tremco Barrier Solutions, Inc. WARM-N-DRI® is a registered trademark of Owens Corning.

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## Professional Women in Building Council of Fairfield County Receives NAHB Charter

*“Women who invest in themselves go further.”*

PWBC Chairwoman, Amber Wilder, describes PWBC as a new group of talented professional women who have come together to support one another on gender-specific issues associated with the building industry. PWBC is using the collective talents of members to educate each other in networking and growing our individual businesses.

Chartered by NAHB in January 2018, according to Fairfield County HBRA CEO, Jackie Bertolome, PWBC has 33 members and growing. Each month, a meeting is hosted at a member’s showroom, and a member gives a presentation on a topic of interest, followed by a discussion.

Past meetings have been hosted at the home of interior designer and builder, Michelle Hogue; at Tile America, compliments of Angela Legg and at Aitoro Appliance with a presentation on networking by Lora Mazurak.

On March 19th, PWBC members attended NY Build 2018 and a panel that discussion on women in the construction industry.

The April meeting was held at Lillian August’s 100,000 sf Norwalk showroom. LA Trade Sales Director, Casandra Billig, described the company’s Greenwich Design Center, its full fledged showroom at 47 John Street in Stamford, which specializes in rugs; and their concierge service with bespoke workroom in Norwalk, offering designers soup to nuts, from organizing a measure to upholstery.

Aleighen Bunkers, DeRosa Builders and Amber Wilder, PWBC chair & business development director at ESCO, presented tips on “Getting the Job”. Amber recommended Simon Sinek’s Golden Circle.



PWB members meeting at Aitoro Appliance Showroom



Emelia Ferri, Emilia Ferri Architecture + Design, Secretary; Amber Wilder, Elevator Service Company, Inc., Chairwoman; Michelle Hogue, Hogue Interior Design; Robin Carroll, Karp Associates; Stephanie Rapp, Stephanie Rapp Interiors, Vice Chair; Judy Doyle, Wright Builders; Angela Legg, Tile America.

“All inspiring leaders think, act and communicate in exactly the same way. And it’s the complete opposite of the rest of us. The key is to start with the Why – what you and your company believes in. It’s not about making a profit.

– Simon Sinek

The May meeting was hosted by Karen Bradbury at Closet & Storage Concepts of Norwalk.

PWBC officers are President, Amber Wilder(ESCO business development director), Vice-President, Stephanie Rapp (Stephanie Rapp Interiors), Treasurer, Lisa Bancroft (V.P. Commercial lending, Fairfield County Bank), and Secretary, Emilia Ferri Architecture & Design.



L-R Danica Caruso, CAFD, Karen Bradbury, Closet & Storage Concepts, Amber Wilder, Elevator Service Co., Dana Drugo, Daigle & Travers Insurance & Suzanne Stillwell, Jade Marketing Solutions

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## HBRA Central CT Turns Out in Force to Defeat Sprinkler Mandate

At the May 23rd Regs Review Committee meeting, 50+ HBRA members wearing safety vests outnumbered fire Marshalls 5 to 1, and the proposed mandate for fire sprinklers in townhouses was unanimously rejected!.



Central CT HBRA V./P. Sheila Leach and Garret Cook, Cyclone Home Systems

“It’s a big win for our industry and for affordable homeownership by eliminating \$10,000 worth of added cost to homeowners” says Johnny Carrier, HBRA Central CT Member of Codes & Standards.

Last August, upon Bob Hanbury’s retirement, the Codes & Standards Committee had included this mandate, but with help from members, realtors, water purveyors and

HBRA staff, we were able to successfully articulate our positions.

With today’s rejection, Codes & Standards will need to remove the Sprinkler Mandate and re-submit to the Regulations Review Committee. The new code is slated to take effect between July 1st and October 1st.



L-R Johnny Carrier, Kevin & Eric Santini

## Larry Fiano Fundraiser for Senator Cassano



Larry Fiano hosted a lunch fundraiser to support State Senator Steve Cassano on March 27th at Casa Mia on the Green in Rocky Hill.

Remodelers Council Hosts Building Science Fundamentals event with instructor Dr. Joe Lstiburek on April 6th at the Sheraton in Rocky Hill. There were over 120 attendees for this great event where the attendees could earn AIA CEUs and BPI credits.



Instructor, Joe Lstiburek & Clara Childress of James Hardie

(continued)

## National Remodeling Month Kick Off



To kick off National Remodeling Month on May 1st Alan Hanbury and the Remodelers Council of HBRA of Central CT had 16 Council members donate their time and materials to build a ramp for a child in need in Farmington.

**April General Membership Meeting** was held at Anthony's Ocean View in New Haven on April 26th. Guest speakers were Michael Barbaro, President of Connecticut Realtors Association and a member of the Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth and Marc Fitch, Investigative Reporter of Yankee Institute. The group discussed the Commission's report and recommendations.



**Student Design Awards Luncheon** was held on April 27th at By Carrier's Yorkshire club house in Farmington. The HBRA of Central CT presented awards to the 2018 Student award winners. See photos top of right column.



### Bringing Housing Home

On Monday, April 30th HBRA of Central CT participated in NAHB's Bringing Housing Home Campaign. The members met with U.S. Representative Joe Courtney and U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal to discuss crumbling foundations, Canadian soft-wood lumber, Housing Finance Reform, Workforce /Immigration



HBRA Central CT members with Senator Blumenthal



HBRA Central CT members with Representative Courtney

Issues, Regulatory Reform and other issues. HBRA Charitable Foundation was a proud sponsor of the Channel 3 Kids Camp W.R.A.P. Luncheon held on May 3rd at the Connecticut Convention Center.





## Home Builders & Remodelers of Eastern CT Hold Golf Tournament



The Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Eastern Connecticut spent a beautiful day on Thursday, May 10th, at River Ridge Golf Course in Griswold. Ninety-two golfers joined us for our Annual Golf Tournament. On behalf of President, David Preka, and the Board of Directors, we thank our golf committee for putting together a wonderful day: Mark Spinnato, Matt Mularski, Dawn Epstein DeCristifaro, and Theresa Mullin.

We would also like to thank the many sponsors who helped support our tournament:

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L-R Golf Committee members Dawn Epstein DeCristofaro, Matt Mularski, Mark Spinnato & HBRAECT Project Coordinator Theresa Mullin



L-R Ken Wilson, Patrick Day & HBRAECT President, David Preka



L-R Rhonda Burnim, Central CT HBRA CEO Eric Person & HBA Northwest EO & Central CT V.P. Operations Sheila Leach

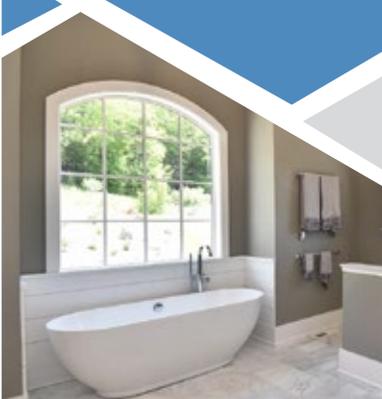
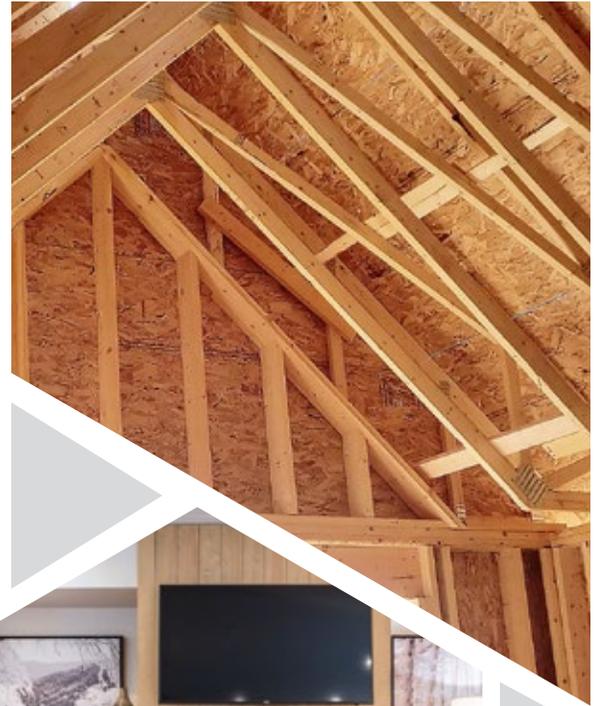


L-R Diana Buscetto, Karen Stearns, Debbie Yother & Beth Glynn

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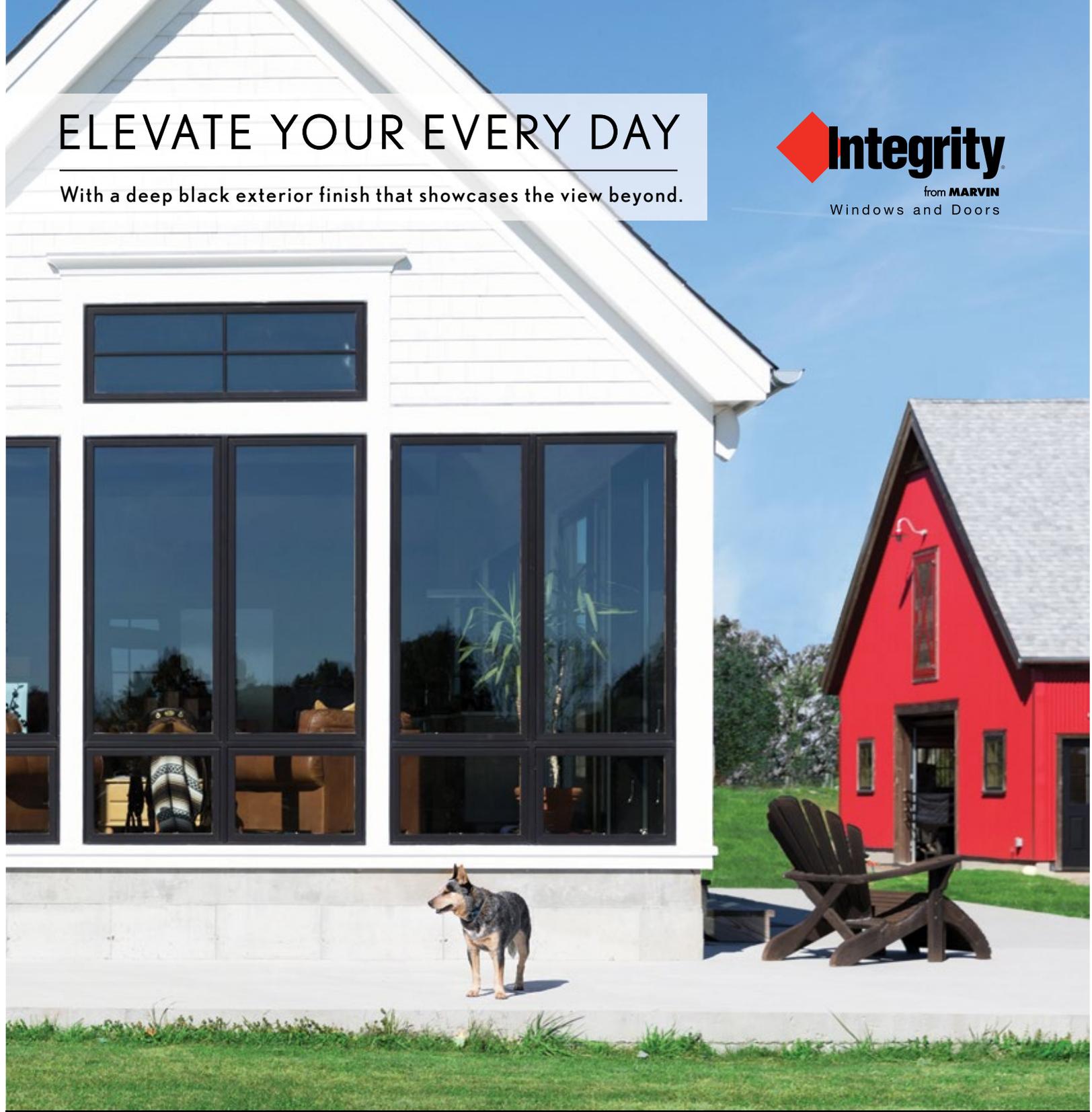
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