

CONNECTICUT BUILDER



The Magazine of the Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut

Winter/Spring 2022
Interactive Digital Edition

REMODELED HOME OF THE YEAR
A&B Painting & CAH Architecture



Photo by Modern Angles

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CONNECTICUT BUILDER

The Magazine of the Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut

President's Message by Eric Santini Jr. 3

CEO Letter by Jim Perras



ON THE COVER: A&B Painting won Remodeled Home of the Year for the amazing renovation of a 1903 Tudor in Greenwich. A&B craftsman builder, Vagner Poloniato and talented architect, Chris Hull of CAH Architecture worked hand in hand with homeowner, Ashley Cole and key subcontractors to create a stunning transformation, including the extraordinary two story family room pictured on the cover.

Photo courtesy of Modern Angles

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Workforce Development Is a Top Priority

HBRA is addressing our state's residential construction workforce shortage



Prior to the commencement of my term as President and First Chairman of the Home Builders Association of Connecticut, I made the decision that one of the main priorities of my chairmanship would be to further the cause of workforce development. This is also one of the principal goals of the strategic plan

that our board of directors approved last year. While our industry faces a multitude of short-term and long-term challenges in our state, none is more critical to our long-term viability than the development of a sustainable workforce.

The workforce issues that plague the residential construction industry began far before the pandemic. According to a recent survey by the American Community Survey the average age of a construction worker in Connecticut is 45 years old which is the highest in the country. The onset of the great recession in 2008 shrunk our industry substantially resulting in fewer younger workers entering the construction trades and many workers leaving for better opportunities in other industries or in other parts of the country. The pandemic has exacerbated this issue with many of our members struggling to properly staff their businesses on a day-to-day basis. While there were many reasons that our 2021 housing starts were at a 10-year low despite the vibrant housing market, the deficiency of our workforce was undeniably a seminal factor.

There are many reasons to blame for the overall shortage of entrants into our State's residential construction workforce including the lack of industry exposure in elementary and middle schools and the statewide focus on moving students down the path of traditional 4-year colleges and universities in municipal school systems. These are systemic statewide issues that have existed for decades that will require cooperation from many stakeholders and hopefully will result in both an attitude shift by municipal school systems for the benefit of our industry and a better alignment of the diverse skillsets of our high school graduates with the industries that are available to them including ours. While we can certainly be part of the conversation in changing attitudes more is required from us if we want to solve our workforce deficiency.

There is much work for our ad hoc committee to do prior to introducing a formal plan to our own Board of Directors for approval but it is our intention to keep the ball rolling as we move closer to our August grant application deadline.

Several years ago our neighbors to the east came to the conclusion that they must confront the workforce development issue in the homebuilding industry directly. The Rhode Island Builders Association (RIBA) created the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP). RCWP offers pre-apprenticeship programs in several industry trades including electrical, plumbing, carpentry and HVAC over a 26-week schedule. The Home Building Institute (HBI) provides the curriculum for these courses. To date, the program has provided their students, many of which are young adults exploring a change in careers, a chance to enter our industry's workforce and supplied many of their members and their subcontractors with employees that are ready to work from day one. In fact, many of their employers hire candidates prior to their enrollment in RCWP's program due to the confidence they have in their instructors as well as their positive experience with their graduates. Rhode Island is a state that shares many of the same demographics and economic characteristics as Connecticut. If a program like RCWP can work in Rhode Island, why not Connecticut? If RIBA can directly confront their workforce issues, why can't we? Based on history, we cannot reasonably expect anyone else outside of our industry to solve our workforce issues. This is our problem to fix.

After researching the success of RCWP and speaking with the key players in RIBA that made it happen, our ad hoc workforce development committee has decided to pursue the possibility of creating our own workforce development program at least partially based on RCWP's featuring HBI's curriculum. The State of Connecticut's new CareerConneCT program offers substantial grants for workforce development that could provide the

required funding needed to start our own program. It is our intention, pending the approval of the HBRA of CT Board of Directors, to apply for this grant by the August deadline. To date, Jim Perras and I have had numerous conversations with members of the RIBA team that were originally

responsible for creating the RCWP programs, potential program partners including HBI and Capitol Workforce Partners (CWP), grant writers to help with our application and have formally asked to be accepted as a member of the Governor's Workforce Council so that we remain part of the statewide workforce development discussion.

(continued)

Workforce Development Is a Top Priority

(continued)

There is much work for our ad hoc committee to do prior to introducing a formal plan to our own Board of Directors for approval but it is our intention to keep the ball rolling as we move closer to our August grant application deadline. Our funding opportunity through the state grant may provide us our one chance to confront the issue that we have debated and tolerated for decades. To make this happen, we need a commitment from our membership and industry to support our efforts and to benefit by hiring the high caliber workforce that our program can potentially provide. Our overarching goal is to provide a true statewide pre-apprenticeship program with multiple locations throughout the state. Let us take this challenge on together for the benefit of our industry today and for future generations of builders, remodelers and industry associates into the future to ensure that the home building industry remains sustainable for years to come.

2021 HOBI Awards

I want to thank Joanne Carroll, Jim Perras, our HBRA of Connecticut events coordinator Michele Quadrato, our HOBI committee and our numerous volunteers for a memorable HOBI Awards Dinner in November! It was great to see everyone in one place and to celebrate excellence in our industry. Congratulations to our deserving winners and their teams! The following pages in this edition of Connecticut Builder highlight the caliber of our winners. Enjoy!

If our Association can be of any service to you or your business, please don't hesitate to contact us. We welcome all members who are interested in getting involved in our various committees. Your talents are needed to continue our Association's important commitment to our industry.

Eric Santini
Chairman & President HBRA of Connecticut

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SURVEY


We Need Your Input!!!

Please give us your valuable feedback on the current construction labor shortage; your company's need for skilled trade workers; and HBRA's efforts to develop a Pre-Apprentice Program.

Take our brief 8 question survey at
[Facebook.com/HBRAofCT](https://www.facebook.com/HBRAofCT).

Or go to Eric Santini's Chairman's Message in our current online issue at www.connecticutbuilder.com and click on the survey link there.

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Your Membership At Work



I write this on the eve of my fourth session as a registered lobbyist representing the interest of businesses engaged in residential construction. And one thing is certain, the need for strong representation has never been greater. As we meet with legislative leaders these past weeks, we have stressed that the red-hot resale market does not reflect the health of the residential construction industry.

We continue to share the data that shows a drop in new construction permits pulled between 2020 and 2021 and we point out how one must look as far back as 2011 to see lower permit numbers than seen now.

We stress the downward pressures of supply chain disruptions, material cost increases, workforce shortages, the rising costs and scarcity of buildable lots are further negatively impacting our industry. We paint this picture in the hopes it might discourage the legislature and the Governor's administration from making it even more costly to build housing units in CT by passing legislation like conveyance taxes to benefit open space or stretch codes that allow towns to compel builders to employ energy efficiency and resiliency measure that are beyond existing code, just to name a few concepts that are currently being considered.

But it is not all doom and gloom for our industry. We are learning of proposals that provide substantial investments in retrofitting of existing housing stock to raise the bar on energy efficiency.

And DOH is currently considering a plan to dedicate millions in federal COVID relief funds to new affordable housing of all types.

- ▶ We continue to urge DOH to dedicate ARPA dollars to the expansion of water and sewer into smaller communities that are actively seeking development opportunities.
- ▶ The HBRA continues to be actively engaged in the conversations with policy makers about greater density around transit stations and where adequate infrastructure already exists.
- ▶ Lastly, we are making great strides in educating policy makers on the clear and immediate need to focus on the workforce development in the residential construction sector while exploring ways in which the HBRA can take advantage of existing funding to meet our workforce issues head on.

Your voice and your opinion matters.

Articulating your thoughts and concerns to us and your representatives can make all the difference. It has never been easier for HBRA members to better engage in the political process. We encourage members to get involved to the degree that your comfort and availability permits. Whether you simply want to be more informed, or you would like to help shape HBRA policies and legislative goals we welcome your engagement. Please consider the following:

- ▶ Look out for weekly emails with legislative updates and HBRA news that impacts our industry
- ▶ Register for text alerts that allow you to contact your legislator with prewritten emails with only a couple of clicks of a button (Text: HBRAC To: 50457 to register)
- ▶ Attend our weekly virtual Government Affairs meetings that shape our policies and direct our actions before state government
- ▶ **Attend our free and virtual Home Building Day at the Capitol Webinar on Tuesday, March 1st from 10:00 to 11:30 AM.**

Your attendance matters. A large number Confirmed participants will demonstrate to state policymakers that HBRA members are engaged and keeping a watchful eye on state government. This year's confirmed participants include:

- DEEP Commissioner Katie Dykes
- NAHB Chief Economist, Dr. Robert Dietz
- Legislative leaders of the Housing Committee and Planning & Development Committee, including
 - Sen. Steve Cassano
 - Rep. Cristin McCarthy Vahey
 - Rep. Joe Zullo
 - Sen. Rick Lopes
 - Sen. Paul Cicarella
 - Rep. Joe Polletta

Jim Perras
CEO, HBRA of Connecticut



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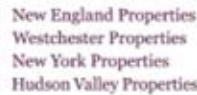
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"The HOBI Awards Dinner wins
Best Must-Attend Event of the Year!"

– Michael Murphy

It had been 2 years since our last HOBI Awards Dinner, and the Aqua Turf ballroom was humming with 650 builders, remodelers, architects, interior designers and suppliers, overjoyed to be back together again, and celebrating their resilience as an industry!!

History was made in 2020

What made this year unlike all the others, is that the winning homes were built and remodeled during an historic pandemic – one that we will be telling our grandchildren and great grandchildren about for years to come.



We all remember the Ides of March 2020, when suddenly, there was NO Work ... and then, just 2 months later, our industry had a hard time keeping up with the tsunami of renters & buyers pouring into Connecticut. Our little state went from #48 to the hottest housing market in the country!!

The 2021 award winning homes and communities show

how this industry responded to such an historic event ... with amazing ingenuity, creativity and craftsmanship.

In the pages of this issue, you will witness firsthand our small state's incredible housing diversity – from a \$350,000 spec home in Newington by Wilmatt Development to a \$40 million estate in Greenwich by Hobbs Inc, and everything in between...

On November 17th, we were proud to have a number of star architects with us at the HOBI Dinner. Their creativity made these winning homes possible.

Chris Pagliaro & Pagliaro Architects, David LaPierre & Cardello Architects, Christopher Hull & Teela Morisette, CAH Architecture, Charles Hilton & Hilton Architects, Paul Harris, Cole Harris Associates, Paul Bailey Architect, Donald Fairbanks, Jim Jamison, Ira Grandberg and Carl Navarro, Grandberg & Associates Architects, Nathan Topf, Dennis Noskin Architects, Lewis & Lewis Architects and Steve Jones of Hatley Homes Design. Thank you all for supporting us and the HOBI Awards!



Christopher Pagliaro Architects HOBI Party Bus

(continued)



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Meet Our 2021 HOBI Awards Judges



L-R New Construction Judges Eric Santini Jr., Liz Verna, Anthony DeRosa and Pete Fusaro. Pete also served as a Remodeling Judge, along with Brian Liistro and Nick Uccello. At far right, Shawna Feeley served as both Interior Design & a Technology Judge.

New Construction

Eric Santini Jr. – a successful multifamily builder of award winning townhouse apartment communities and current President of the HBRA of CT.

Liz Verna – a diversified builder of residential communities and commercial buildings, and a past president of the state HBRA.

Anthony DeRosa – an award winning Greenwich builder of luxury custom and spec homes and Past President of Fairfield County HBRA.

Pete Fusaro – A builder of high end custom homes in Greenwich, he has been awarded a National Green Building Emerald designation. Pete served as both a new construction & remodeling judge this year.

Remodeling

Brian Liistro – President of Healthcare & Multi-family Construction for the LICO Group, Brian has served several years as a HOBI judge.

Nick Uccello – a builder and remodeler of custom & spec homes and Chairman of Central CT HBRA Parade of Homes.

Interior Design

Shawna Feeley – talented interior designer, project manager for leading Fairfield County builders, and the owner of Shawna Feeley Interiors.

Technology Judges

Clare Michalak and **Jim Fuhrmann** & ADU/ Multifamily Design Judge, **Sara Bronin**, could not attend the HOBI Awards Dinner.



Clare Michalak



Jim Fuhrmann



Sara Bronin

(continued)

Highlights of the 2021 HOBI Awards Dinner



L-R HBRA President Eric Santini, Vice-President David Preka, Events Coordinator Michele Quadato, HBRA Immediate Past President Chris Nelson, HOBI Producer/MC Joanne Carroll, CEO Jim Perras and HBRA Treasurer Mike Girard.



Remodeled Home of the Year winners Vagner Poloniato, A&B Painting and architect Chris Hull, CAH Architecture with HBRA President Eric Santini



Custom Home of the Year winners Hallmark Associates Barry Ertelt and architect Nathan J. Topf and homeowners Lauren & P.J. Camp.



Winner of Remodeled Home Project of the Year Hobbs Inc. L-R Scott Hobbs, Tony Hogan & Marc SanAngelo



Custom Home Project of the Year winners Tom Yaroscak & P.J. Hendrick and their Legacy Construction Northeast team.



Spec Home of the Year winners Rick Benson, R.B. Benson and architect Donald Fairbanks



Community of the Year winner the Horton Group team with all six of their HOBIA awards



L-R Joanne Carroll, Liz Verna, HBRAC President Eric Santini, V.P. David Preka, CT Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz and HBRA CEO Jim Perras



Paul Harris (center) & Cole Harris team who won five HOBIA Awards, including 1st ever Best ADU Design & Best Multifamily Design with Leia Ward, winner of Best Home Staging Over \$5 Million



L-R Allan & Liz Koiva, Nordic Builders, with Liberty Bank table. Chip Poehnert center with empty chair & rose in memory of 14 year HBRA & HOBIA Events Director, Joanne Hoerrner, who passed away in August.



L-R Jason Wyman, Mark SanAngelo, Daniel Parady, Chuck Hilton, Scott Hobbs, Tony Hogan & John Saunders. Hobbs Inc. and architect Charles Hilton Architects won Best Custom Home Over 20,000 SF.



L-R Pat Sweeney, Sweeney Construction with architects Chris Harrigan, Chris Pagliaro and Danilo Marini of Christopher Pagliaro Architects and Roberta Mancuso, New England Home magazine.



Custom Home Project of the Year

Best Custom Home 15,000-20,000 SF

Legacy Construction Northeast
Carol Kurth Architecture



Tango House is a sleek, modern, eco-friendly home in backwoods Greenwich, clad in zinc panels, stucco, and white ash, treated thermally for moisture. A striking glass pivot entry door opens to the foyer and family room, where a stunning backlit Brazilian quartzite with hand-chiseled edges is displayed over the linear gas fireplace.



Legacy fireplace

Best Special Purpose Room

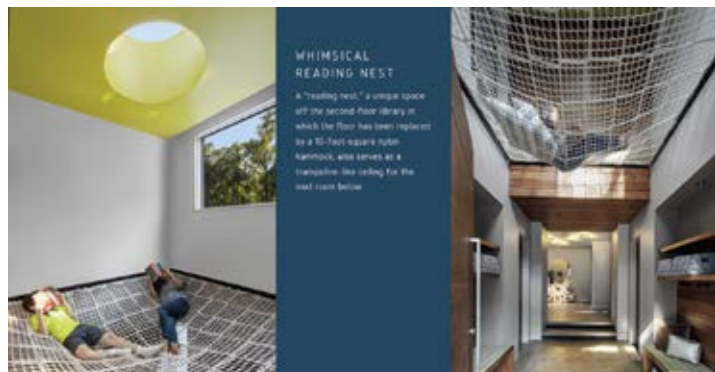
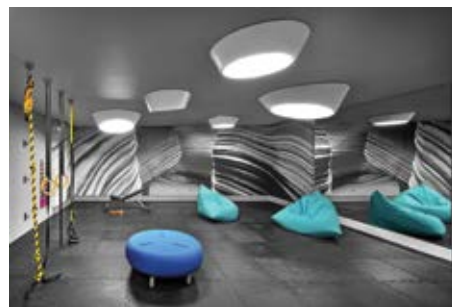
The clients met on the dance floor, and their 25' x 38' Tango Room is designed with maple floor, soaring swooped walnut ceiling and Omer Arbel cast-glass spheres, mimicking a suspended 'light cloud,' illuminate the dance floor.

Life sized murals of the client's nature photography emblazon select walls in the gym, master bedroom and master bath, where the mosaic glass tile walls replicate a nature photo.

For the "reading nest," the floor was replaced with a 10 ft square nylon hammock. Other amenities in this spectacular 15,700 sf home, include a wine cellar, media room, library, craft room, art storage room, his and hers home office spaces, electric car-charging garage, spa and sauna and an indoor lap pool.

Best Pool House

Outside, the stunning pool and HOBI winning two bedroom pool house sit amidst the natural, eco friendly habitat of a farm to table lifestyle.





Custom Home of the Year

Best Custom Home 10,000-15,000 SF

Hallmark Associates

Nathan J. Topf Architect



After 4 ½ years building this amazing home in Guilford, Barry Ertelt retired to Florida for a rest! Designed by Nate Topf, and reminiscent of the homes in Lake Cuomo Italy, it sits on a cliff overlooking L.I.S., with a foundation to withstand a 5.5 earthquake. The detail in this home is phenomenal!





Pictured is the bleached white oak paneled entry hall with intricate stone tile floor by Connecticut Stone, and stunning balustrade highlighting the swooping main staircase.



The open main living area is designed as a cross with pool table, dining, and sunroom forming the center and kitchen and family room on opposing sides.



His HOBI winning office is designed with a two story domed ceiling.

The sunroom is glazed on three sides with VS LowE2 Marvin windows from Rings End, which save 30% heat loss. The sunroom opens to a full length veranda overlooking the water. Interior design details by Forehand+Partners are exceptional.



A shiplap ceiling gives a cozy feel to the master bedroom and the marble master bath features a walk-in shower with island dressing room beyond.



A metal helix stair leads to an elegant lanterned turret and the deck with its thick mahogany rail and infinity pool suspended over the cliff.

(continued)



Best Custom Home Over 20,000 SF

Hobbs Inc.

Charles Hilton Architects



Hobbs Inc. built this spectacular 35,000 SF Georgian-style Greenwich estate, classically designed by Charles Hilton Architects on 13 acres. The entry foyer floor is a showstopping 3-dimensional marble tile flower design supplied by Connecticut Stone, and the 1,500 sf columned living room is designed with Venetian plaster and rift white oak walls and majestic round-top transoms over 2 ½ story glass doors. The interiors were designed by talented Forehand + Partners.



French doors with round top cobweb transoms surround the sunroom.

The outdoor living spaces are equally breathtaking. The regal pool house with intricate carved cutouts in the pergola columns to allow LED lights, and the arresting, lushly landscaped rear view. A 30KW Co-generation system returns excess electricity to the grid.



Indoor pool room.



Outdoor pool and pool house

(continued)



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Best Designed Custom Home

Christopher Pagliaro Architects



The year's 1st Architects Only: Best Designed Custom Home winner, Chris Pagliaro created this stunner in Weston MA. A unique octagonal stair and entry foyer is the centerpiece of this open plan with family room, dining, kitchen and lounge retreat opening off it.



The lower level wine tasting room and the 'Shack', a sports haven with betting odds board & 5 large TV's.

(continued)



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Best Custom Home 9,000-10,000 SF

UCE Fine Builders



Sited on a rock cliff and 200 ft in length, Jack Bear built this 9,700 sf Taconic Lodge with cypress beams & siding, and a reclaimed barn board interior. The home was designed for a family of 5 with ample room and special amenities for their guests.



Two kitchens, an oversized dining hall, media room, a basement pub and a grass surrounded pool overlooking the hillside, provide plenty of space for incredible entertaining. A Batcave with reinforced concrete tunnel leads to a two story garage for antique cars.



Best Builder Website

UCE Fine Homes for www.ucebuilders.com



(continued)



Thank you for bringing out our best.

We are proud to have won these HOBI awards and will continue to provide an amazing experience for your customers in-person and online at our updated virtual showrooms.

From kitchens to baths and beyond, we look forward to more award-winning work and relationships with the great builders and remodelers of Connecticut. Our success is only possible because of yours.



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Best Custom Home 6-7,000 SF

CCO Habitats



David Vyneryb built this California style flat roof contemporary home on Nash Pond in Westport.

Best Custom Home 5-6,000 SF

Guiltec Development



Dennis Guilfoyle was recognized for this traditional custom in Greenwich designed by Jones Byrne Margeotes Partners with two story entry and open concept living.

Best Out of State Custom Home

Gatehouse Partners
Grandberg & Associates Architects



Gatehouse Partners built this contemporary stucco home in Rhinebeck, N.Y. It was designed by Grandberg & Associates Architects as series of pavilions, connected by a central skylit gallery, and equipped with an art studio, skylit living room, colorful kitchen, indoor pool and jacuzzi.

The stunning spa master bath is designed with a center island tub, linen closets flanking the shower, and windows bringing in nature from all sides.



(continued)

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Best Vacation Home Over 5,000 SF

Hobbs Inc.



This Mid Century Modern California beach house in the Hamptons features a sunken daybed, infinity pool, panoramic views and outdoor glamour.

Best Vacation Home Under 5,000 SF

Cole Harris Homes



Cole Harris design built this Mid-Century Modern guest Cabin on Squam Lake New Hampshire, with designer Anna Petrova using cedar shiplap and multi-level decks, oak battened walls, and views of the water from every room.

Best In State Vacation Home

Corbo Associates



Corbo Associates built this Lake Zoar vacation home in Oxford for a Florida builder and his family. It features lake views, multitiered waterfall island and lacquered cabinets in the kitchen and a formal billiards room.

(continued)

Best Modern Custom Home Over 5,000 SF

Prutting & Company



This spectacular modern Greenwich home, built by Prutting in Sequoia siding with slate roof, is designed by Jobb Moore as 2 parallel bars linked by a grand staircase.



The showstopping spiral staircase, was sculpted from one piece of Corian, and guided into place with custom steel rigging plates. The back of the home facing Long Island Sound is all glass.



Best Modern Custom Home Under 5,000 SF

Ruddy Builders

Hatley HomeS Design



John Ruddy and Steve Jones, Hatley Homes Design, tackled a close to impossible building site on 5 Mile River Darien for this modern cantilevered home. They used 16' high concrete columns and a retaining wall with 5 tons of rebar and concrete to support the front of the house and the road above it.

The interior is all Manhattan loft, with a two story family room and second floor perimeter bridge above. A custom-built oil-rubbed blackened fireplace rises above the open family room, with a two-story rolled steel clad interior chimney chase.



Outstanding Affordable Custom Home

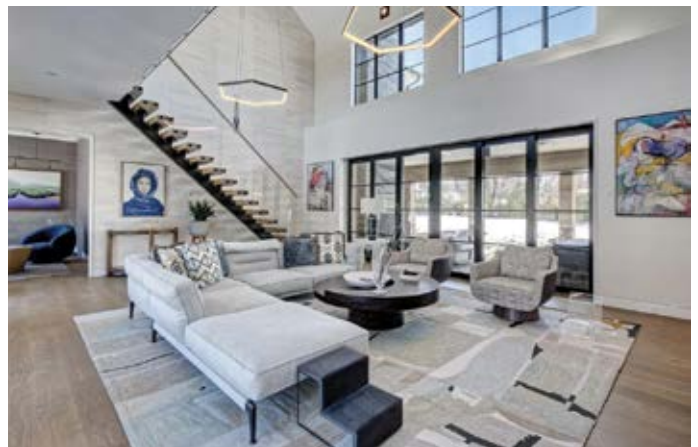
Advanced Group



Advanced Group & Westchester Modular Homes design built this craftsman-style custom to give 1st time buyers a dream home at \$560,000.

Best Custom Home Under 5,000 SF Built During Covid

Pyramid Construction



Joe Mirra built this modern farmhouse start to finish during Covid. Pictured is the family room with mono-rail steel stair and white oak ceiling truss. The home includes COVID must have his and her home offices and plenty of outdoor living. It was the Cover Story of winter 2021 issue of Connecticut Builder.

(continued)



BKI BETH KRUPA INTERIORS

luxé design for the treasured home



Award Winning Interior Design, Remodeling, & Renovations

Best Custom Home Over 5,000 SF Built During Covid Crisis

Brayden Construction



Jaimie Duggan built this 8,000 sf Greenwich shingle style during Covid. It was designed by Isaac & Stern and Morgan Harrison Home Interiors. Homeowner, Dr. Robin Varghese, who is head of heart surgery and COVID response at Mt Sinai, N.Y., managed to remain extremely involved in the build.

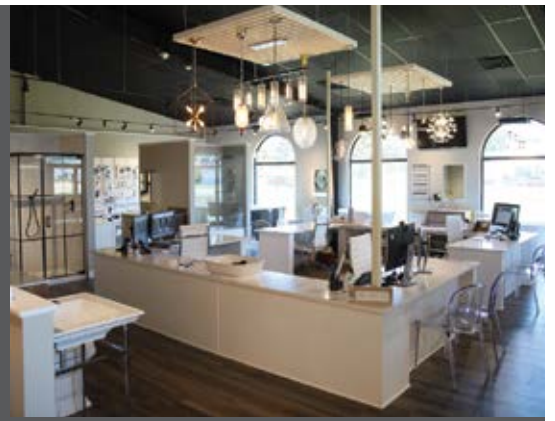
Outstanding Tolland County Custom Home

Nordic Builders of Tolland



Liz Koiva built this contemporary craftsman in Tolland with a rear patio, pool and spa for outdoor enjoyment, and a two story entry and family room, an island kitchen and a 1st floor master with luxury shower.

(continued)



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Outstanding Custom Home

Paul Valeri Builders

Talk about craftsmanship, Paul Valeri's design build log cabin in Bridgewater is a real stand-out! Builder Paul Valeri did exhaustive research to find the unique building materials that he wanted for his own dream home.

The exterior is Western Red Cedar logs from British Columbia, and features a 75' long cedar deck, king trusses and a steeply pitched metal roof. The 23 ft high Great Room, with floor to ceiling fireplace of Burlington boulders, is supported by another massive king truss and three giant trunks, weighing a ton each, support the balcony.



An archway carved thru the logs opens to the dining area and kitchen with one-of-a-kind custom quarter sawn white oak cabinetry, and 42" high island with Vail white granite top. The cost of trucking logs 3,000 miles was mostly offset by then 25% advantage of US to Canadian dollar, and the home is "easy on energy".



Best Custom Home 4,000-5,000 SF

Hemingway Construction

Cardello Architects

Hemingway built this stunning Shippan Point home, designed by Cardello Architects with 16 ft high fieldstone base reaching to the 1st floor living space, and the steeply pitched roof, just 1 inch from Stamford's height limit. The back yard extends to the beach and a full length deck is an outdoor living paradise with built-in spa and retractable outdoor TV.



The two story family room with dramatic curved ceiling trusses and Cardello signature granite hearth & mantel is on the cover of the fall issue of Connecticut Builder. A roof deck adds to the outdoor living glamour and a 1,000 lb. stone chimney cap is a true memory feature.



(continued)



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Best Custom Home 3,000-4,000 SF

Outstanding Kitchen

Best Butler's Pantry

The Greyrock Companies



This striking contemporary farmhouse was the 2020 Idea House for This Old House. Jerry Effren built it across from Saugatuck Golf Course and Long Island Sound.

The heart of the house is the exquisite 22'X44' kitchen/dining/family room with beamed cathedral ceiling, stone fireplace and wall of glass. Both the award winning kitchen and stand out butler's pantry were designed by Sandy Effren & Karen Berke-meyer, KB Home. Pictured is the charming upstairs bunk room and amazing outdoor living environment with kitchen, plunge pool, firepit and putting green overlooking the golf course and water.



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Best Custom Home Under 3,000 SF

Sweeney Construction

Christopher Pagliaro Architects



Architect, Chris Pagliaro and builder, Pat Sweeney, created this empty nester gem on the Norwalk River. It's designed with a bleached wood ceiling, wine wall under the open metal staircase, a perimeter bridge, and a master with shiplap wall and built-in furniture. Every room has a view of the water, and decks add to outdoor enjoyment.



Best Healthy Home

Sapia Builders Corp.



Nick Sapia built this certified Indoor Air Plus passive house in East Lyme, Zero Energy Ready with a HERS 39.

Best Green Energy-Efficient Custom Home

BPC Green Builders



BPC Green Homes created a 2nd cavity with 12" trusses outside the sheathing for a R-62 exterior wall in this passive home in Stamford.

(continued)

Spec Home of the Year

R.B. Benson

Donald Fairbanks Architect



It took Rick Benson many months to overcome municipal and FEMA challenges, COVID, and dealing with a neighbor's 20 percent view easement, to build this amazing Westport home. Designed by Don Fairbanks with plenty of glass and multiple decks overlooking the Saugatuck River, it is all about indoor/outdoor living.

The family room Nana doors provide an unobstructed water view, and a double island kitchen with 60" gas range, extra cabinetry and two sinks is perfect for entertaining. The sumptuous master suite is equipped with fireplace, sitting area, a private balcony, two large walk-in closets and a spa bath with 9ft glass shower and tile from KB Home. Apple Homekit manages key home functions and the 4-stop elevator completes the tech package. It sold to an empty nester couple at \$3.95 million.



Best Not So Big Spec Home

R.B. Benson



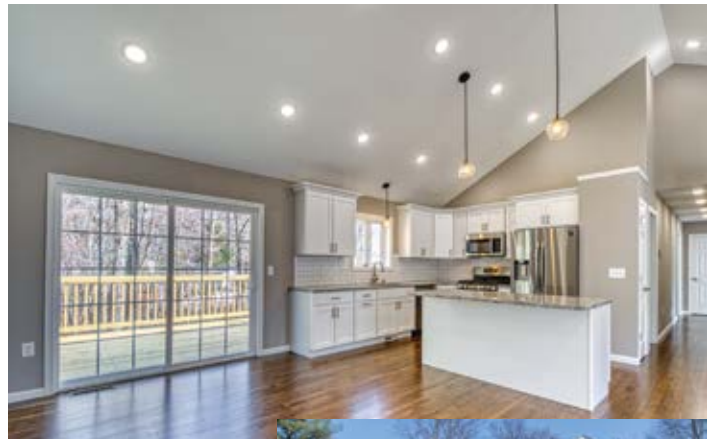
Rick Benson won a 2nd HOBI Award for this 2,400 sf Not So Big Spec on just 1/10th of an acre in Westport. It took 8 years of perseverance to navigate the zoning, neighborhood opposition, financing, construction and market issues to create this sophisticated, functional, beach house on a tiny lot.

Designed by William Achilles, the floor plan maximizes year-round views of Long Island Sound and Sherwood Mill Pond, and packs style into every inch, from its open shiplap family room kitchen, to its amazing roof deck. Sold \$2.5 million.



Best Spec Home Under \$500,000

Wilmatt Development



Greg Patchen built an economically efficient 3 bedroom, 2 ½ bath raised ranch in Newington, but loaded it with the amenities



today's homeowner craves. Pictured is the vaulted ceiling family room island kitchen with stainless appliances, plenty of recessed lighting and access to an oversized deck. The home sold at \$360,000, \$10,000 over asking.

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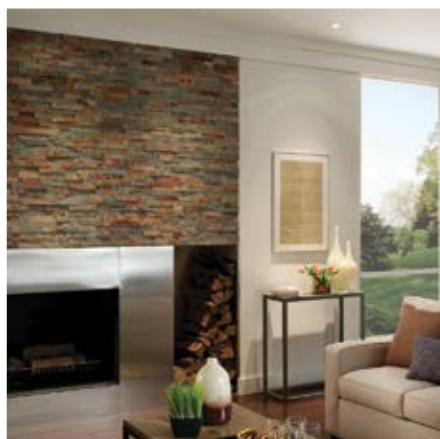


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Best Spec Home \$500,000-750,000

By Carrier



Johnny Carrier built this handsome modern farmhouse in white with black accents. It offers an open floorplan, three bedrooms, two-and one-half baths and a 595 sq ft finished basement with 9-foot ceilings and a large window for natural light. In addition to high end finishes, the home has a HERS rating of 48, making it both luxurious and energy efficient. It's part of Carrier's Arbor Meadows community in Cromwell, which is walking distance to TPC River Highlands Golf Club. It lists at \$704,000.

Best In Town Spec Home Best Powder Room

Altamura Homes



Luigi Altamura built this in town New Canaan spec with open concept living, five ensuite designer-inspired bedrooms, 4.5 baths and this winning powder room. It sold at \$2.8 million.

(continued)

Best Spec Home Over 5,000 SF Built During Covid

Red Canoe Partners



Red Canoe built this charmer during COVID with a bluestone patio, a lusciously landscaped yard, and a 20x40 gunite pool. Designed by Red Canoe Partners with Amy Zolin of Clarity Home Interiors, it offers over 8,600 sf of living area, 10-foot ceilings, 5-bedroom, 8-bathroom, a 3-car oversize garage and spacious lower level rec room, 2 laundry rooms, home gym, home office and wine-room. It's a walk to downtown Greenwich, and leased at \$35,000 per month.

Best Spec Home \$750,000-1 Million

Corbo Associates



This 3,589 sf home in a sought after neighborhood in Southbury includes 10 foot ceilings, a two story foyer, oversized windows and an antique wood mantle over the family room fireplace. It SOLD at \$930,000, \$30,000 over list.

Best Spec Home \$1-2 Million

Beachwalk Homes



Oscar Leal focuses on the town of Fairfield, and he

has built and renovated several custom homes on the same street. He design built this winning spec home with a unique sweeping roofline to truly separate it from the two neighboring custom homes, also designed and built by BeachWalk Homes.



Located in a Fairfield flood zone, note the attractive raised entry, sunken foyer and striking custom kitchen cabinets with Hale Navy lowers, white uppers and brushed brass hardware. Large built-ins flank the fireplace It SOLD \$1.35 Mil

Best Design Build Spec Home Best Spec Home Under 5,000 SF Built During Covid Best Interior Design

Bonnie Paige Interiors



Bonnie Paige won 3 HOBI's for this darling, California inspired Federal she design built in just 10 months during COVID. Located in the heart of Southport, it's loaded with interior design magic!



Outbuilding converted to home office with interior pictured below.



The garage appears to be an annex to the main house, though it is connected by a side door leading to a large entry mudroom, complete with a dog cubby and farm sink. Bonnie utilized glass walls to create private, yet open spaces. oversized 4 pane windows, 4 panel glass entrance doors, frosted glass bath doors, 5" wood plank floors with a light, natural finish, custom built-in cabinetry, including closets and bookcases.

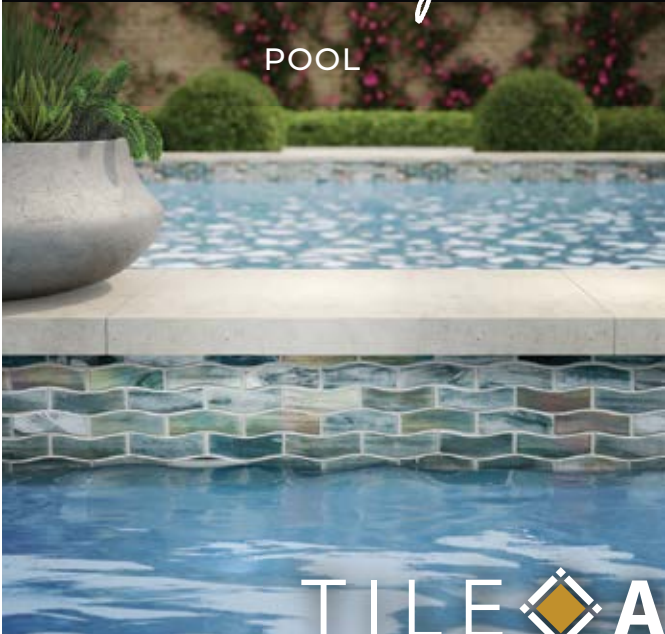
Oak, stucco and white natural stone details and a charcoal black library give a truly unique, charming feel to this home. And in a smart response to the COVID inspired trend, stay at home work spaces, she included a finished attic suite with a full bath and studio area, and a fabulous converted outbuilding home office pictured here. The home sold at \$3 million.



(continued)

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Best Spec Home \$2-3 Million

Able Construction



Able Construction and Vita Design created this unique spec home in Westport with floor to ceiling window walls and creative oak accents. SOLD \$2.95 million.

Best Spec Home \$5-6 Million

TREC

This refined 4 level 6,350 sf Tudor, designed by Andrew Nuzzi and built by TREC, combines classic architecture with modern function. Pictured is the double vaulted FR with see-thru fireplace to the deck.



Best Spec Home Over \$7 Million

Fletcher Development



Ryan Fletcher built this gorgeous Greenwich spec with oversized island kitchen, a conditioned wine wall, and Nana doors giving a room sized view of the deck, plunge pool and water. Outstanding features include the open tread floating staircase with stacked floor to ceiling windows and a skylit upper level hall with glass floor. The home sold for \$9.5 million.

(continued)



COMMUNITY OF THE YEAR Best Luxury Condominium Community

Horton Group for Residences at 66 High Street in Guilford



Kenny Horton won Project of the Year in 2018 for the 1st phase historic renovation of the Mill Building at 66 High Street in downtown Guilford. Then, he built two of three four story condominium buildings, with the third to be finished in 2023. Each unique residence in these new steel framed buildings features an open floor plan, highlighted by high ceilings, gourmet kitchens, finely appointed baths, and high-end finishes. These elevator buildings, with parking garage under and 4 units per floor, opened for sale in the \$600,000's. In 2021, he sold a penthouse at \$4.5 million, setting a record price point in Guilford, and most recently, a buyer paid \$5 million for one super luxury condo unit, and another \$1.7 million for a condo directly under it.

The Residences at 66 High Street offer outdoor amenities, including a community pool and kayak launch, open green space, walking paths, and an indoor community gym.

In keeping with Horton's record breaking sales pace, half of the 3rd building is pre sold, and Kenny Horton is proud that 66 High Street has given \$37 million in work to local contractors.

Best Luxury Condominium Unit Outstanding Special Purpose Room HORTON GROUP





The winning 3BR 2 ½ Bath condominium on pg. 44 offers an abundance of oversized windows and a porch to take advantage of salt marsh and river views. Luxury amenities include a wine wall stone countertops, Wolf and Sub Zero appliances, an Ortel fireplace and exquisite detailing. The master suite

features a marble tiled bath and beautifully appointed walk-in closet. A bonus golf room off the family room is equipped with \$60,000 Swing Catalyst software, special shelving, golf club storage and country club decor.



Best Large Commercial Horton Group

Horton Group is not only a stand out in residential construction. The company was also recognized with a HOBI Award for this Guilford commercial development, including one renovated existing building, two brand new buildings, state of the art facilities, a fully landscaped courtyard with viewing platform to a neighboring body of water and ample parking. It was fully leased before project completion.



(continued)

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Best Luxury Condominium Unit
Outstanding Special Purpose Room
Best Luxury Condominium Community
Community of the Year

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Best Hartford County Cluster Community

Sunlight Construction for *Cambridge Crossing* in Simsbury



Bill Ferrigno, Sunlight Construction is building 79 home Cambridge Crossing, with 16 units of income limited work-force housing scattered throughout the development. It's easily accessible to the Town Center of Simsbury, and the 15 colonial, cape and ranch models are designed by Jack Kemper, Kemper Associates Architects, and priced from the mid \$300,000's to the mid \$600,000's.

Best Fairfield County Cluster Community

Best Fairfield County Single Family Home Over \$800,000

Toll Brothers Inc. for *Enclave at Taunton Lake* in Newtown



In Newtown, Toll Brothers won for Enclave at Taunton Lake with homes starting in the upper \$600,000's. Their winning Saybrook model features a 2 story family room and finished basement with bar, and is priced at \$1.1 million.

(continued)

Lumber Market Update

by Frank Sanford, Sanford & Hawley, Inc.
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What has happened Since September?

The market has risen almost steadily, there was a slight two week drop that spanned the end of October and the beginning of November. More recently there was a one week drop in early February. And then all items resumed their climb, although OSB never stopped.



- ▶ Douglas Fir is up 164%.
- ▶ KDSPF is up 93%.
- ▶ Douglas Fir plywood is up 98%
- ▶ OSB is up 93%.
- ▶ KDSPF is at a somewhat normal discount of 10% to Doug Fir.

All prices are higher than they were 12 months ago, but are well below the peak of May/June 2021.

Why has this happened?

Supply is lagging demand again due the Omnicron variant of Covid-19 and continued labor shortages. In addition OSB and engineered wood production is hampered by shortages of adhesives. This goes all the way back to the cold weather in Texas over a year ago, and was compounded by the gulf coast hurricanes in the fall. In addition transportation delays continue to hamper delivery once material is manufactured and ready to ship. This affects both truck and rail, with shortages of truck drivers and rail cars.

Imports

Lumber imports have leveled off and dropped back from the recent high volumes imported from Europe. Imports of moulding and trim boards continue to arrive from South America and New Zealand in large volumes. Lumber production continues to decline in British Columbia, while eastern Canadian provinces try to make up the volume.

Exports

Exports from the U.S. are dropping, especially to China. Chinese tariffs on logs and lumber from the USA are having a big impact. There is relatively little lumber being exported from the USA. Most of it is going to traditional Caribbean markets.

What is happening now?

The price trend is very much like last year which peaked in May/June. Will that peak repeat this year? Will the recent drop in Covid cases increase production and cause an earlier drop in prices? Plan ahead for spring starts. Time will tell what the next few months bring. ☐

Best Pocket Community & Best Rental Unit

Red Canoe Partners

for Strickland Shores in Cos Cob



Red Canoe's 7 unit rental community in Cos Cob imitates its historic neighborhood. This winning 3 BR rental has its own back yard and a modern high beamed family room. It leases at \$6,700 per mo.

Best Mixed Product Community Best Community Website

Karp Associates

for *The Vue* in New Canaan

In downtown New Canaan, Karp's rental condo mix, *The Vue*, features underground parking, outdoor dining, a playground, concierge service and a club room and deck for hosting parties. Rents range from \$4,500 -9,000 and the condominium units start at \$1.4 mil.

Their winning website *findyourvue* allows visitors to book a tour from their phone or tablet.



Best Affordable 55+ Community

for *Founders Ridge* in Middletown

Ameritage is building the 84 home community, *Founders Ridge* on a hill overlooking Middletown and the Connecticut River. There are walking trails and two gazebos. A Shared Amenity package with adjacent Luther Services includes use of the meeting rooms, game rooms, exercise classes and chapel. For a small fee, residents can eat in the Luther Ridge dining room. The 7 models range from 1,300-2200 sf and are priced from the mid \$300,000's to the low \$400,000's.



(continued)

Best Smart Growth Community Archetype

for *Clocks Lane* in Darien

Paul Harris acquired four distressed properties close to Darien Center and revitalized the neighborhood by building 4 uniquely designed homes, and coordinating the process for city water and sewer line extensions. The homes sold for \$2-3 mil. and raised the value of existing homes. A Win Win and true SMART GROWTH.



Best Rental Community Gault Family Companies & Pen Building Co.

for *Belden Place* in Westport

Located on the Saugatuck River in downtown Westport, Gault's Belden Place offers 14 luxury apartments and one street level retail space. Rents \$3,500-5,000 per month.



Best Mid-Priced Condominium Unit Best Affordable Townhouse EG Home

for *Perkins Reserve* in Mystic

At *Perkins Reserve* in Mystic, E.G Home was recognized for the carriage home pictured below with vaulted great room, 1st floor master and cozy office niche in the 2nd fl hall.

EG Home also won for the affordably priced 2BR townhome with two car garage at \$376,000 pictured above right.



Best Townhouse Community Toll Brothers Inc.

for *Woodlands at Rivington* in Danbury

Toll Bros. *Woodlands at Rivington* in Danbury offers an outdoor pool and access to the 15,000 sf Rivington Clubhouse with resort amenities.



Best Mid-Priced Townhouse DeLaurentis Developments



Eric DeLaurentis built this appealing duplex townhouse in Fairfield that sold for \$700,000.

Best Luxury 55+ Community Able Construction

for *Daybreak Commons* in Westport



Able Construction built 55+ Community *Daybreak Commons* in Westport. The nine detached homes offer luxury living with soaring ceilings, wide plank flooring, heated master bath floors, custom built-ins, and masonry chimneys, at \$1.2-1.3 million.

Best Luxury Townhouse Toll Brothers Inc.

for *the Ridge* at Rivington in Danbury

The 3BR 3 bath Denton townhouse model at Rivington offers a finished lower with an additional full bath, custom bar, fireplace surrounded by custom built-ins featuring Richlite paneling and full height glass walk-in wine cellar. There's 3,352 SF of living space, including the finished lower level at \$1 million.



Best Single Family Home

\$700,000–800,000

T&M Building Company

T&M Homes won three single family categories: *Gledhill Estates* in West Hartford is a 3,312 sf center hall colonial with formal dining room on one side of the foyer and a flex room with a walk-in bay window on the other. The rear of the first floor is a 39 ft wide expanse encompassing the family room with fireplace, a breakfast nook and kitchen with 8ft island.



Best Single Family Home

\$500,000–600,000

T&M Building Company

The 3BR 2 Bath Hublein ranch at *Suffield Chace* features craftsman styling with a covered front porch with pillars above cultured stone bases, prairie window grills, shake siding, and a six paned front door with shelf.



Best Single Family Home

\$400,000–500,000

T&M Building Company for *Glastonbury Glen* model home

The model home at *Glastonbury Glen* features a large mudroom off the garage. The kitchen is designed with a 7ft long island and a walk-in pantry with the breakfast nook on one end and the fireplaced family room on the other. The second floor bedrooms all have walk-in closets, and the master suite encompasses the entire rear of the second floor.



All three T&M single family communities, and their winning South Windsor multi-gen unit feature Mercury Excelum windows, a trusted and dependable name in exterior building products since 1953, and locally based in East Windsor CT.



Best Hartford County Multi-Gen Unit

T&M BUilding Company

T&M's Multi-Gen home in South Windsor has masters on both levels, grandparents down and children and grandkids up.





REMODELED HOME PROJECT OF THE YEAR

Hobbs Inc.

John B. Murray Architect



basement 4' to 7' to provide new living areas at the lower level. The bedrock basement was removed by hoe-ramming, and saw-cutting the stone.

While doing the reconstruction, Hobbs also built several additions to look as if they were always part of the original mansion. Eleven bedrooms were rebuilt and a tiered home theater was added to the basement, along with a pool and game rooms, kids playroom and the fitness area.

A new floating elliptical stair was built in an elliptical opening, and a one story circular library wing pictured below is equipped with a glass monitor for added sunlight. The majestic rear view of the completed 15,700 sf mansion is pictured at top.

Hobbs completed a massive reconstruction of a 1925 Georgian Revival mansion located on L.I.S. in Greenwich. The original structure had been constructed with 2ft thick fieldstone walls, granite quoins and banding, and a slate roof. See BEFORE photo above.

The entire interior, including all existing structural framing, was removed in sections, while shoring the perimeter walls, and also lowering the existing



COVER STORY

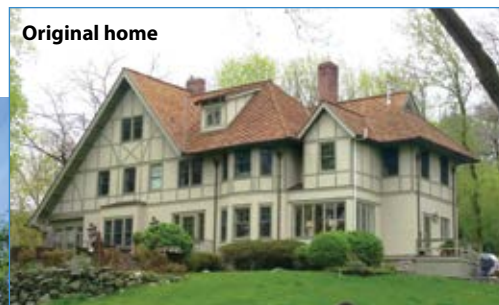


REMODELED HOME OF THE YEAR BEST REMODEKLED HOME \$2-3 MILLION

A&B PAINTING
CAH ARCHITECTURE



Remodeled home same view



Original home



L-R Homeowner Ashley Cole, Cole Design, Chris Hull & Vagner Poloniato

Craftsman builder, Vagner Poloniato of A&B Painting, and talented architect, Chris Hull of CAH Architecture worked hand in hand with homeowner Ashley Cole and key subcontractors to create a stunning transformation of a 1903 Tudor home in Greenwich. They retained the Tudor aesthetic, and brought it into the 21st century, with an amazing renovation.

“Although the original stucco was in terrible shape, and a new shingle style design was considered, the history of the property won out, and it was decided to modernize the stucco finish and remove the boarding,” said architect, Chris Hull.

A thick roll-on waterproofing was used to form a continuous membrane, which would also expand and shrink with both the old and new sheathings. CAH respected the home’s original architecture, while streamlining it, and adding a stunning port cochere to increase the home’s narrow street presence.

“The new porte-cochere not only greatly enlarged the street façade but served as a

marker for the main entrance,” explained architect, Chris Hull. “This was carried through to the interior by adding a stair tower, which opened up the area immediately inside the entrance. “





The homeowner, Ashley Cole, is on the Greenwich Sustainability Commission and she has rescued many historic homes. She knew what she wanted in her own home renovation.

"I hired Chris as my architect the moment he drew a sketch of the port cochere. The original 1903 house had one, but it had been removed, and I was adamant that we needed to bring it back for historical significance, as well as for the streetscape. It turned out to be a game changer."

park for me. He came up with the perfect wrought iron stair railing that is historic, yet contemporary at the same time. It's classic, but not boring."

A& B Painting added a new family room, breakfast nook and kitchen wing across the back of the house, with expansive windows to take in beautiful views of the adjacent lawn, forest and stream.

The magnificent two story family room, pictured on the cover of this issue, is built with four enormous rustic oak ceiling



Ashley further explained, "Chris Hull designed a four flight stair tower, which opened up the house and made it more usable. It was a practical and beautiful solution, but it was Dave Ponti of Garon Fence Company, who hit it out of the

trusses, walls of bronze framed Sierra Pacific windows, and a classic stucco fireplace with limestone mantle and surround. Two wrought iron Darlana double ring chandeliers from Circa Lighting add historic elegance to the room. Ashley worked closely with Circa Lighting rep, Debbie Kelly throughout the renovation.

"Debbie Kelly was a signature resource on the project. The whole team at Circa was very helpful, especially when it came to site visits. Circa's fixtures are beautifully made, and the finishes are gorgeous. Some might think the pricing is expensive, but I think it's a bargain, given the quality and service."

- Ashley Cole

(continued)



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COVER STORY *(continued)*

REMODELED HOME OF THE YEAR

BEST REMODEKLED HOME \$2-3 MILLION

A&B PAINTING
CAH ARCHITECTURE



Ashley specifically mentioned the iconic Hicks lanterns by Thomas O'Brien hanging over the kitchen island, and the "warm dims", which are recessed fixtures that "create a mood like a theatrical lighting experience".

Opposite the fireplace end of the family room is the new kitchen with luxury appliances, a cooking-oriented layout, oak beams and a blue island, which carries through to other millwork in the mudroom and laundry. A stunning stainless and brass oven hood, Calcutta Retro ceiling height marble slab backsplash, and gorgeous 9ft X 6ft marble island turn this kitchen into a showstopper!

According to Ashley Cole, installer, Buddy Ontra of Ontra Stone Concepts is her "marble hero".

Buddy Ontra is current President of the National Stone Institute, an industry consultant and a mentor.

"I have years behind me, and I try to make it as easy as possible for the homeowner and the builder," says Ontra.

Ashley had originally wanted Calcutta Gold for her counters, but the price was prohibitive, so she kept researching, until she found the perfect fit. "I drove up and down the Eastern Seaboard looking at marble!" She found her look with Calcutta Retro, which is imported from Italy and has the same dramatic veining at a more reasonable price point.

"The island, perimeter counters and full height back splash took six slabs of butterflyed marble. The diagonal veining was a real challenge to bookmatch."

– Buddy Ontra, Ontra Stone Concepts

Homeowners George and Ashley Cole attended the HOBI Awards Dinner in November, and they were thrilled to have their home and builder, A&B Painting, win a top HOBI Award.

"I love my builder! Vagner is thoughtful, transparent and a true craftsman.

– Ashley Cole

"What made this house a winning structure was the craftsmanship that went into it," Ashley explained. "I have a background as an art director - and the one thing I have learned is to respect and trust your craftsmen and artisans, and give them room to create.

A&B Painting owner, Vagner Poloniato, couldn't agree more.

"Working with the Cole family was an excellent and pleasant process. Mrs. Cole made it very easy, because she knew exactly what she wanted from the start. By combining her vision, with the talent of CAH Architecture and Design, I was able to guide my experienced team smoothly from start to finish. The outcome of this project is something we are all proud to have accomplished.

Thank you George and Ashley!

– Vagner Poloniato

"It was a great experience – and all the more important given that we were building in the middle of a pandemic," Ashley Cole concluded. "I can't say enough about the whole team. Creating a house like this is not unlike directing a movie, and bringing in the right talent was the key."

(continued)



New London, CT • Stamford, CT • Concord, MA

Architect: Joeb Moore & Partners

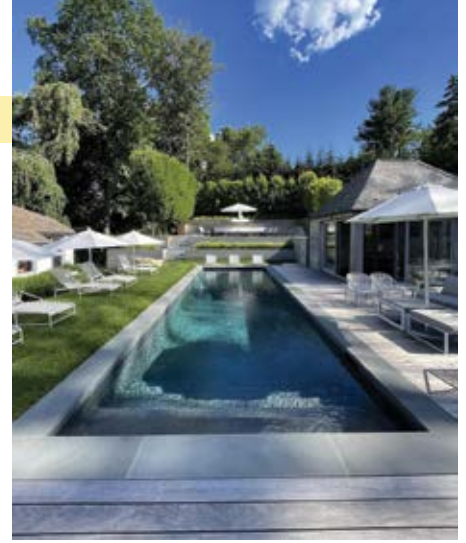
Builder: Prutting & Company Custom Builders, LLC

Best New Old Home Remodel

Pollack + Partners

Pollack & Partners used a modern connector stair and hall to link this 1804 main house and carriage house. The classic exterior is juxtaposed with a contemporary open floor plan with no interior molding.

The Master Suite is on its own floor and includes sitting room, office, and his and her bathrooms connected to the bedroom via spacious walk through closets. The exterior gardens were converted into a modern outdoor oasis with pool and multiple terraces for outdoor entertaining.



Best Residential Remodel During Covid Crisis

D.A.S. Custom Builders



For this 60's home built by and for world renowned builder, Jon Tishman, Chris Alvarez used Sugi Ban siding, floor to ceiling windows, an open steel staircase and a Maum freestanding fireplace with black slate floors.

Best Residential Remodel Under \$100,000

Loomis Group

Andrew Loomis renovated a 1920's Dutch Colonial in Cheshire, maintaining its old-world charm, while creating modern amenities.





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Kitchen Designed by: Robert Mondavi

Best Residential Remodel \$100,000-250,000

Cole Harris Homes



Cole Harris renovated this 100 year old Milford beach house, gutting the interior, correcting structural deficiencies, and replacing interior & exterior doors and windows, roofing, siding and trim. The result: a remade historic beach home, loaded with updated charm, and a bonus garden art studio.

Best Residential Remodel \$250,000-500,000

VanBrodt Estates, LLC



Susan Vanech reimaged a 1960's Westport colonial with full length porch and modern amenities, including underlit floating shelves in the island kitchen and home automation.

Best Residential Remodel \$500,000-750,000

Greentek Construction

David Mann turned an auctioned house into this appealing home with new rooflines, dramatic three floor glass paneled staircase and a beautiful new kitchen with walk-in pantry. The interior was re-configured to create spaces for a family of five, plus a suite for two aging parents.



(continued)

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Best Residential Remodel \$750,000 – 1 Million

Fox Hill Builders

Christopher Pagliaro Architects



Chris Pagliaro teamed up with Fox Hill Builders to create this remodeled home in Contentment Island Darien. Chris added 5 feet across the front of the home, thus enabling a multi-volume space. The floor plan and rear walls were blown open, inviting nature into the formerly dark interior. Ceilings were used to define the spaces around the new open-riser stair that allowed views of the water through it.



Outstanding Residential Remodel \$750,000 – 1 Million

Stephen C. Gidley Inc.



Stephen Gidley gave this 100 year old New Canaan colonial a stunning renovation including an elegant library with deep coffered ceiling that serves as a family room and office.

(continued)



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Best Fairfield County Residential Remodel \$1-2 Million

Gatehouse Partners

Grandberg & Associates Architects

Gatehouse Partners and Grandberg Assoc. Architects transformed this 1950's Mid Century lake home in Greenwich using new Tennessee stone columns and wall finishes to reinforce the interior and exterior detailing. A new entrance with a copper canopy and skylight was introduced to visually bring the entry closer to the arrival forecourt.



Outstanding features of this home include the wide plank ash floors, sculptured staircase, Tennessee stone columns and a stunning kitchen.

Best New London County Remodel \$1-2 Million

Coastal Construction Management



Mike Scarpa tore down the center section of this home, and rebuilt and connected it. He installed large windows across back of home to showcase the river views, fun lighting throughout, and concrete counters in the kitchen.

(continued)

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760 Post Road East
Westport, CT 06880
Tel 203-226-3321

Best Residential Remodel \$3-5 Million Best Entry & Best Remodeled Kitchen

Domus Constructors



Chris Shea won 3 awards for this Fairfield remodel. The pool area was redone, seating added, and pergolas were built to create a backyard oasis. The winning entry foyer is highlighted by a herringbone floor, new staircase, and exquisite pendant light fixture suspended from a chevron patterned oak ceiling with thick layered moldings. Each room has a memory ceiling. Pictured are the sunroom and showstopping kitchen.

Best Residential Remodel \$5-7 Million

Davenport Contracting



Davenport did a top to bottom renovation of this 1918 Georgian colonial, with new outdoor landscape by James Doyle Design Associates. The architect, William Hellow, Hellow Studio, was charged with designing exterior and interior renovations without changing the exterior brick facade. The success of this whole house renovation lies in the fact that while the exterior brick envelope did not change, every mechanical component inside did! An open air porch off the living room pictured was turned into an elegant sunroom/ conservatory with bar.

“The owners envisioned something colorful, rooms that convey happiness” says Shazalynn Cavin Winfrey of SCW Interiors, and the resulting high gloss, colorful interiors appeared in Veranda Magazine.

(continued)



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Outstanding Residential Remodel \$5-7 Million

Fletcher Development
CAH Architecture



Ryan Fletcher did an outstanding renovation of this Belle Haven home, with a 2nd floor in wall aquarium, glamorous master suite with glass floor balcony and skylit master sitting room, and a unique lap pool spa hugging the exterior of the house. The existing home was practically falling apart, which required some structural adaptation along the way by Chris Hull and CAH.

Best Historic Home Rehab Under \$1 Million

Koushouris Construction



View from New Family Room to Existing Living Room. Note seamless tie-in of new and existing

John Koushouris built a 3 story addition for an historic Riverside home, and seamlessly incorporated old and new. He used Marvin windows with diamond light upper sashes and fir flooring.

(continued)



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Best Historic Home Rehab Over \$1 Million

Red Canoe Partners

John Kavounas, Red Canoe Partners, used period Hawthorn yellow paint to convert an 1890 Cos Cob home to this 2-family home. The house had to be lifted above the flood line, and the original wood beams were preserved.



Best Conversion

Cole Harris Homes

Cole Harris gut renovated a 19th century house in the center of Westport for their architectural office. Paul Harris respected tradition in the white clapboard exterior and windows, adding a touch of a sustainability with a green roof. The most provocative feature is the integration of a structural glass cube, which takes the place of the original building façade. The south west corner of the 2nd story is solely supported by three 6" steel columns, allowing a large area of the first floor to be open to the public.



Best Small Commercial

Stephen C. Gidley Inc.

In early March 2020, Gidley received an urgent call from The Compliance Officer and Construction Manager at the Mercury Fuel Company that their framing crew refused to travel from East Windsor to Westport to frame the new Mercury Fuel Station and Convenience Store. Westport was under siege from the COVID-19 pandemic, and had become the single worst hotspot in Connecticut. Within 48 hours Mercury hired Stephen Gidley's firm, and they completed the entire project on time, on budget.



(continued)

Best Mid-Size NEW Commercial

Mystic River Building Company

Nort Wheeler built this Waterford Endodontics office to resemble a Rocky Mountain ski lodge. It's beautifully crafted with a timber frame front entry and site built matching Craftsman style columns. The dental offices feature five operatories, a conference room and an outdoor courtyard waiting area, visible through Andersen Weiland Pivot doors. Relaxing 3Form architectural resin panels were used in the reception area as plant backdrop.



Best Mid-Size Commercial Rehab

Murphy Brothers Inc.

When relocating their Headquarters, Northeast Structural Steel sought to expose the existing structure to reveal the underlying steel assembly, and highlight the business of steel fabricating. Murphy Brothers used black mullion windows, a concrete look tile and exposed steel joists and rolled beam sections painted black for a new sleek look.



Best Large Commercial Rehab

Fletcher Development

Fletcher and Silver Heights Development renovated the 80,000 sf office campus, *Darien Crossing*, using a bold new black iron color, a floor to ceiling glass lobby, high tech polished concrete floors and a gym that encourages HUSTLE with its graphic mural and high quality exercise equipment.



PLEASE SEE ADU & MULTIFAMILY DESIGN AWARDS on page 87

★ SPECIAL FOCUS AWARDS ★

BEST MUDROOM
Beth Krupa Interiors



Beth Krupa did a beautiful job on this mudroom for a young family, with ample storage beneath the bench, and soft close hinges to protect little hands.

BEST MASTER BATH BY A SUPPLIER
Design by the Jonathans



This winning master bath is in shades of gray with a floating vanity & flush glass enclosed shower.

BEST KITCHEN BY A SUPPLIER
Design by the Jonathans



This stunning coastal modern kitchen was designed and supplied by the Jonathans.

BEST KITCHEN BY A BUILDER
Hemingway Construction



Hemingway created the WOW in this kitchen with a gorgeous 20 ft high skylight centered over double islands.

BEST MASTER BATH BY A BUILDER
Hobbs Inc.



Hobbs used a classic walnut vanity with free-standing aluminum tub, which is centered in the bay window to allow views to the garden and shoreline.

BEST HOME GYM/ GAME ROOM
Karp Associates



Karp turned an unfinished basement into a fully outfitted game room & home gym.

BEST WALK-IN CLOSET
Closet & Storage Concepts



Karen Bradbury won for this floor to ceiling master closet with lighted poles & island pull down hamper.

BEST REMODELED BATH
Tri-State Tiling



Mirek Kozlowski remodeled this bath with a curbless porcelain shower, a recessed Drains Unlimited linear drain & Hydroban waterproofing.

BEST OUTDOOR ROOM
Blansfield Builders



Jim Blansfield's answer to Covid: an Alaskan cedar Post & Beam outdoor pavilion with FPL & kitchen.

(continued)

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★ SPECIAL FOCUS AWARDS ★

**BEST OUTDOOR
FEATURE**
Petra Construction



Petra won for this stunning multi-level curved Ipe deck for a Thimble Islands home.

**BEST BUILDER
HOME TECHNOLOGY**
Susan Vanech Properties



Susan Vanech used Tesla and Apple to create a home that encompasses the most advanced technologies

**BEST SMALL PRODUCT
SHOWROOM**
Torrco in East Windsor



**BEST MID-SIZED
PRODUCT
SHOWROOM**

Toll Brothers Inc Design Studio in Danbury



**BEST OUTDOOR
AMENITY**
Redwood Construction



Redwood was recognized for this waterfront infinity pool, bar & cabana in Greenwich

**BEST SMALL
COMMERCIAL REHAB**
Interstate + Lakeland
Lumber



Interstate won for their new Westport lumberyard and showroom featuring the same exterior millwork they supply for custom homes.

**BEST LARGE PRODUCT
SHOWROOM**
Bender Norwalk



Bender was recognized for their 10,000 sf multi-level showroom in Norwalk.

**BEST HOME
TECHNOLOGY
BY A SUPPLIER**
Innerspace Electronics



Innerspace gave this Eastcliff home 11 audio zones, 200 zone Lutron lighting & motorized shades pictured in this master bath.

BEST HOME ELEVATOR
Elevator Service Co.



ESCO installed this 4 stop hydraulic glass elevator in a Gatehouse Partners home.

SPECIAL FOCUS AWARDS

BEST SUPPLIER WEBSITE

Bender Plumbing for
www.benderplumbing.com

Judges were impressed with Bender's use of videos, virtual tours & blogs to capture visitor attention.

OUTSTANDING SUPPLIER WEBSITE

Tile America for
www.tileamerica.com

Tile America was recognized for their Visualizer & Live Chat features, which add to buyer convenience.

SPECIAL PROMOTION DURING COVID

Calcagni Real Estate
Self-Guided Tour

In response to Covid, Calcagni came up with their winning Self-Guided Model Home Tour, which uses an iPad and a virtual sales consultant. This creative Tour technology proved to be convenient for buyers who may have otherwise not been able to tour their model homes due to timing, availability, or personal comfort level during COVID. The Self-Guided Tours motivated potential buyers to meet in person, which in turn resulted in at least 3 documented sales.



★ SALES AND MARKETING ★

NEW HOME SALES TEAM OF THE YEAR

Calcagni Real Estate Sally Smirnoff & Sandy Fehrs

With sales of \$7.6 million at *Hillcrest Village* in Southington, Sally Smirnoff & Sandy Fehrs of Calcagni Real Estate are the 2021 Sales Team of the Year.



L-R Hillcrest developer, Liz Verna, Sally Smirnoff, Calcagni Director of Business Development Joel Grossman and Sandy Fehrs.

BEST MARKETED COMMUNITY IN NEW HAVEN COUNTY

Calcagni Real Estate for City Point Landing in New Haven

Calcagni SOLD OUT the thirteen 2&3 BR townhouses at *City Point Landing* in New Haven with their digital ad campaign.



★ SALES AND MARKETING ★

**BEST AD & BEST MARKETED
COMMUNITY IN
NEW LONDON COUNTY**

**Berkshire Hathaway Home Services for
The Orchards in Old Lyme**



L-R Ruth Butler, Leader of Berkshire East Lyme office, Berkshire Regional V.P. & Director of New Homes & Land, Gregg Wagner & Lynn Rival, Project Manager, New Development Marketing.

**OUTSTANDING INTERIOR DESIGN
Stephanie Rapp Interiors**

Stephanie Rapp did an Outstanding job with this chic, yet accessible design and, she so aptly calls it, Organic Luxe.

**BEST HOME STAGING OF
A \$1-3 MILLION HOME
BA Staging & Interiors**

This Stamford home staged by Birgit Anich for N.Y.C. millennials SOLD in 10 days!

**BEST HOME STAGING OF
A \$4-5 MILLION HOME
BA Staging & Interiors**

In Westport, Birgit accentuated this home's architecture with artisan pieces and finishes. It sold at \$4.5 million.

**BEST HOME STAGING OF
A \$3-4 MILLION HOME
Iconic Modern Home**

This \$3.5 mil Sag Harbor home had multiple offers the 1st week, and the buyer hired Iconic Modern Home to complete the interior design.

**BEST HOME STAGING OF AN
OVER \$5 MILLION HOME
LTW Design**

Like HGTV's "Love It or List It", after Leia Ward staged this \$12 Million Greenwich home, the owners took it off the market, and decided to Love it!



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★ SALES AND MARKETING ★

**OUTSTANDING
SPECIAL EVENT
DURING COVID****Aitoro Appliance**

During Covid, Aitoro held Zoom training & events from their Norwalk Showroom for their Monogram Design Council.

**BEST VIDEO****Cornerstone Contracting**

Cornerstone Contracting won for their company video, "The Bridge", narrated by Cornerstone founder, George Pusser.



George Pusser, Cornerstone Contracting

HOME FINANCING**Liberty Bank**

In a record 24 year repeat, LIBERTY BANK won Best Construction Permanent Custom Home Loan & Best End Loan.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

During the pandemic, Johnny Carrier built an Outdoor Classroom Amphitheatre for Toffolon Elementary School in Plainville.

**Most Responsive Town During Covid**

Stonington Building Official, Larry Stannard was recognized for creating a user friendly on-line permitting system for approvals and inspections. Nort Wheeler of Mystic River Building Company submitted Larry and the Town of Stonington for consideration by the judges.



These HOBI winning interior designers are in high demand by spec & custom builders and their clients



Bonnie Paige won three HOBI Awards, including Best Interior Design. From concept to completion her firm designs, builds, renovates, and furnishes outstanding residences and landscapes for discriminating clients.



Truly a talented designer with flair, Bonnie is known for creating refined interiors that seamlessly integrate classical design principles and contemporary elements.

Her "picture perfect" chic decor is sophisticated, price conscious, and always a showcase. Her classic eye combined with a modern edge helps to create the perfect home.



Bonnie's success lies in the art of positioning a property by showing different alternatives as to how it can fit the needs of the buyer. Bonnie's sense of aesthetics, combined with long-term experience in the luxury real estate market, enables her to identify a property's character and potential "upside."

Bonnie's HOBI winning California inspired Federal Farmhouse combines a glimpse of color, a sparkle of light, well crafted architectural details and an abundance of nature

This is how Bonnie describes her winning interior design, "An open first floor living space allows for family time, while utilizing glass walls to create private, yet open spaces. Stay at home work spaces, include the finished attic suite with a full bath, studio area and peaks of LI Sound, as well as a converted out-building, with kitchen, HVAC, full bath, and a secret mediating garden, with outdoor shower. We utilized design, finish and paint techniques so the garage appears to be an annex to the main house, though it is connected by a side door leading to a large entry mudroom, complete with a dog cubby and farm sink.



The interior features include oversized 4 pane windows, 4 panel glass entrance doors, 5" wood plank floors with a light, natural finish, oak beam details, custom built-in cabinetry, including closets and bookcases, quality fixtures and hardware, Viking appliances, creamy stucco fireplaces and white natural stone details throughout, all creating a thoughtful family home."

Forehand + Partners was the interior designer for both the Custom Home of the Year in Guilford built by Hallmark, designed by architect Nathan Topf, and the Best Custom Home Over 20,000 sf in Greenwich, which was built by Hobbs and designed by architect Charles Hilton.



Clients identify with Raymond Forehand's approach to comfortable modern design that blends contemporary influences with traditional elements. Notable attention to detail and an unwavering sense of the practical are characteristic in Ray's interpretation of space.



Custom Home of Year FR



Best Custom Home Over 20,000 SF

Beth Krupa Interiors (BKI) is an award-winning Interior Design firm specializing in remodeling, renovation, and design.

"There is a deeper connection to the home now than seen in the recent past and families have returned to the two lost luxuries of time and togetherness. Designing a home that is both beautiful, yet approachable and functional today and in the future, is a mission we stand behind with every project."

— Beth Krupa, Allied ASID



Beth had these comments about the importance of interior design for spec & custom homes:

The advice and guidance of an interior designer can be invaluable when building a spec or custom home. It saves valuable time and money and avoids costly design mistakes down the road. We work

synergistically with architects and builders throughout projects to ensure the home not only embodies the owner's style, but supports a timeless, livable space.

What makes BKI special



Our multi-faceted client design presentations utilize cutting-edge 3D rendering software providing clients photorealistic 360° design visuals. We provide a custom Design Build Binder with detailed architectural drawings, finishing layouts and schedules (i.e., paint, tile, plumbing fixtures, etc.) and product specification sheets including cross-section diagrams. This is sent digitally to each Trade with a physical copy remaining onsite and updated at least weekly by our design team. Clients and GC's have commented on how impressed they are with this organization and communication method.

Beth, alongside her design team, have a Design Studio & Gallery located in the heart of downtown Greenwich, Connecticut at 19 E Elm Street.



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Architects, designers, builders and real estate developers in Fairfield and Westchester Counties bring their projects to Karen Berkemeyer Home. KB Home provides a true “one stop shop” experience for their kitchens or baths, including tile, stone, cabinetry, plumbing, lighting and countertops.



For Greyrock Homes *This Old House* featured custom home, which won HOBI Awards for Outstanding Kitchen and Best Butler's Pantry,

Karen Berkemeyer explained “We used Woodmode’s rough sawn European oak for its texture and soft matte finish. It was perfect for the casual look with interest. The accessories maximized the storage space. Integrated lighting was used throughout – from undercounter, interior of the pantry cabinet, interior of drawers, inside of glass cabinets and floating shelves. We were able to use our design ideas with the factory for a truly customized kitchen.”



For R.B. Benson’s Spec Home of the Year in Westport, KB Home senior designer, Amy Eisenberg, worked with interior designer, Raquel Garcia to choose tile with plenty of texture, along with soft whites of dolomite in the primary bath. Amy also worked with ASID designer, Diana Sawicki and custom builder Peter Sciarretta, Hemingway Construction, on his HOBI winning custom home at Shippan Point. Beautiful marble tiles and mosaics were used for the primary bath and sandy creams, grays and whites flowed throughout this overall design.

What are luxury homeowners looking for in kitchens and baths?

Karen Berkemeyer had this to say, “Luxury homeowners are looking for texture, color, interesting wood finishes, Integrated lighting undercounter and in the interior of cabinetry. Drawers for storage and for vanities, giving more storage. Built in appliances, microwave drawers, steam ovens, slip resistant mats in deep drawers, metal guards on recycling bins, sink mats in sink bases, corner swing out shelving. Accessories for all individual needs are important. Kitchens and baths need to be customized for the owner’s needs.”

What is KB Home predicting for 2022, and what challenging projects are you working on?

“Cabinetry will continue to be simple, recessed panels or slab doors. Styles will be mixed as well as materials. Interesting wood finishes and stains will be used on islands, butler’s pantry or accent shelving. We are working on an interesting project with 2 colors in the kitchen and wood accent shelving and a patinated zinc hood. The Butler’s pantry will be a high gloss paint with custom tile to coordinate with the high gloss color. The challenge is mixing the finishes together so they harmonize.”



These HOBI winning interior designers are in high demand *(continued)*

Stephanie Rapp Interiors, whose office is located in Westport, was recognized with an Outstanding Interior Design HOBI Award this year.



"I am passionate about creating elevated design that is not only beautiful, but makes you feel happy, content and serene, because the flow of your space directly affects the flow of your day."

— Stephanie Rapp

Stephanie had this to say about the importance of interior design, and what makes her designs special.

"An interior designer can set the overall design point of view and concept for a home. For a spec home, the designer often times creates the special elements that tell the new owner what the style of the home is and the lifestyle they can expect to have there."



Select finishes, architectural detailing, lighting and hardware all work in tandem to tell the story of living in that home. Custom design for homeowners works in much the same way, but is much more personal for that client's particular style and personal lifestyle. Either way, Stephanie Rapp takes a very thoughtful approach to creating homes that are modern and cutting edge in terms of those design elements, but always are welcoming and comfortable for those that ultimately will live there."



Leia Ward is the founder and principal designer of LTW Design — an award-winning staging design firm with celebrity clients like Bruce Willis and the New York Knicks' RJ Barrett — Leia T. Ward knows her way around luxury properties. She also knows that making those properties irresistible to design-conscious visitors with generous budgets is all about emphasizing both their elemental appeal and how they can adapt to new occupants and trends.

"Many critics of modern spaces that claim minimalist spaces are cold may be surprised to learn about warm minimalism," Leia says. "While our brand aesthetic leans more minimalist, every project has warmth to it, and we achieve this by weaving and layering textures throughout the rooms to create depth."

Entice Home Buyers With Spaces That Feel Beautiful and Versatile



Consider how she's deployed her minimalistic-yet-cozy aesthetic to polish up big-ticket homes like this year's HOBI winning Best Home Staging of a Home Over \$5 Million — and take note of her techniques for when it's time to make your place look like a million (or 20 million) bucks.

Leia's favorite design trends for 2022

1. Custom. Custom. Custom.

Lead times have turned into a nightmare during the pandemic, so we've been thankful to work with amazing local artisans to design our own pieces that are then made here in the US. This year, we plan on leaning into this even more. Going custom al-



lows our clients to have handmade, one-of-a-kind items for their homes that aren't stuck on cargo ships or continuously delayed. It's a win-win for everyone.

2. Low-Profile, Modular Furniture

Livability and adaptability are major musts for people today since many are using their homes for new purposes. We certainly don't know what this year holds, but modular furniture allows for great flexibility. Clients can change up their seating arrangements with ease and without sacrificing style. Bringing in low-profile modular furnishings creates the casual sophistication and the minimalist vibe we love, too.

3. Warmer Tones

Leia is all about blending neutral warm tones to strike a modern, layered, and calming balance. Cool grey's blended with warm tones used to be avoided, but we are all about it. In 2022, greige is here to stay and you'll also be seeing plenty of gray oak and white oak in our upcoming projects.

4. Textured Walls

Yep, we said it! Textured walls are back but not the 80's sponge paint texture you're thinking. We are adding textured walls to our projects in the following ways ...lime wash paint, plaster and wallpaper. And we aren't talking grasscloth wallpaper, (safe to say we've moved past that) instead we are using faux suede, velvet and wood wallpaper to add a layer of texture that wraps the room and sets the vibe.

5. Large Planters + Greenery

When we say large, we mean large. So large that the branches are at least double the height of the vase... we promise, it works! Even in the cold winter, grab clippers and cut bare branches from your yard, just as you would in the summer, and place them inside a large floor vase or pot on the counter. We also love how sculptural an olive tree looks, it's like adding live art to your space.



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Recap of 2021 CT Housing Market, and Outlook for 2022

By Antonio Liguori, President Calcagni Real Estate



To appropriately look ahead for 2022, it was necessary to review the recap from last year around this time and see where we are at a macro level. Like trying to purchase a new vehicle, new homes are trending the same. Labor shortages further extend the time to wait. Supply chain disruptions and buying “used” means overpaying on a relative basis (supply/demand economics) because there is LIMITED inventory.

SmartMLS data for 2021 showed:

- ▶ Increases of 1.2% in pending sales, 2.8% in closed sales, 10.5% in median sales price.
- ▶ While those numbers might sound low, consider they are, respectively:
- ▶ ~20% higher than each year 2017-2019 for both pending and closed sales
- ▶ ~28.5% higher for median prices each year 2017-2019.
- ▶ It doesn't help that our statewide inventory and calculated months' supply of inventory are still trending downward.
- ▶ 2021 had an inventory shortage of 40.6%, and it was already a staggering 36.1% lower in 2020.

What does this spell out for the CT Housing Market in 2022?

The cold hard truth is this is absolutely nothing like the housing bubble, with risky borrowing and “artificial” home price inflation. Unfortunately, the facts are the facts, and the fundamentals are the fundamentals.

Listening to economic experts such as the National Association of Realtors' Chief Economist, Dr. Lawrence Yun, I agree with his sentiment that we are getting closer to stabilization in the market. The Fed raising rates will help in one of two ways for housing. (Economically, I hope it helps our country.) The final leg of people who want to buy or sell will be pushed one way or another to stay where they are for the foreseeable future, or they will decide to move forward in a housing transaction.

For those reading this and curious about people's reasons for buying in CT, let's consider the DECD priorities, which include:

- ▶ leveraging the remote workforce
- ▶ rewarding employers to locate and grow in CT
- ▶ instilling confidence in major businesses interested in establishing themselves in CT.

Please also consider that when prices may seem “high” to someone who has lived in CT their entire life, pricing to someone from NY or MA looks like a steal.

The pandemic, stimulus, and uncertainty have created an environment where many individuals have paid off credit cards, saved lots of cash, and positioned themselves very comfortably...and many of them have been either renting or been patiently waiting on the sidelines.

My thoughts and insights for builders and developers

Continue to build your contractually obligated new homes but consider building speculative homes and lock in prices. Marketing more homes in an environment with low supply may seem like a “no brainer”; however, supply chain disruptions and increasing costs without appropriate hedges in place could mean little to no profits. Therefore, while interest rates are still low, bring homes to market as “quick delivery,” setting a price with a built-in profit margin. The current real estate market pricing has real evidence to confirm that the pricing deltas between resale homes and new homes are not wide enough, so do not “undersell” a new build. There will be a buyer for the houses. The market can support the prices, so don't let your comfort zone prohibit your ability to be profitable. If builders and developers fail, the economic impacts are far more significant for local communities.

My thoughts and insights for real estate professionals and remodelers

Reach out to your contacts, and ask a straightforward question; “Does your home check off all your needs and wants?” A home should provide the highest level of utility, whether for a single occupant or family, and fit all the personal needs and desires. Buying and selling a home in this environment should only create an opportunity or provide a solution.

Therefore, if someone loves where they live but needs a new kitchen, get that new one! Real estate professionals and remodelers can advise on the ROI (return on investment) for any enhancements made to a home and provide an exit strategy if the needs and wants do not make sense for the homeowner's asset and time horizon.

My thoughts and insights for homeowners

Evaluate your largest asset just like you would your investment portfolio before it is too late. The reality is, avoid a situation where, in the next few years, you will ask the following rhetorical questions; Why didn't I sell my house then? Why didn't I refinance before the rates went up? Why didn't I finish the basement when that remodeler had an opening last year? I wish I did this or that then... If the concern is “Where will I go?” and you have not asked what type of solutions are out there, like a “Use & Occupancy Agreement,” then the supply and demand issues we are facing in our state will continue to perpetuate. Don't miss a genuine opportunity now because the right questions are not being asked.

All in all, I'm excited and curious to see how our state continues to move forward in this environment.

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There are many structural engineering firms throughout the country with one thing in common – engineers. Each has the capacity to create structural marvels to support even the most intricate architectural designs. The true measure of an excellent structural engineer is the ability to solve the most complex problem with a pragmatic approach.

Based in New London, Connecticut, e2 engineers use their expertise to achieve creative solutions to the most complex architectural designs. Utilizing the latest in software technologies such as Building Information Modeling and Finite Element Analysis, e2 engineers actively pursue practical solutions to demanding challenges set forth by their clients.

e2 engineers was founded in late 2002 by Scott Erricson with his idea of molding an engineering firm that would be dedicated to serving the needs of his clients. In 2010, Scott partnered with Chad Vogt and together they have grown the firm steadily with now over 20 employees. In 2021, Kate MacDougall and

Geoffrey Sandberg were elevated to the roles of Associate Principal. Celebrating its 20th year, e2 engineers looks towards emerging building technologies as a path towards continued growth and improvement.

Collaborating with hundreds of architects over the past 20 years, e2 engineers' extensive project range includes high-end residential, educational, institutional, life sciences, multi-family, and commercial projects. Recently, e2 engineers provided the structural engineering for Carol Kurth Architecture's Tango House in Greenwich, Connecticut. That collaboration garnered the 2021 HOBI Award, Custom Home Project of the Year. e2's commitment to the process and innovative thinking was vital towards the success of this project.

As budgets and timelines are contracted and clients' demands continue to expand, e2 engineers is poised to provide practical solutions to demanding design challenges. Their commitment to utilizing the latest in computer-aided design software along with continued educational training of their staff allows e2 engineers to meet the challenging demands in today's construction industry.

ADU & MULTIFAMILY DESIGN

In response to this year's groundbreaking *Zoning Enabling Act* legislating as of right Accessory Dwelling Units throughout Connecticut, for the 1st year, we recognized the *Best Town Specific ADU and Multifamily Designs*.



Cole Harris came out on top with a unique 6 unit design in Weston, appropriately reminiscent of farm buildings. Paul Harris has investors interested in replicating this concept.



Paul Bailey Architect received a HOBI Award for his OUTSTANDING use of rural duplex housing, that fit the site and Town of Canaan. And it's 100% affordable!



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The Great Resignation and Workforce Development

The buzz phrase leaving 2021 and going into 2022 is “The Great Resignation”, signifying the mass exodus of nearly 4.5 million people from the American workforce. Although the Northeast has fared better than the rest of the U.S., we are still feeling the punch. Some individuals left the workforce to start their own business, parent remote learning children, leave high stress careers for roles with less stress and pay, or simply to retire.



Industries such as hospitality, healthcare, IT, and retail are seeing the biggest losses. However, the trickling down is affecting all of us – including here at HBRA. It is quite the perfect storm with frustrating supply chain disruptions, shipping delays, and the ongoing shifting employee

mindset of personal, rather than employer, loyalty. Yet, it is not all doom and gloom.

Infusion of Workforce Capital

A large part of my vision for HBRA Fairfield has always been workforce development – including working with reformed prisoners, abled and disabled veterans, and individuals who left careers and are seeking retraining & mentoring programs. There ARE people who want to work in the jobs we offer – we just need to be a bit more creative to find them.

The timing of Governor Lamont’s announcement that Connecticut will receive \$60 million in workforce development funds could not be better. According to the Hartford Courant, Kelli Vallieres, the Executive Director of the Connecticut Workforce Development Unit, said 8,000 workers will be trained. The state will earmark \$14 million each to manufacturing, healthcare, and information technology; \$10 million to infrastructure and green jobs; and about \$9 million to other industries. It should be noted that only non-profits, workforce development organizations, schools, and universities are allowed to apply for funds - not employers directly. Working collaboratively with these organizations is the key to successful outcomes.

Leveraging Opportunity for Anticipated Growth

According to Research & Markets, the US construction industry is forecasted to grow by 3.7% in 2022, mainly driven by the residential construction market.

The Great Resignation was, for the most part, NOT about money; it was about personal fulfillment and, in some cases, personal sanity. Workers are demanding a work life balance, and employers who want to attract and retain top talent need to understand the mindset of personal loyalty.

We have learned a lot from the pandemic – the need to be flexible and open to change, the willingness to train new team members from the ground up, the offering of flexible work schedules when possible, and offering employees coveted robust benefit packages, including health insurance.

As our state and country adapt to this “new normal”, we as employers need to do the same. It is time for collaboration and looking towards our future, rather than our past, here in Connecticut. I am excited about the thriving opportunities ahead of us, as well as what we at HBRA Fairfield can bring to the table as it pertains to workforce development. Above all, this includes helping change the lives of those in our community while supporting business growth and expansion.

As always, my proverbial door is always open – please do not hesitate to reach out.

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Builder News

Johnny Carrier of Carrier Group Appointed Chairman Dept. of Administrative Services Codes & Standards Committee



In January, Connecticut builder/developer, Johnny Carrier assumed the role of Chairman of the Department of Administrative Services' Codes & Standards Committee. Johnny has been representing the residential construction industry on the Committee since August 2017.

"The other members respect me enough to pull the Committee in the right direction," said Johnny, "but Bob Hanbury paved the way with his 20 years of service on Codes & Standards."

"Having a home builder as knowledgeable and committed as Johnny Carrier in such a vital role for our industry is incredibly valuable, and we owe him our thanks."

- Jim Perras, HBRA CEO

With this two year commitment, Johnny will oversee the code adoption process and the commission's administrative appeal process on matters pertaining to local building officials, fire marshals, building board of appeals, the state building inspector and state fire marshal.

The Codes & Standards Committee is comprised of stakeholders in all fields affected by building codes. are 21 total

members - Health, 2 Architects, Residential Contractor, 2 Building Officials, Labor Trades, HVAC Member, Structural Engineer, 3 Public Members, 2 Fire Marshalls, Advocacy, Electrical Contract Member, Electrical Engineer, Building Contractor, Fire Protection Engineer, Plumbing Trades Contractor, Energy Efficiency member.

"We represent all aspects of building in Connecticut, and come from different sides, yet we sit down and talk things out, and determine together what makes sense and what doesn't," Johnny explained. "We've got a really good system in place, and the goal is to eliminate outside political influence."

The Committee is against codes by Statute. Johnny gave the example of hard wired smoke detectors, which are legislated by statute. Wireless technology has been around for 10 years, but it's almost impossible to get rid of a statute, so hard wired smoke detectors are still required in CT.

It takes approximately 18 months for a Codes package to be adopted. There's public input during the Sub Committee hearing. Once voted on by the committee, the code package is put out to the public for input. After the public comment is done, the final package goes to the legislative review committee, where concerns can be brought to the legislative process. Due to the pandemic, there was no legislative review process in 2020 or 2021.

Johnny is proud that Connecticut will be one of the 1st states in the country to adopt the 2021 Code on October 1, 2022.

In the 2021 Code, energy was ramped up significantly. However, Johnny helped convince the Committee to allow HERS rating to be used as an adequate metric for compliance. This will give builders flexibility to meet the standards with a metric they are comfortable using.

Congratulations Johnny Carrier! We wish you well in your new role as Codes & Standards Committee Chairman!

Calcagni Real Estate Business Development Director Joel Grossman Gives His Take on the Current Housing Market in CT



"New construction is moving along but, without move-in ready product, we may not see the same sales volume as we did in 2021. Most builders are building the houses they have commitments for, and that's challenging, as you know, with lack of supply and labor. On February 1, 2022, there were a 2,696 single family houses for sale in Connecticut. Out of this number, 420 are new construction (either to be built or in process) ... not much inventory."

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Builder News

U.S. Home Sales Jumped 6.7% Amid Record-Low Inventory

Buyers snapped up houses across the country as mortgage rates climbed

The housing market remains extremely competitive. Rising mortgage-interest rates in recent weeks have prompted buyers to move quickly in case rates climb further, real-estate agents say. Homes are frequently selling within days for more than their list prices.

Still, the shortage of homes on the market is holding back the number of sales, economists say. On top of that, some buyers have been pushed to the sidelines as rising home prices and higher interest rates have made homeownership less affordable.

The median existing-home price rose 15.4% in January from a year earlier, NAR said, to \$350,300.

“Buyers were likely anticipating further rate increases and locking in at the low rates, and investors added to overall demand with all-cash offers,” said Lawrence Yun, NAR’s chief economist.

So far, rising mortgage-interest rates have hardly dented buyer demand, which still far outpaces supply, say market participants. One reason is that rent prices are also rising quickly, so prospective first-time home buyers are reluctant to wait.

Building activity has increased due to the strong demand, but builders have been slowed by supply-chain issues and labor shortages. A measure of U.S. home-builder confidence declined in February, the National Association of Home Builders said this week.

Housing starts, a measure of U.S. home-building, fell 4.1% in January from December, the Commerce Department said this week. Residential permits, which can be a bellwether for future home construction, rose 0.7%.

Once Again, High Home Prices Are to Blame

The NAHB Housing Trends Report reveals 67% of buyers who were actively engaged in the process of finding a home in the final quarter of 2021 had spent 3+ months searching for a home without success. The inability to find a home they could afford once again became the most common reason (41%) these long-time searchers could not buy a home. The inability to find a home with desirable features (39%) was second. In third place, 35% attributed their lack of success to getting outbid by other buyers’ offers. The latter share is down from 45% a quarter earlier, probably due in part to less competition from buyers discouraged by dwindling affordability.

When asked what they are most likely to do next if still unable to find a home in the next few months, 49% of active buyers searching for 3+ months said they will continue looking for the ‘right’ home in the same location, unchanged from the third quarter. The share that will buy a more expensive home rose during this period, from 21% to 26%.

Meanwhile, the share who plan to give up their home search until next year or later has begun to rise again, from 20% in the second quarter of 2021 to 23% in the final quarter of the year.

Redfin Statistics on the 2021 Housing Market

- ▶ **The typical U.S. home sold for nearly \$400,000** — up 24.4 percent, year over year.
- ▶ **Home supply dropped to its lowest level in recorded history** — down 23 percent, YOY.
- ▶ **The typical home sold in just 15 days** — the lowest days on the market in recorded history.
- ▶ **More than 60 percent of homes went off the market within two weeks.**
- ▶ **56.5 percent of homes sold above list price** — up 29.6 percent from a year earlier.
- ▶ **Mortgage rates dropped to a record low of 2.65 percent.**
- ▶ **Investors bought 18.2 percent** — or nearly one in five — of all the homes sold in the U.S.
- ▶ **Demand for second homes was up 91 percent over pre pandemic levels.**
- ▶ **Nearly a third of all Americans looked to move to a different metro area (based on online home searches)** — up from 26 percent a year earlier.



Builder News

Developers are building thousands of new housing units across Greater Hartford as apartment and condo projects surge.

Few forecasters anticipated a wave of large-scale apartment and condo projects when the pandemic started, but across central Connecticut developers are building thousands of new housing units.

Along with the uncertainty of the COVID-19 era are supply-chain breakdowns and a rough labor market, but none of that has been enough to stop a building bonanza in the region.

“In a lot of towns, there’s been no new inventory for so long. In Berlin, we’re going from such a small inventory to potentially 400 apartments in the next 24 months,” said Chris Edge, economic development director of Berlin.

Developer Avner Krohn, who has more than 700 new apartments across the region in planning or under construction, suggested that people who are spending more time at home now want more comfortable and stylish accommodations.

Many builders in the region credit municipalities’ greater willingness to offer tax breaks on new construction, and those near the CTRail or CTfastrak lines report that access to mass transit is helping to drive demand there.

The overwhelming majority of communities around Greater Hartford have large-scale projects in the works, and some have several apiece. Among them are these eight:

Avon

Boston-based Beacon Communities plans 176 one- and two-bedroom apartments in the Avon Park South office park. It will remodel the former headquarters of Security Connecticut Life Insurance into 76, and construct a four-story building next door for the other 100. The company anticipates that 140 will be affordably priced, with the rest at market rate.

Berlin

The first stage of the Steele Center mixed-development project in Berlin is on track to open by mid-year. The five-building, mixed-use Steele Center, which will add 76 apartments in town.

The \$18 million project is alongside the Amtrak and Hartford Line station, and developers Tony Valenti and Mark Lovley along with state officials describe it as a prime example of transit-oriented development. The one- and two-bedroom apartments will be leased at market rates.

East Hartford

Development partners Brian Zelman and Avner Krohn of Jasko Development plan 360 studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments on the site of the long-closed Showcase Cinemas along Silver Lane near I-84. Rents haven’t been established yet. Contractors this fall began the \$80 million project by demolishing the old multiplex theater.

Farmington

The former Hartford Marriott Farmington is being turned into 224 studios and one- and two-bedroom market rate apartments. A development cooperative led by 15 Farm Springs LP paid \$21.5 million for the property in October. Part of the location’s appeal is that it’s near an I-84 exit as well as Route 6.

New Britain

Developer Avner Krohn of Jasko Development broke ground last year on The Brit, planned as a stylish six-story, 107-unit apartment building in the heart of downtown. Earlier this month, he announced he’ll tear down the aging Amato’s Toy and Hobby building next door to become the site for a twin project. In total, that will add nearly 220 market-rate one- and two-bedroom apartments.

Newington

Texas-based Anthony Properties plans 238 apartments near the CTfastrak Cedar Street station. The four-story building will have studios and one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. Rents have not been announced. The company’s proposal includes a 310-car garage, a swimming pool for tenants and a sidewalk directly to the CTfastrak station.

Plainville

Before construction, Newport Realty reports it has already sold the first three phases of its four-phase 61 unit condo development on the Plainville-Farmington line. Willow Brook Estates will be a 55-and-over complex of detached, single-story homes ranging from 1,444 to 1,610 square feet. Prices start at \$370,000.

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Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Market Update

by Gregg Wagner, Senior V.P, Director New Homes & Land & Commercial



2021 was a record-breaking year in real estate. Across the United States, average home prices are at a 10+ year high while affordability remains strong

due to wage increases and low mortgage interest rates. It appears the COVID-19 pandemic has altered the importance of home forever.

In the state of Connecticut, even with a 5.6% decrease in new single-family home and condominium listings brought to market, 2.4% more homes were sold in 2021. The average price for the 55,800 homes sold was \$507,449, an increase of 13.1% year over year. By December, there was only an average of 1.3 months of supply for homes priced under \$500,000. For reference, we define a 'balanced' market as having five to seven months of available inventory at any given time. While single-family home sales were down slightly year over year,

condominium sales increased by 19%, proving the flexibility of 2021 buyers in such a competitive market.

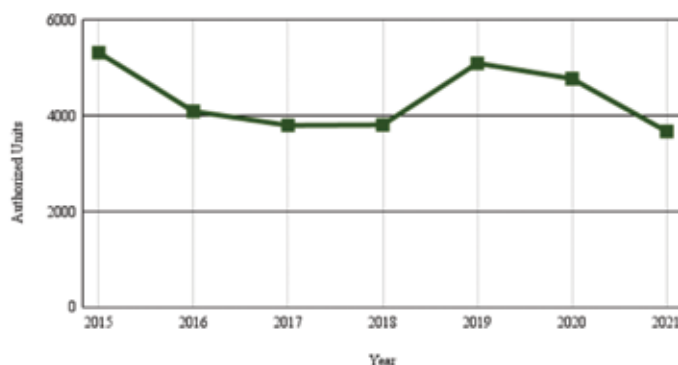
Low inventory in the resale market typically would result in more new development sales; however, homebuilders faced severe supply-side challenges, including a lack of approved and affordable lots, rising building costs, supply-chain bottlenecks, and difficulty finding skilled labor. Some of these supply-chain challenges existed before the pandemic, but it compounded tremendously over the last 18 months.

Demand for new product continues to well exceed new building permits. The number of building permits issued in Connecticut is the lowest it has been since 2011.

When we look at the breakdown of the distribution of the approved units, we find that 58% were single family with the other 42% included remaining duplex, triplex, quads and multifamily units. 2021 numbers were 23% below 2020.

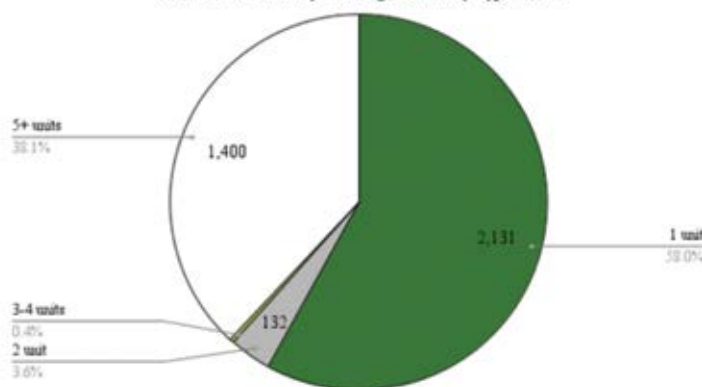
As a result, in 2021, 946 new single-family homes (built in 2020 and 2021) closed in Connecticut. That number is down 5.5% from the 1,001 new homes sold in 2020. Demand for new construction has also pushed the average selling price from \$736,024 to \$760,427 in 2021, a price increase of 3.3% YOY. I agree with NAR's Chief Economist, Lawrence Yun, in that I expect a 2% reduction in sales activity with home prices outperforming pre-pandemic years to appreciate 5%-7% overall. Supply chain issues for new development may improve slightly, however they will likely still affect the rate of construction. Overall, 2022 will be a great year for sellers, and we will need to see more homes come onto the market as the weather warms up and COVID concerns subside. We hope builders will supply buyers with more choices as they race to purchase before interest rates climb and bring us back to a more balanced market.

Connecticut Housing Units Authorized by Permit YTD



Numbers supplied by the DECD (Department of Economic and Community Development)

Connecticut Monthly Housing Permits by Type: 2021



Business Product News

CAH Architecture Projects Recognized with Multiple HOBI Awards

CAH Architecture has earned a reputation among builders, such as Arnold Karp, Ryan Fletcher and Vagner Poloniato, for solving complex problems, while delivering outstanding design.

In 2019, CAH teamed up with Karp Associates for the *This Old House 2019 Idea House* in downtown New Canaan. They restored the façade of the 1880's Greek Revival home, and gut rehabbed the interior using innovative building materials, and won several HOBI Awards.



This year, CAH & builder A&B Painting won *Remodeled Home of the Year* for respecting the original historic architecture of a 1903 Greenwich Tudor home, while skillfully transforming it into a stunning modern home. See *HOBI Cover Story* in this issue.

In addition, this year CAH and Fletcher Development were recognized with *Outstanding Remodeled Home \$5-7 Million* for the amazing transformation of a Belle Haven home.



The existing home was practically falling apart, and CAH founder, Chris Hull, did the required structural adaptation, while straddling Belle Haven community regulations and Greenwich historic guidelines.

Christopher Hull founded CAH Architecture and Design, LLC in 2005, and his full-service design firm has worked on more than 150 projects with construction costs up to \$400 million, and ranging from childcare facilities and music schools, to single-family homes, a new YMCA, churches, multi-family developments, and commercial headquarters. Chris is a talented designer, whose builder and developer clients value his skill at solving complex problems and gaining zoning approvals. Mr. Hull is a member of the AIA, NCARB, MENSA, and is a licensed architect in Connecticut, New York, and Ohio.

Teela Morissette has 15 years of experience in the architectural field and over the years she has developed a strong sense of design on projects ranging from luxury homes to multi-family and commercial developments. . She is comfortable with taking the initiative on any aspect of a project.

Weverson Ponte is a Greenwich High School graduate and lead creative at CAH. He is an artist and creator, who strives to bring a unique solution to every design challenge.

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What's more, Circa offers the unique benefits of on staff lighting designers, who can design a lighting plan for each room, and an outside sales rep, Debbie Kelly, who is ALA certified, and works with builders, architects and homeowners on site.



"I was struggling with lighting when I was introduced to Debbie Kelly," said architect, Chris Pagliaro. "The LED color and lumens I was getting were horrible. I told Debbie what I was looking for, and she set me up with an account. Circa has so many options: tape in, flanged, round, square, baffles... And the experts at Circa help me set the proper specs for my needs, and fill in the blanks."

"Debbie Kelly and Circa have become a vital part of what we do, and she provides the perfect price point for each project. It's about experience and service."

- Chris Pagliaro, Christopher Pagliaro Architects

Circa and Debbie Kelly collaborate with award winning builders and architects, such as A&B Painting & Remodeling, Able Construction, Fletcher Development, Red Canoe Partners, Bluewater Home Builders, Chris Pagliaro and Tanner White Architects.

Circa Lighting has showrooms in Greenwich and Norwalk. The Norwalk Showroom is in the former Klaff's location at 24 Washington Street, and at 5,000 sf, it's a full service showroom with Lighting Lab. To reach Debbie Kelly, e-mail her at dkelly@circalighting.com or call c. 203.687.0504.

2022 Marks Rings End 120th Anniversary



The Ring's End Fuel Company, founded in Darien, CT in 1902, originally supplied feed and fuel to local residents. Gradually, we shifted our product focus to building materials, and eventually paint was also included. Throughout their history, Ring's End has remained family owned and operated, supporting the shared goals and interests of the communities they live and work in.

Rings End celebrates this 120 year milestone with the third generation of leadership at the helm, excited to continue the tradition of quality and service the company was built on, and remain true to their vision to be the premier resource in the building supply industry.


"We are immensely proud of our heritage and grateful to our customers for their continued loyalty and support," said President & CEO Dave Campbell.

Lumber Dealers Association of Connecticut Recognizes Mark Lefsyk as 2020 Lumber Person of the Year



Lumber Person of Year On October 20, 2021 at the Aqua Turf Club, the Lumber Dealers Association of CT presented Mark Lefsyk of National Builder Products their highest recognition 2020 Lumber Person of the Year. The award honors Mark's long standing dedication, support, and service to the lumber and building material industry. Mark Lefsyk is General Manager of national Building Products, in East Hartford CT.

(continued)


A man and a woman are seen from behind, embracing each other in a room that is under construction. The room has exposed wooden beams and framing, suggesting a new home. The man is wearing a light blue t-shirt, and the woman is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt. The text "Building your family's home can be a whole lot easier." is overlaid on the image in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Building your family's home can be a whole lot easier.

Liberty Bank's award-winning **Construction to Permanent Mortgage** automatically converts to a permanent loan once construction is complete. With half the paperwork and one-time closing costs, new homeowners have more time and money to devote to the home of their dreams. It's just one of the ways Liberty helps to improve the lives of our customers for generations to come.

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The Closet Factory Offers Builders a One Stop Shop Advantage

The Closet Factory offers clients the advantage of being both manufacturer and supplier, with their factory/showroom locally located in Bethel CT and a new Darien Showroom. Their products are custom-made to order, and the Darien showroom will showcase a wide range of products, making it easier for builders and their custom and remodeled home clients to visualize what they will get, and how impressive these systems are in person.



Nataliya & Nazar Bryksa

Post pandemic home-owners value home organization systems more than ever

The Closet Factory's Darien Showroom features walk-in closets, home offices, pantries, and much more. There are areas devoted to material and color samples, hardware samples, such as rods, knobs and pulls, doors styles, LED lighting, all types of accessories, like jewelry drawers and valet rods. This expansive display of products and accessories helps builders and their clients imagine the storage options available for their spec, custom or remodeled home.

"Closet Factory is the leader in the home organization industry, specializing in custom storage solutions for the entire home. For over 36 years, we have been creating dynamic, truly custom solutions for every room in our clients' homes. We are very excited about our new Darien showroom and are very happy to provide builders and/or their homeowner clients with a tour of this new location."

– Nataliya Bryksa, co-owner of the Closet Factory

Local owners Nataliya & Nazar Bryksa invite you to stop in to the showroom, or request a complimentary on site consultation for your spec home. If you are building or remodeling a custom home, your clients can visit the showroom, and request a complimentary in-home design consultation to explore a personalized design for their home. Each design is one-of-a-kind, stylish, and will keep your potential homeowners or custom clients and their families well organized.

Lumber Dealers Association of Connecticut Recognizes Mark Lefsyk

(continued)



On January 5, 2022, Builders FirstSource, Inc. (NYSE: BLDR) announced that it acquired National Lumber, the largest independent building materials supplier in New England. National Lumber operates 19 facilities and employs more than 700 people across Massachusetts, Connecticut (National Building Products) and Rhode Island, with a diverse mix of products and end markets. National Lumber sales are expected to be approximately \$440 million in 2021.

"Following 87 years as a family-owned company, we are excited about our future with BFS, the biggest, and more importantly, the best supplier of building materials to professionals in the country."

– Steven Kaitz, National Lumber Co-CEO

Steven Kaitz will remain a Special Advisor, and the business will continue to operate under the National Lumber name and branding for the foreseeable future. National Lumber President, Manny Pina, will continue to manage the day-to-day operations of the business, with the new title of Area Vice President, New England.

National Lumber began expanding into Connecticut in 2015 with the acquisition of Oxford Paint & Hardware, and opened its East Hartford location in 2019. The East Hartford location operates under the National Building Products brand name, and the Oxford location will continue operating as Oxford Lumber, both as part of the New England division of Builders FirstSource.

Business Product News (continued)

Connecticut Lighting Centers is expanding their showroom and operations with a new location in Hartford



Connecticut Lighting Centers is relocating to 312 Murphy Road, just a stone-throw away from their current location. The new facility will be a state of the art showroom and distribution center.

“We’ve outgrown the building, it’s incredibly exciting” says David Director, “with the new facility we are going to be able to put everything under one roof, which will provide a much-improved shopping experience for our customers”.

Connecticut Lighting Centers opened their showroom in 1972 at 160 Brainard Road. Over the years they’ve added a warehouse and corporate office on Murphy Road and Restoration Lighting Gallery at 167 Brainard Road. The new facility will have all three operations under one roof, making logistics much smoother and a better process for both residential and commercial customers.

The new showroom will be about double the size and the layout will make it really easy to shop for a few fixtures or an entire project.

In addition to decorative lighting, the showroom will feature an approximate 1000 square foot lighting demonstration lab showcasing functional lighting in real life applications. This area will include recessed lighting, track lighting, cove lighting, under-cabinet lighting, commercial lighting and lighting controls. Brett Director adds, “lighting is a product that needs to be seen, having more space allows us the opportunity to display more product and spread out our product assortment offering a better shopping experience for our customers”.

Besides lighting and ceiling fans, Connecticut Lighting offers decorative hardware, including door hardware, cabinet pulls and locks, home accents, mirrors, accent furniture, lampshades, window shades, vintage lighting and restoration and repair services. “We’re celebrating our 50-year anniversary this year, says Todd Director, “and are very excited about being part of the Hartford community for the next 50 years”.

Connecticut Lighting Centers is a third generation locally owned and operated business with showrooms in Hartford and Southington.

For more information contact David, Todd or Brett Director at 860-249-7631, email clcweb@ctlighting.com or visit www.ctlighting.com.



Interstate + Lakeland Lumber is celebrating its 100th year in business.

“To the communities that have trusted us year after year, decade after decade, thank you for your trust, your business, and your friendship. We appreciate your support in our first century and look forward to you being a part of our next 100 years.”

- Sheldon Kahan

This year will see the opening of its new, HOBBI Award winning Design Center in Westport. This state-of-the-art showroom will offer visitors an immersive experience showcasing the latest and greatest in luxury windows and doors. In addition, they are creating a new installation service department to offer new services to builders and homeowners. It’s all part of their plan to keep making Interstate + Lakeland Lumber better and stronger, as they head into their second century of business.



Webster Bank closes \$10.3B merger with Sterling

Webster Bank said Tuesday morning that it has completed its \$10.3 billion merger with New York’s Sterling Bancorp.

Officials with both lenders said the combined company — still named Webster Bank, but now headquartered in Stamford instead of Waterbury — is well-positioned to grow its commercial banking business, improve the banking experience for customers and realize gains for investors.

“Today marks a transformative moment in Webster’s history that will greatly benefit our colleagues, clients, communities and shareholders. Our bank will have enhanced scale and significant loan growth potential.

- Webster President and CEO John R. Ciulla

Webster also appointed seven Sterling officials to its new board of directors, including Jack L. Kopnisky, who will serve as executive chairman of Webster Financial Corp.

Connecticut Stone Is Busier Than Ever Supplying Top Builders, Architects and Interior Designers



For more than 70 years, Connecticut Stone has been helping builders, homeowners and design professionals turn their ideas into reality. As a manufacturer and supplier, CT Stone has a 13,000 sf showroom in Milford, and over 10,000 different products, such as marble, quartzite, ThinStone and Bluestone.

This year, Connecticut Stone supplied Hallmark Associates *Custom Home of the Year* and Hobbs *Best Custom Home Over 20,000 SF* with one-of-a-kind mosaic tile, limestone and porcelain. They worked with Forehand + Partners Interior Design on both these exquisite homes. *Connecticut Builder* recently spoke with Connecticut Stone V.P. Tyra Dellacroce about trends, the market, and pandemic related challenges the company has faced.

“It’s been a crazy busy time for us. After the Covid shutdown, USPS recorded 10,000 address changes from N.Y.C. to Connecticut. Rentals turned into sales, and it was a fast and furious time of renovating purchased homes. Supply was completely

upended, and domestic products are now favored. I’m excited about the momentum Connecticut has had.”

What trends are you seeing in the materials you supply?

“There’s a re-emergence of natural materials over quartz. For the kitchen, natural quartzite has durability, and yet hits the natural, greener note. We are mixing mosaics, porcelain and natural tile for a cleaner, more refreshing look. Whites and ivories are still popular, but with pops of color.

For the exterior, Connecticut Stone is a big manufacturer, making paving and cladding from blocks, so designers and their clients can touch, see and feel the products. In this supply chain climate, all of the uncertainty goes away when working with a domestic supplier/manufacturer. It’s a huge advantage.”

What is your biggest problem?

“Labor is a real struggle! People from N.Y.C. who relocated here didn’t need jobs, and the trade had already left because the cost of living is so high, and there was not enough work. We partner with trade schools to do internships. It’s been very gratifying, because people are also re-evaluating their lives, and there’s more talk among young people about wanting to get into a trade rather than corporate work. Craftsmen are coming back.”

www.connecticutstone.com



CONGRATULATIONS

to all the 2021 nominees and award winners.

IBS Message from NAHB Immediate Past Chairman, Greg Ugalde



Even considering extensive health and safety protocols, more than 70,000 home building professionals attended the NAHB International Builders Show in Orlando last week.

The attendance at the show exceeded our expectations and reflected the enthusiasm of the home building industry to collaborate and discover the latest products and technology solutions for their customers.

There was 725,000 sf of indoor and outdoor exhibits. More than 1200 exhibitors displayed the latest in building products and technology. Many exhibitors also noted the strong foot traffic and enthusiasm of attendees.

This was a huge win for NAHB and for the industry: With a robust turnout, we were able to build excitement for next year's show in Las Vegas. And with increased support from all involved with the Builders Show, NAHB is able to do even more work creating a business environment that is conducive to building the American Dream of housing opportunity.

Among the factors that are holding our industry back from meeting the housing need in this country are the Supply Chain Issues and the enduring high lumber prices. At the show, we activated our members through a new interactive display that asked those who purchase lumber to express what percent increase they have seen on their lumber packages over the past two years.

This visual was striking – and seeing dozens of cases of lumber increasing over 200% was even more striking. In fact, it seemed like the majority of those who participated, from all over the country, are routinely seeing more than 200% increase in lumber.

The price and availability of lumber and many other building materials are among the top concerns for builders moving into the rest of 2022.

Other top concerns include the cost and availability of labor, limited supply and high price of buildable lots, and inflation.

Inflation is dominating the economic news. The Federal Reserve will need to move more aggressively to regain credibility, raising the possibility of the Fed making a mistake by moving too quickly. We saw an over-aggressive Fed in late 2018, when they moved too much and had to reverse policy in 2019.

Inflation came in stronger for January than the Federal Reserve expected, with the CPI up 7.5% year-over-year. This is the fastest pace in 40 years, led by gains in shelter, food and energy.

The outlook for the Fed is becoming clear. They will raise rates in March, with a growing possibility of a 50-basis-point increase. Higher rates will increase short-term rates, while having a lesser effect on long-term rates like mortgages.

The greatest risk for housing is an accelerated run off of the balance sheet (sales of mortgage backed securities), which would raise long-term rates more. NAHB economists anticipate an increase in mortgage rates of 100 basis points of hikes in 2022, but the chance of more is growing, given incoming inflation data.

Housing affordability also remains a critical concern as it fell to a 10-year low at the end of 2021. Affordability will continue to decline this year as interest rates rise.

Personal Note:

Now that my time on the NAHB Chairman's ladder has officially come to an end, I want to thank all of you who have been along for the ride.

It has been a truly inspirational time for me: one that has opened my eyes to all the work that still needs to be done. I have plenty of thoughts to share back here in CT. It has been a monumental honor to serve at the national level, but my heart has always been here in this state where I began my journey.

Thank you for encouraging me, believing in me, helping me course-correct when I needed it, and for you all being my friends.



Greg Ugalde & Governor Larry Hogan (R-MD)
very popular, a great speaker and possibly
Presidential Candidate



Greg Ugalde with HUD Deputy Secretary
Adrienne Todman



Dave Preka, Nort Wheeler, Kerry Brun, Garrett
Cook & Bob Wiedenmann



HBRA Members Celebrate Being Back at IBS



Sheila Leach, George LaCava, Liz Verna
& Kevin Young



Allen Hanbury & Sheila Leach



George LaCava, Huber rep Will Contento, Liz & Allan Koiva



IBS Cocktail Party



John DiMatteo &
David Preka



Eric Pearson & Sheila Leach with
NAHB Commendations



Nort Wheeler, David Preka,
Kim DiMatteo & Kerry Brun

Left side George LaCava, Sheila Leach and Eric Person, right side
ken Boynton, Greg Ugalde & Tim Bobowski



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FAIRFIELD COUNTY HBRA NEWS

A jobs pipeline: Fairfield County HBRA Companies looking for 'home-grown' talent met with Wright Tech students in Stamford

In a first-of-its-kind event, the HBRA of Fairfield County invited J.M. Wright Technical High School seniors to meet with companies interested in hiring them right after graduation.



L-R Fairfield County HBRA V.P. John, Exec Officer Kerry Brun, President KimDiMatteo with Wright Tech Principal Justin Lowe

Company representatives and students mingled for more than an hour at the school campus Wednesday, talking shop — literally — with the students studying trades from carpentry to plumbing. The goal was to help ease workforce burden by hiring Juniors and Seniors that are going through the tech program.

“It is very exciting to see the many employment opportunities coming the way of our students,” Wright Tech Principal Justin Lowe said in a press release about the event. “The HBRA is one of many groups we are hoping to build relationships and pipelines to employment for our students today and in the future.”



Job-seeking trade students met with employers in a first-of-its-kind event intended to inform students of different job opportunities and hire on the spot.



Andrea & Barry Reiner
Innerspace Electronics

HBRA CENTRAL CT NEWS

Central CT HBRA Annual Awards Night

by Sheila Leach, Vice-President of Operations

We could not be more thrilled with our Annual Awards Night and the Induction of Ted Brown as our Incoming President.



The evening before the event, Liz Koiva called to say that she had COVID! So, Liz gave her president's speech virtually to the over 170 attendees.



Carl Harris, 2nd Vice Chairman of NAHB, was our guest of honor, and a surprise to those in attendance. Carl kept his visit a secret, which was a gift, especially to George LaCava, who was inducted into the Hall of Fame by Carl.



Ted Brown inducted as President of the HBRA of Central CT.

Photos courtesy of Jennifer Highman Photography.



The band Changes in Lattitudes was excellent, and set a great tone.

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HBRA CENTRAL CT ANNUAL AWARDS



**Builder of the Year Mike Riccio with
Carl Harris**



**Remodeler of the Year Tim Freeland
with Carl Harris**



**Immediate Past NAHB
Chairman Greg Ugalde
with 2nd Vice Chair Carl Harris**



**Associate of the Year Antonio Liguori,
Calcagni Real Estate**



**Associate of the Year Hocon Pete
Battaglio (Josh Greco accepting)**



New Member of the Year Jeff Miller



President's Award Tony Pion



President's Award Vinnie Bonavita



**NAHB 2nd Vice Chairman Carl Harris with
Sheila Leach and Central CT HBRA CEO
Eric Person**



A great HBRA of Central CT night held at the new "Parkville Market" in Hartford - great to get everyone together! (l to r Eric Person, CEO - HBRA CC; Liz Koiva, President - HBRA CC; Sheila Leach, CEO HBA - NW CT; Greg Ugalde, NAHB Immediate Past Chair)



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