

**FEATURED
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SERVICES
FOR AUGUST**

Center Section

**Pro-housing
measures
enacted**

Before it adjourned for the year, the Rhode Island General Assembly enacted several measures important to the state's housing market.

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**Annual Golf
Classic slated
for September**

The Rhode Island Builders Association's 28th Annual Golf Classic, to benefit the Builders Helping Heroes charity, is set for September 17th.

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**Panel finds
housing act must
be rewritten**

A special legislative commission finds that Rhode Island's 27-year-old Low and Moderate Income Housing Act hasn't worked.

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**Interview: There
are better places
to site solar**

A well-known zoning expert suggests there are places to put solar farms that can avoid "solar sprawl" in Rhode Island.

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Infrastructure Grant Program is now law

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

In a crucial move for public health, the environment, the economy and sustainable residential growth, the General Assembly passed the Rhode Island Municipal Infrastructure Grant Program (MIGP) on June 23rd, in the last days of the 2018 session.

The program, once it's funded by the General Assembly in a future session, would be administered by the Dept. of Administration to help finance municipal

and other infrastructure projects that are vital for sustainable residential growth.

Gov. Gina Raimondo signed the measure into law on July 2nd.

A broad coalition of business and environmental groups, along with planners and government agencies, have long advocated for a state fund to help municipalities upgrade and expand infrastructure, especially drinking-water and sewer systems, which

see GRANT PROGRAM...page 29

Clambake time is here!

WHEN: Friday, August 10th, noon to 8 p.m.

WHERE: Francis Farm, 27 Francis Farm Rd., Rehoboth, MA 02769

COST: \$40 for the first 300 people, \$86 per person after that and for non-members. All tickets must be paid when making reservations.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: August 1st.

FOR INFORMATION, FOR SPONSORSHIPS AND TO REGISTER: Contact Elizabeth Carpenter at ecarpenter@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

It's time for the Rhode Island Builders Association's 68th Annual Clambake, a RIBA tradition since 1950, and tickets are still available!

The price includes a full and fabulous day of fun,

see CLAMBAKE...page 29



**RIBA's 68th Annual Clambake • Friday, August 10
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Presenting: All the benefits of Premier Sponsorship, plus 7 complimentary tickets; special photo, story and thank-you in the magazine.

**Contact Elizabeth Carpenter at the RIBA Office:
(401) 438-7400 • ecarpenter@ribuilders.org**

Lawmakers deal with sea-level rise, notice issue, surveyor shortage

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Along with the important Municipal Infrastructure Grant Program (*see story on page 1*), the 2018 General Assembly passed several bills of significant interest to the residential construction industry.

Building heights in flood zones

In a positive move for those living at the coast, House Bill 7741 Sub A and Senate Bill 2413 Sub A amend the definition of “building height” in special flood-hazard areas. The building height would now be measured from the base flood elevation (BFE), and would take effect on March 1, 2019.

Relative to sea-level rise, this allows the property owner to use the BFE, rather than the pre-existing grade, to measure compliance with municipal height restrictions.



The measure was signed by the governor on July 2nd.

The bill was sponsored in the House by Majority Leader K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Warwick) and Reps. Evan P. Shanley (D-Warwick), Helder J. Cunha (D-East Providence), Deputy Speaker Charlene Lima (D-Cranston, Providence) and Majority Whip John G. Edwards (D-Portsmouth, Tiverton).

In the Senate, sponsors were Majority Leader Michael J. McCaffrey (D-Warwick), Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Providence) and Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Newport, Jamestown).

Gov. Raimondo signed these bills into law on July 2nd.

The ‘Notice Bills’

In an important move that would keep landowners apprised of matters concerning their own property, House Bill 7767 and Senate Bill 2412, both as amended,

would require that when a proposed text amendment to a zoning ordinance would cause a conforming lot of record to become nonconforming by lot area and/or frontage, the municipality must provide written notice of the public hearing to all affected property owners.

The bill was sponsored by Reps. Cunha, Shekarchi, Shanley, Michael A. Morin (D-Woonsocket) and Jean P. Barros (D-Pawtucket). In the Senate, sponsors were Majority Leader McCaffrey and Majority Whip Goodwin.

The governor signed the measures into law on July 2nd.

Surveyors Bill

Lawmakers responded to the need for more surveyors in Rhode Island by easing unreasonable restrictions on registration. House Bill 7939 and Senate Bill 2335 streamline the application and examination process.

see LEGISLATION...page 29

The Rhode Island

Builder

Official publication of the
Rhode Island Builders Association
since 1951

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The Rhode Island Builder Report

Publishing Director..... John Marcantonio
Editor Paul F. Eno

The Rhode Island Builder Report is published monthly by the R.I. Builders Association, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy. #301, East Providence, RI 02914, tel. (401) 438-7400, fax (401) 438-7446, e-mail INFO@RIBUILDERS.ORG. Advertising information is available on the Internet at www.RIBUILDERS.org or from New River Press at (888) 273-1941 (ext. 1). Claims and representations made in advertising are the sole responsibility of the advertiser. The Rhode Island Builder Report and the R.I. Builders Association neither endorse nor guarantee advertiser claims. Readers may submit articles and photographs of interest to the residential building and remodeling industries in Rhode Island, but the publishing director and editor may reject any submission or advertisement. While designed to provide accurate and authoritative information on the subjects covered, The Rhode Island Builder Report and the Rhode Island Builders Association are not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional or technical advice or product support. Accordingly, RIBA cannot warrant the accuracy of all legal or technical information contained herein and disclaims any and all liability which may result from publication or reliance on the information provided. Unless otherwise noted, articles may not be reprinted without the written permission of the publishing director. The Rhode Island Builder Report is edited, designed and produced by New River Press, 645 Fairmount St., Woonsocket, RI 02895, tel. (401) 250-5760 (ext. 1), fax (401) 356-0913, e-mail builder@newriverpress.com.

DEADLINES FOR THE SEPT. ISSUE

All copy, ads and photos must be to us by

Friday, August 3

E-mail material to builder@newriverpress.com Fax: (401) 356-0913

**RIBA welcomes
these new members
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their sponsors!**

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Sponsor: Darren Jodoin – PMC Media Group



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LOOKING AHEAD!

♦ **August 10th: 68th Annual RIBA Outing and Clambake** - Noon to 8 p.m. at Francis Farm, Rehoboth, Mass. Watch for more information. To become a sponsor, contact Elizabeth Carpenter at (401) 438-7400 or ecarpenter@ribuilders.org. Sponsors will have exhibit space at the Clambake. All tickets must be paid when making reservations. *Details on page 1.*

♦ **August 16th: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours - Topics are Confined Spaces, Asbestos Awareness, Mold Awareness.** *Details on page 14.*

♦ **August 28th: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours - Topic is Deck Codes.** *Details on page 14.*

♦ **September 20th-21st: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors FOR RHODE ISLAND AND MASSACHUSETTS - 12 Credit Hours - Topic is Energy Codes.** This course will provide 12 credits for those who need to fulfill their Massachusetts licensing requirements (renewal every two years). Of the 12 credits, five (presented on September 20th) will count for Rhode Island continuing-education requirements for registration renewal (every two years). *Details on page 14.*

♦ **September TBA: Professional Women in Building Monthly Meeting** - For information and to register, contact Linda Bohmbach at linda@homehealthsmith.com. *Watch for more information. Related story on page 8.*

♦ **September 13th: Networking Night** - 4:30 to 7 p.m., FREE for members and their guests.

♦ **September 17th: 28th Annual RIBA Golf Classic** - Wannamoisett Country Club, East Providence. Watch for more information. To become a sponsor, contact Robin Barlow at (401) 438-7400 or rbarlow@ribuilders.org. *Details on page 6.*

♦ **October TBA: Professional Women in Building Monthly Meeting** - Gathering and tour at Reid's Remodeling, 22 Hoxsie Rd., Richmond. To register, contact Linda Bohmbach at linda@homehealthsmith.com. *Related story on page 8.*

♦ **October 2nd: RIBA Annual Meeting and Election of Officers** - *Watch for more information.*

♦ **December 14th: Professional Women in Building Monthly Meeting** - 11:30 a.m., combined holiday meeting and dinner with the National Association of Women in Construction, Providence Biltmore Hotel. *Watch for more information.*

More information, registration and payment for most RIBA events is available at RIBUILDERS.org.

♦ Indicates a RIBA-sponsored event.

♦ Designates a course eligible for Rhode Island and/or Massachusetts state-mandated continuing education credits. Contact RIBA for confirmation.

(S) Class will be taught in Spanish.

Take RIBA classes online at RIBAEducat.es.com

Visit RIBAEducat.es.com for access to 24-7 continuing education!

Online courses include Scaffold Safety, Workplace Safety, Confined Spaces, Ladder Safety and more, each worth one credit hour of state-mandated continuing education. Just as with RIBA's onsite courses (see pages 13 and 14), online courses are FREE of tuition charges for members and their employees. Just use your coupon at the online checkout.

NEED A COUPON CODE? CALL RIBA AT (401) 438-7400. Non-members: \$12 per credit hour. For information about online or on-site courses: Contact Sheila McCarthy smccarthy@ribuilders.org or (401) 438-7400.



David A. Caldwell Jr.

President's Message

Thoughts and emotions: From the beaches of Normandy to the beaches of R.I.

No Mission Too Difficult. No Sacrifice Too Great. Duty First.
-Motto of the United States Army First Infantry Division

Our family has just returned from our first overseas vacation, to France. The highlight of the trip was a visit to Normandy, where we spent a day at Omaha Beach, Point du Hoc, and the American Cemetery. It is without question a place that can provoke powerful emotion, and I would encourage anyone who has the opportunity to make the journey.

Growing up, the men and women of that Greatest Generation were everywhere in our lives. We all knew the stories of the Great Depression and World War II. It was their world. We just lived in it – they earned it, and they gave it to us. But that generation is slipping away to history.

If you ever have the chance to stand on the cliff at Omaha Beach and look out at the ocean, it's impossible not to have the thought, "How did they do it?" And then you turn around, and see 9,387 graves, and see the price they paid to get it done.

The year 1945 saw the end of the most destructive war in history. The postwar generation, the aforementioned Greatest Genera-

tion, helped to literally rebuild the world. That is to say, after the destruction of the war, they built the peace.

The year 1945 also saw the beginning of the Rhode Island Builders Association, which played a significant role in the period of postwar prosperity, the long economic boom that was unmatched in history. I like to think that many of our earliest members were shaped by the events of their lives during periods of great struggle and uncertainty, if not even greater danger. Coming together to overcome problems and challenges to the industry is teamwork in the best sense, working together. Together we are stronger than we are alone.

Our country has an amazing history, and it's worthwhile from time to time to reflect on the remarkable achievements of our forefathers. They adapted, persevered and overcame innumerable challenges and seemingly insurmountable obstacles in the service to building our great nation. The present is often uncertain, and the future is unknown. But I have a deep and abiding faith that we will persevere, overcome and continue our march of progress no matter what the circumstances.

Summer in Rhode Island is the best time of the year for most. People from all over come to our beaches and enjoy the beautiful weather, with all that our state has to offer. There are truly few places better. But when I'm at the beach this summer, and likely every summer after, I will be reminded, if only for a moment, of those beaches in Normandy. And in our time, we will continue to pay it forward.

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Golf outing to benefit Builders Helping Heroes set for Sept. 17 at Wannamoisett

WHEN: Monday, September 17th, registration and lunch 11 a.m. to 11:45.

Shotgun start will be at noon. Dinner will be a 5 p.m.

WHERE: Wannamoisett Country Club, Rumford Country Club, 96 Hoyt Ave., Rumford, RI 02916

COST: \$190 per player. Dinner only: \$55

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: September 7th

FOR INFORMATION, TO REGISTER AND FOR SPONSORSHIPS: Contact Robin Barlow at (401) 438-7400 or rbarlow@ribuilders.org.

It's the Rhode Island Builders Association's 28th Annual Golf Classic, to benefit the association's charity, Builders Helping Heroes! Enjoy a day of great golf, fine food and valuable networking at one of the state's most beautiful Donald Ross-designed courses. At the same time, support RIBA's non-profit charity that helps wounded veterans and their families, and the families of those killed in action since 9/11.

Cart, greens fees, lunch, dinner and a raffle ticket are included in the full registration fee. There will be prizes for first, second, third and last-place teams, along with awards for longest drive and closest-to-the-pin on numerous holes. If you can't devote the day to golf, just join us for dinner.

Be a sponsor!

Please consider a sponsorship. In doing so, you will generate great exposure

for your company with tee signs, and you will be mentioned on a special page in *The Rhode Island Builder*. Top sponsorships offer you complimentary registrations at the event. (See below). Builders Helping Heroes helps turn our wounded heroes' homes back into places of comfort.

Call Robin Barlow for more information: (401) 438-7400 Tuesday through Friday during business hours.



NAHB 20 Club: Consider joining!

By **Dona Mistichelli NAHB**

The NAHB 20 Club program is creating a strong backlog of prospective members. Our goals are to make sure the needs of our current clubs are met and to start new clubs. We are looking for owners of home building companies who are interested in joining, or learning more.

To qualify, you must have at least five percent ownership in the company and hold a builder membership in our local association. There are five good reasons to join a 20 Club:

- On average, members double their net profit by the third year of membership.
- 20 Clubs are a small builder's sounding board for ideas and a source for useful industry information, best practices and financial benchmarking.
- 20 Clubs can be a survival tool, with members assisting each other with long-term business planning and building a resilient management system to survive and be triumphant against the next recession.
- 20 Clubs result in the opportunity to form both personal and professional friendships that will last a lifetime.
- These members-only clubs promote a builder-to-builder or remodeler-to-remodeler exchange that highlights the value of NAHB membership. A required confidentiality agreement ensures that all information shared remains within the group.

Find out more at NAHB.org, or contact me at (202) 266.8281.



Golf Sponsorships

PRESENTING

Includes two complimentary players, five tee signs, dominant signage at lunch and dinner, hat giveaway and thank-you in *The Rhode Island Builder* **\$2,000**

PREMIER

Includes two complimentary players, three tee signs, signs at lunch and dinner and thank-you in *The Rhode Island Builder* **\$1,500**

SUPPORTER

Includes one complimentary player, one tee sign, thank-you in *The Rhode Island Builder* **\$500**

PATRON

Includes one tee sign and thank-you in *The Rhode Island Builder* **\$300**

FRIEND

Thank-you in *The Rhode Island Builder* **\$75**

**Contact Robin Barlow
at (401) 438-7400 or rbarlow@ribuilders.org.**

Build-PAC event raises money for pro-housing candidates

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Nearly 60 members and guests turned out at the East Greenwich Yacht Club on Thursday, June 14th, for the Rhode Island Builders Association's most recent Build-PAC fundraising event.

"It's very important that we have these fundraisers, especially in these turbulent times," said Joseph W. Walsh, RIBA's chief government relations advocate, who reviewed the association's legislative agenda in detail with those in attendance.

"Led by (Past RIBA President Roland Fiore and Steven Carlino of Douglas Lumber, Kitchens and Home Center, co-chairmen) the Legislative Committee meets and reviews hundreds of bills on the state level every year. We take a position on the ones most relevant to the residential construction industry. The committee works very hard for you," Mr. Walsh stated.

The Build-PAC is bipartisan and has the goal of supporting pro-housing candidates at the federal and state levels through the voluntary contributions of members. There is also a national Build-PAC, operated by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

"RIBA has been well respected for many years in the political arena," said Mr. Walsh. "But we need the support of every RIBA member in order to be most effective."

He urged members to build relationships with their own lawmakers so that an understanding of residential construction issues can be developed.

"When you have a dialogue with your senator and representative, let us know how we can help, and what information you need. The more members active in our legislative advocacy, the better."

For more information about Build-Pac and RIBA's legislative advocacy program, contact Executive Officer John Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400 or jmarcantonio@ribuilders.org.

Enjoying a beautiful evening are, from left, David Gardner of Custom Built Window & Door, Eric Wishart of Civil CADD Services Inc., Darren Jodoin of PMC Media Group, RIBA Executive Officer John Marcantonio, and RIBA Treasurer Carol O'Donnell of CRM Modular Homes.



Nearly 60 members and guests gathered at the East Greenwich Yacht Club on June 14th. The Rhode Island Builders Association's chief government relations advocate, Joseph W. Walsh, at far right, reviews RIBA's legislative agenda with attendees.



Those attending included, from left, Frank Bragantin of Ferland Corp., Dennis DiPrete of DiPrete Engineering Associates Inc., Jose Marcano of JM Painting LLC, RIBA Vice President Timothy A. Stasiunas of The Stasiunas Companies, and David C. Baud of Baud Builders Inc.



RIBA
offers many great
networking opportunities!
Check them out at
Ribuilders.org
or contact Elise at
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egeddes@ribuilders.org

Professional Women in Building : PWB NEWS

New Member Spotlight

Kim Crispino

Sales Support Specialist

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What benefits do you find being a member?

Great networking opportunities; education; creating higher goals for myself; profitable, productive, amazing business relationships; teamwork; friendships; making a difference in the industry and, of course, self-growth.

What drew you into your career?

Thriving to reach a higher level, wanting to be the best I can be. As a breast-cancer survivor, you have a determination, a fight that doesn't let you quit, "reach for the stars"! I am reaching and I look forward to success in every way, positive attitude with heart!

What sets your company apart from others?

Thriving to overcome, knowing that it's a team effort. Yes, you help yourself however; you embrace the people, connections, opportunities around you. I have a dream, and I'm working to make it come true!

How do you spend your free time?

In my free time, you can find me volunteering at the RISPCA (I love animals). I enjoy spending quality time with family, friends, and my grandchildren. I also spend time giving back and time for myself.



PWB Officers

Carol O'Donnell - President
Linda Bohmbach - Vice President
Sophia Karvunis - Treasurer
Jacqueline Pagel - Secretary

Want to learn more about the PWB?

Please visit our site for contact info, up-coming events and news at <http://ribuilders.org/professional-women-in-building>

RIBA Happenings: Professional Women in Building



► The Rhode Island Builders Association's Professional Women in Building Council members and guests met at the East Greenwich Yacht Club on June 11th for their Summer Social. The theme: "Meet Past RIBA Presidents." And a number of these attended, including George Calcagni (1976-1978), Steven Gianlorenzo (2000-2002), Edgar N. Ladouceur (2004-2006), Robert J. Baldwin (2010-2012), long with current President David A. Caldwell Jr.



► Ronald J. Caniglia of Stand Corp., at left, and Eric Wishart of Civil CADD Services Inc. are with Julietta Georgakis of the Rhode Island Commerce Corp., currently on loan to the Dept. of Business Regulation



◀ Joining the PWB for the evening were, from left, Carmen Warren, RIBA Latino Outreach Coordinator Betty Bernal, Rhode Island Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea, Christina Caldwell and RIBA President David A. Caldwell Jr.



◀ Attendees listen to remarks by PWB President Carol O'Donnell.



▲ Meeting up at the PWB Summer Social are, from left, Aaron Colaluca of Smithfield Supply Co., Thom Marandola of Tomark Construction, with Carol and Jack Bergantini of Construction and Design Services.

◀ From left are Past President Robert J. Baldwin, Jose Marciano of JM Painting, Thomas Furey of Furey Roofing & Construction, Kristen Longo and Rebecca Downing of DiStefano Brothers Construction, and Lauren Brierley of Calyx Homes Ltd.

Member Profile: Doug Sabetti of Newport Solar

It all started with the yurt

By Paul F. Eno Editor

It was the yurt that did it.

"I lived in Colorado, and I used to go to the Utah desert to hike, climb and bike," declares Doug Sabetti, chosen by Fate to found Newport Solar in 2009.

"My girlfriend talked me into moving back to Rhode Island," the Newport native recalls. Doug agreed, but with one caveat. "That I would return to the Utah desert once a year for a sanity check."

Deal! When his now-wife, none other than the prominent Newport artist Sue McNally, went to Utah with him, she fell in love with it too. They bought 80 undeveloped acres of land off-grid and built a yurt, a round structure based on the dwellings of Mongolian nomads, "far away from pavement."

"That's how I was first introduced to solar," Doug says. "I was amazed how efficient it is. We can power the yurt with it all year long, so we have all the luxuries of electricity whenever we go there. It's also insulated and has a wood stove, so we're good for all four seasons."

Construction itself wasn't new to Doug. His father was a commercial contractor, working largely with steel buildings.

"Starting when I was a junior in high school, I worked for my dad during the summers until 1989," remembers Doug, who graduated from Middletown High School and studied at the Community College of Rhode Island.

Then he got into the residential side, working for several contractors. Finally, Doug opened his own company in 1998: Sabetti Construction. But within a few years, the spirit of residential solar would be tugging at his sleeve.

"Once I learned about solar and how well it worked, I realized it could work in Rhode Island, and that it would complement my small construction business," Doug says. "So, I started offering solar installations. In 2009, I was dba Newport Solar! We haven't done residential construction for the last five years."

Growth has been steady. Newport Solar now has 13 employees and ranges over the entire state. It's "very much a family business"



Doug Sabetti

as well: When not creating or exhibiting her artwork, Sue is Newport Solar's director of finance.

There have been some interesting solar clients over the years, both residential and small commercial, according to Doug. These include Aquidneck Community Farms, an honest-to-goodness lama ranch, a Newport restaurant, and several installations at the homes of prominent politicians.

"At the lama farm, the solar array powers the entire place, including the houses. They tell visitors all about us," Doug says.

That kind of word-of-mouth stood Newport Solar in good stead when competition increased after 2011.

"Up to that time, we helped create the great solar policies Rhode Island has now. With the state's Renewable Energy Growth Program, which began in 2012, solar took over 100 percent," Doug explains.

"Before that, there were just a handful of local companies. The flood gates opened in 2012, and national firms poured in. The competition became fierce! Now there are 40-plus solar companies operating in Rhode Island."

How did Newport Solar continue to prosper?

"We just stuck to our core business model: The customer always comes first, and that gives us a really good reputation," Doug declares. "We find that when the big companies market, people look for a second price, and they usually find us."

Newport Solar isn't just a business for Doug and Sue. It's also fun, all the way from the Utah yurt to the company website, which has entertaining features like "Stuff John Saw Today," about Site Analyst John Marino's adventures in the field.

Meanwhile, Doug holds the highest accreditation in the solar industry: He's a PV Installation Professional, as certified by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP).

Newport Solar joined RIBA in 2011.

"The tuition-free classes are excellent for my employees," Doug says. "The solar industry being very dynamic and evolving rapidly, RIBA has been an incredible resource for legislation. Also, the networking is just what we need."

Doug adds that he's looking forward to the association's 68th Annual Clambake on August 10th. *Related story on page 1.*

What does the future hold for Newport Solar?

"In the next few years, we plan to become a full-service energy company. That will include battery systems, generators, car chargers, hybrid electric water heaters, and whole-house energy monitoring systems," Doug reports. "Even now, we're offering air-source heat pumps for mini-split heating and cooling."

To find out more, visit Newportsolarri.com.

Sabetti Construction dba Newport Solar

Principal: Douglas Sabetti

RIBA member since: 2011

Focus: Residential & Commercial Solar Systems

Serves: Rhode Island

Founded: 2009

Local based: North Kingstown, Rhode Island



Workers' compensation insurance questions can be tricky

We often hear from customers with workers' compensation questions, such as: "I don't have payroll for a couple of months. Should I cancel my policy?"

Our answer is usually "No!" and here's why. With workers' compensation insurance, you're paying based on what your payroll adds up to, not the number of days it's in force. If you cancel your policy (or worse, stop making your payments) we can no longer note that policy on your certificates of insurance, which could cost

you a job.

In addition, your insurance carrier must now perform an audit and refund payments, which takes time. All this must happen before you can reapply for coverage again, adding costly delays. Letting your policy lapse by failing to make your payments is a no-no, counting against you when it's time to take this important coverage out again.


What's an 'if any' policy?

Another question we hear is "I've heard there's an 'If Any Policy.' What's that?"

This is a policy that's sometimes issued for employers who are required to provide proof of workers' compensation coverage when there are no employees, an unusual situation.

There's quite a bit of misinformation on this topic, so it's best that you contact our office to see if your situation qualifies for this coverage and what the related costs will be.

Remember, your agent should be one of your trusted advisors, so pick up the phone and call with your questions and concerns.

For more information, give me a call at (401) 438-4244. 


Be sure that RIBA has your latest contact information

Many people change their e-mail addresses as often as once a year. Maybe they go with new Internet service providers, or they just want to throw off the spammers.

Please check with the Rhode Island Builders Association staff to make sure we have your correct contact information, including your current e-mail, phone numbers and physical addresses.

That's the message from Elise Geddes, the association's member relations coordinator.

"RIBA offers tremendous membership benefits, and these are always growing," Ms. Geddes says. "But we have to be able to keep in regular touch with members if we're to keep you fully informed! You can take full advantage of your member benefits only if you know about them."

Please call Ms. Geddes when you need to update your contact information: (401) 438-7400 or egeddes@ribuilders.org. 

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Member News

nationalgrid UPDATE

with Laura Rodormer



How to get to Zero Energy

National Grid's Residential New Construction program (RNC) supports the design and construction of high-performance homes throughout Rhode Island. In the last two years, there has been an increase in the number of homes that are 45 percent more energy efficient than the baseline home in the state and, even more impressive, homes that are Zero Energy or Zero Energy Ready.

What is a Zero Energy or Zero Energy Ready home?

Zero Energy Home: A very energy-efficient home that does offset its annual energy demand through on-site renewable energy generation.

Zero Energy Ready Home: A very energy-efficient home that *could* offset its annual energy demand with renewable energy.

RNC's highest-performing homes come in all shapes and sizes, but they share similar characteristics. They start with smart design, they use energy modeling to achieve the best energy results, and they engage a third party for verification, technical support and certification. These services are available to all RNC participants.

What are the most common elements in these homes?

They are tight. Envelopes are well sealed (blower door results of 0.6 – 2.0 ACH50), are well insulated (walls R40-R60, ceilings R60-R80, floors R38-R60), and have highly insulated doors and windows (U values 0.25 or less).

They are well ventilated. High-efficiency ventilation systems – heat recovery ventilation (HRV) or energy recovery ventilation (ERV) – extract heat from ventilated air and return it to the fresh-air intake.

Ventilation also provides health and comfort benefits.

They have efficient heating, cooling and hot-water equipment. The highest-performing RNC homes have air source heat pumps (HSPF 10 or higher, SEER 18 or higher), and heat pump water heaters (UEF 2 or greater).

They have efficient lighting and appliances. They have LED lighting and Energy Star® rated appliances and electronics.

Find out how the RNC program can help you build a Zero Energy Home. Call (888) 887-8841.



Baseball Outing a fun time for members, guests



Elaine Eccleston from Century 21 Access America and her mom were among those enjoying the game.

It was an evening full of fun and surprises on June 19th as members and guests descended on McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket for the Rhode Island Builders Association Annual Baseball Outing.

The evening featured a double-header, with the Pawtucket Red Sox taking on the Buffalo Bisons. Both teams split the take, Buffalo beating Pawtucket 4-0 in game 1, with the win going to the PawSox 6-0 in game 2.

Before the games, the RIBA contingent enjoyed the famous McCoy Stadium barbecue. Well-represented member companies included Lockheed Window, Garafalo & Associates, Bernard Modular homes, Richard E. Olsen Hydraulic Backhoe Service, Miracle Method, and Century 21 Access America.

It was the second year for the revived Baseball Outing, one of many events that have returned as RIBA grows. Watch *The Rhode Island Builder*, RIBuilders.org and your mail for information about more events coming your way.



CRLB OFFICE MOVES

The Rhode Island Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board (CRLB) is now located at 560 Jefferson Blvd., Suite 204, Warwick, RI 02886. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The new main phone number is (401) 921-1590. Fax is (401) 889-5535. Until further notice, hearings will still take place at the Dept. of Administration, One Capitol Hill, 2nd Floor in Providence. Call for additional information.

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Continuing Education for Contractors

Courses headlined in RED on the Education Pages qualify for state-mandated continuing education requirements.
EVERY RESIDENTIAL CONTRACTOR registered to work in Rhode Island must take five hours of continuing education
before his or her next renewal date.

Five Credit Hours: Deck Construction Codes

August 28th

WHEN: Tuesday, August 28th, 7:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.
WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914
COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$15 materials/registration fee. \$150 for non-members, with a \$15 materials/registration fee.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This course will cover: "Deck Construction Codes: Sorting Out Codes and Solutions."

Included will be a review of jobsite safety rules, fall protection, ladders and scaffolding, and confined spaces.

Five Credit Hours: R.I. Confined Spaces, Asbestos, Mold

August 16th

WHEN: Thursday, August 16th, 7:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.
WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914
COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$15 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$15 materials/registration fee.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This course will cover confined spaces, asbestos awareness, and mold awareness.

You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free. Lunch is included.

More homeowners are loving their backyards and looking for outdoor living solutions, so decks are becoming an important part of an increasing number of homes. You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration.

Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free. Lunch is included.



Twelve Credit Hours: R.I. & Mass.

Codes & Safety

September 20th & 21st

WHEN: Thursday, September 20th and Friday, September 21st, 7:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST: Day One (Six Credits) - FREE for members and their employees, with a \$50 materials/registration fee. A \$125 charge for non-members and a \$50 materials/registration fee. **Both Days (Twelve Credits):** FREE for members and their employees, with the \$50 materials/registration fee. A \$225 charge for non-members and the \$50 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This is a two-day course providing continuing-education credits required for Rhode Island contractor registration renewal and for Massachusetts construction supervisor license renewal.

If participants need only Rhode Island credits, they can take only the first day.

Day One covers home energy and solar equipment basics for the construction supervisor.

Day Two covers workplace safety, business practices/workers' compensation, energy codes and lead-safe practices.

The materials/registration fee is only charged once, whether you attend for Day One or both days. Lunch and snacks are included.

Call for further information.



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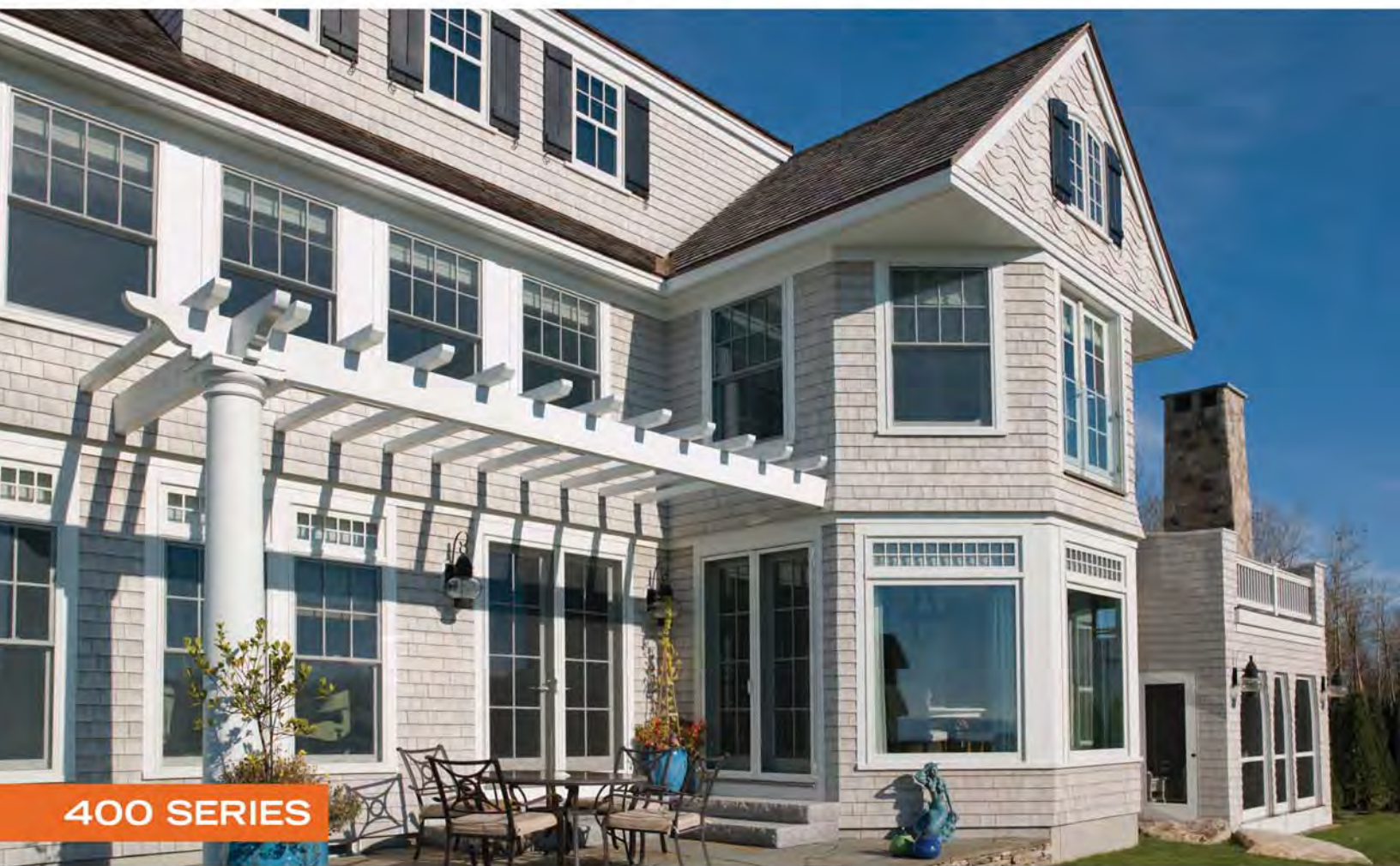
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R.I. SkillsUSA students win big at Nationals

Forty Rhode Island career and technical education (CTE) students won big as they finished among the top in the nation at the SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, June 25th-29th.

Nationally, more than 6,800 students competed in 108 occupational, leadership and skill competition areas, with 87 Rhode Island students participating. Here are the top-placing students in construction-related categories.

National Silver Medal Winner

Architectural Drafting: Michael Webb
– New England Institute of Technology

Sixth Place

CNC Milling Specialist: Johnathan Woolford – William M. Davies, Jr. Career and Technical High School

Ninth Place

Electrical Construction Wiring: Ariel Acosta – IBEW Local #99 Apprenticeship Program

For more information on any of the
see SKILLS...page 29



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Installing PVs in Mass.? Know the rules!

Rhode Island isn't the only place in New England where solar energy is all the rage. Solar installers, electricians and general contractors who work in Massachusetts should be aware of the Bay State's requirements.

We thank the Massachusetts Consumer Affairs Blog for this information.

Solar photovoltaics (PVs), more commonly referred to as solar panels, are made of silicon cells mounted on a glass sheet and encased in aluminum. For maximum efficiency, they should be placed on a south-facing, flat roof, because they will receive the most direct sunlight at that angle. Energy from the sunlight is then converted into alternating current (AC) that can power your customer's home. Although solar panels are often associated with sunny-year-round climates, they can be used successfully in Massachusetts.

How much will they save?

Before anything else, your customers should check their electric bills to see what they pay now. Although they might be able to drive down utility usage, they will still pay the fixed charge each month. The Renewable Energy Division (MassDOER) offers information for consumers about solar energy and has incentive programs such as the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program, and the Mass Solar Loan program.

Buying vs. Leasing

Your customer can buy an entire system, which has an average gross cost of \$18,840 without tax credits, according to EnergySage. You may want to help them explore financing options through the installer, a bank or the state.

They may be able to lease a solar system, if they'd prefer. These can be long-term agreements, lasting up to 20 years, so they shouldn't plan to move anytime soon. If they lease, they're entitled to all the power that's generated, but the leasing company will be responsible for maintenance. The Federal Trade Commission and *Consumer Reports* have more information on the differences between buying and leasing.

Finding a certified company

Solar companies that perform installations must be certified by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP). In Massachusetts, the installer must be a licensed electrician as well as registered as a home improvement contractor. We encourage consumers to check the referrals and licenses of the contractor and to seek multiple bids with written estimates included.

As with any other major purchase, we encourage consumers to research extensively and consider more than one option before purchasing solar panels. Variables such as the price up-front, tax breaks, the life of the system, and the responsibility of maintaining them all play a role in making the best decision for your home and wallet.

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center released a guide to

solar power that Massachusetts residents should consult for more information.

If you or your customer have questions, contact the Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation at (617) 973-8787 or (888) 283-3757, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

The Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation, along with its five agencies, work together to protect and empower consumers through advocacy and education, and to ensure a fair playing field for Massachusetts businesses. The Office also oversees the state's lemon laws and Arbitration Program, Data Breach reporting, Home Improvement Contractor Programs and the Massachusetts Do Not Call Registry.



Resources for RIBA members who work in Massachusetts

The Rhode Island Builder covers Massachusetts news relevant to members of the Rhode Island Builders Association who work in our neighbor to the north and east.

Here are some sources of regulatory information and forms for contractors who work in the Bay State, or who plan to. For education purposes, RIBA will shortly expand its education programs to include courses required for work in Massachusetts.

Building Permits: Massachusetts has a statewide formula for building permits. Application forms may vary a little by municipality, but standard forms and information may be found at the Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulation (OCABR) website: Mass.gov/ocabr.

Contractor Registration and Licensing: Massachusetts has licensing for construction supervisors and registration for home improvement contractors. Find the details at Mass.gov/topics/building-trades.

Also find information about trade licensing at this site.

MassHousing: Similar to Rhode Island Housing, MassHousing is an independent, quasi-public agency that provides financing for affordable housing in Massachusetts.

Created in 1966, MassHousing raises capital by selling bonds, and lends the proceeds to low- and moderate-income homebuyers and homeowners, and to developers who build or preserve affordable and/or mixed-income rental housing. Since its inception, MassHousing has provided more than \$20 billion for affordable housing. Find out more at MassHousing.com.



R.I. Low and Moderate Income Housing Act must be rewritten, commission finds

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Rhode Island's Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (LMIHA) is a failed, one-size-fits-all mandate that must be reconsidered and rewritten.

That's the upshot of a long-awaited final report from the Special Legislative Commission to Study the LMIHA. The law, passed in 1991 and revised in 2004, basically mandates that 10 percent of a given municipality's housing stock be "affordable" by federal definition: Requiring that no more than 30 percent of household income be spent on housing.

What set off alarm bells for housing advocates, and helped prompt formation of the study commission, was the fact that, in 27 years, only five municipalities out of the state's 39 managed to reach the 10 percent goal. Three of these, Woonsocket, Central Falls and Pawtucket, were already at or above that when the law was passed.

A number of municipal planners also urged that the LMIHA be revisited.

The commission was formed in 2016 at the behest of Rep. Shelby Maldonado (D-Central Falls), who was named to chair the panel. Among the 14 members was David A. Caldwell Jr. of Caldwell and Johnson Inc., president of the Rhode Island Builders Association.

The 110-page final report, released May 31st, raises many questions for the reader. Primary among these is: When a municipality hasn't met the goal, how much of the reason is an inability to comply, and how much is an unwillingness to comply?

"This is considered a failed 'one-size-fits-all' approach in need of major updating and improvement," said a joint statement from planners in Narragansett, Charlestown, Exeter, Hopkinton, New Shoreham, North Kingstown, Richmond, South Kingstown and Westerly, in response to a survey the commission sent to all municipalities.

The planners' statement details the issues facing communities when trying to



Rep. Shelby Maldonado

comply with the LMIHA, especially when it comes to infrastructure. It dovetails with the survey response from the Town of Glocester, which told the commission that the 10 percent mandate "does not take into consideration key differences across municipalities, including access to public water...public sewer...public transportation, land capacity, local growth rates, and other existing state policy."

The town's lengthy response went on to note that Glocester has no municipal water or sewer services, which "severely limits its ability to accept dense development."

The town is currently at 2.2 percent affordable housing stock, and the response notes that another 300 units would be required to meet the mandate, an unrealistic short-term goal for the town.

Glocester's response also recommends that towns be able to set their own "local needs" goals through the comprehensive planning process, asks that the definition of low- and moderate-income housing be broadened, and that some way be found to accommodate more rental development without unfairly burdening the town's tax base.

Glocester's response was the benchmark for still other municipalities that replied to the commission, and it was endorsed in separate responses by Little Compton, Richmond, Foster, Hopkinton, Charles-

town, Coventry and Burrillville.

Providence sent its own response to the survey, essentially supporting the LMIHA and saying it has exceeded the 10 percent mandate by at least 4 percent. But because of a change in computer software, some numbers are unclear and data are available only from January 2017, according to a city statement submitted to the commission.

Mr. Caldwell acknowledged the infrastructure shortfalls pointed out by the state's smaller communities, but he doubts that this is the only reason for the affordable-housing shortfall in so many municipalities.

"As the commission's report makes clear, the state clearly recognizes the housing shortage and affordability problem. And there's more work to be done," Mr. Caldwell said.

"However, the fact remains that we punish housing development. And we have to consider the fact that all development takes place at the municipal level. Many municipalities consider residential growth to be a cost and a burden, whose gains accrue to the state and not them. We have to address this fundamental issue if we're going to solve the housing crisis."

Mr. Caldwell cited the example of a high-end home he built in a Rhode Island town.

"This was a \$1.6 million home for two young professionals. When I got the certificate of occupancy, I found that the taxes were going to be about \$25,000 a year. The secretary said: 'We're not making any money on this one if they have two kids in school,'" he recalled.

"That about sums up the attitude. Unless we can work out some way to incentivize or compel a municipality to grow, they won't."

The commission report ends with a summary of recommendations.

- The State Housing Appeals Board (SHAB), which hears appeals to local decisions on affordable-housing developments, should clarify its timing, guidelines and evidence standards.

see *HOUSING...* page 28

Regulations boost multifamily housing costs up to 42% or more, study says



National Association of Home Builders

Regulation imposed by all levels of government accounts for an average of 32.1 percent of multifamily development costs, according to new research released on June 14th by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and the National Multifamily Housing Council (NMHC).

In fact, in a quarter of cases, that number can reach as high as 42.6 percent, according to the study.

“Apartment and condo development can be subject to a significant array of regulatory costs, including a broad range of fees, standards and other requirements imposed at different stages of the development and construction process. However, until now there was no previous research done to analyze the extent of this regulation,” a statement from NAHB said.

The joint effort between NAHB and NMHC specifically aimed to determine how much regulation exists and how much it’s adding to the cost of developing new multifamily properties. Breaking down the regulatory costs showed that an average of 7 percent comes from building-

code changes over the past 10 years, with 5.9 percent attributable to development requirements (such as streets, sidewalks, parking, landscaping, and architectural design) that go beyond what the developer would ordinarily provide, and 4.2 percent of the costs come from non-refundable fees charged when site work begins.

“The home building industry is one of the most highly regulated industries, and the multifamily sector is particularly subject to these obligations,” said NAHB Chairman Randy Noel, a custom home builder from LaPlace, La. “Housing affordability is a huge issue throughout the country, and this new research only further illustrates how the layers of excessive regulation translate into higher rents and reduced affordability.”

NMHC President Doug Bibby echoed the concern.

“The current regulatory framework has limited the amount of housing that can be built and increased the cost of what’s produced,” Mr. Bibby said. “At a time when states and localities are struggling to address housing affordability challenges, public and private stakeholders should work together to streamline regulations and take

the steps necessary to expand housing in communities across the country.”

As in Rhode Island, local governments around the country generally have authority for approving development and adopting building codes, but state and federal governments are increasingly becoming involved in the process and layering on additional levels of fees and regulations.

“Developers can almost certainly expect average costs to be higher now or in the near future due to the effect of recent regulations that went in place at the end of 2017, such as the EPA’s new Silica Rule. Further, the survey does not account for other price-influencing factors such as the effects of recent tariffs on building materials (*story on page 26*), or the extent to which local jurisdictions empower citizens to oppose multifamily development in their communities,” the NAHB statement added.

View the full study NAHB.org/mfcostofregulation.



R.I. Housing marks record quarter

Rhode Island Housing (RIH) funded a recording-breaking 523 mortgages with a volume of over \$104.9 million during the first quarter of 2018. This is the highest first quarter for closings in the agency’s 45-year history, said RIH spokesman Kevin Tente.

The news of record-high mortgage closings came during June - National Homeownership Month.

“It is a great time to buy a home in Rhode Island,” said RIH Executive Director Barbara Fields.

RIHousing offers many loan options for first-time homebuyers, current homeowners and Rhode Islanders who want to improve their homes. Buyers can receive 100 percent financing, including down payments. For details, visit Loans.RIHousing.com.



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Nathan E. Kelly AICP, NCI

Associate Principal, Horsley Witten Group

Nathan E. Kelly directs the Horsley Witten Group's Providence office. He has nearly 18 years with the company and has provided professional planning, zoning and facilitation services to more than 30 New England municipalities. His work ranges from comprehensive zoning-revision projects to the development of affordable housing, open space, rural land preservation and economic-development studies. Immediate past president of the Rhode Island Chapter, American Planning Association (RIAPA), Mr. Kelly also belongs to the Massachusetts Chapter, and he serves on Grow Smart Rhode Island's Advisory Council. He is one of the primary authors of the Massachusetts Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit, a lead facilitator for the Rhode Island KeepSpace program, and his work in Rhode Island has received three awards from RIAPA. He holds a master's degree in Urban and Environmental Policy from Tufts University.



we have a large array on the landfill in East Providence. That's a great use for that land. There may be brownfields, where residential, industrial or commercial development is too difficult or isn't economical, and that's also a great candidate for a solar array.

Of course, there are even parking areas. There, you see the free-standing solar panels that create energy and at the same time provide shade for the cars parked there.

THE BUILDER: So, people actually park under the solar panels?

KELLY: Yes. The clearance is 12 feet or so. They just drive right into the lot and park under the panels. It's a win-win. There's such a parking lot/solar array in Foxboro, Massachusetts, the "solar canopies" at Patriot Place.

THE BUILDER: There are four major solar farms in Rhode Island and 26 more are planned, according to the *Providence Journal*. Are we headed for solar sprawl?

KELLY: That's a distinct possibility. The way the (renewable energy) programs are structured now, my understanding is that they're very favorable toward what we call "greenfield development." In other words, development of solar farms on forested, open-space land.

That seems to be the path of least resistance now, and my understanding is that incentives are pushing that way from both the industry and programmatic perspectives. So, yes, we're in danger of solar sprawl.

THE BUILDER: Some of these solar farms are taking the place of hundreds of acres of forest, but others are popping up in residential areas where additional housing could be built. Can you suggest alternative siting strategies?

KELLY: Yes, I think commercial and industrial rooftops are the most preferable. As with any innovation, solar has been a long time coming, and the numbers are really starting to work when it comes to mid- and large-scale development of solar facilities.

With that in mind, we have to start asking questions: Where is this development appropriate, and where is it smart? And it's certainly smartest to site it on land that's already developed, particularly on rooftops. There are several large-scale solar farms on rooftops in Rhode Island now. So, it's not unheard-of, but it's not the path of least resistance, or the one that's most attractive from an economic standpoint.

It's also smart to use previously disturbed land. For example,

THE BUILDER: You mentioned "path of least resistance" twice. Who's doing the resisting?

KELLY: Maybe that wasn't the best choice of words, but there actually is some organized resistance now when it comes to the structure of the program. That's coming from municipalities and open-space advocates. Siting is the issue, and I've never heard anyone say they're against solar power and renewable energy.

Everyone, myself included, enters this argument saying: "We want as much renewable energy as we can get." That said, it doesn't mean that you go willy-nilly into the remaining forest lands of Rhode Island and just start hacking it down and putting up arrays.

It's a question of finance on the development side. Developers have to cover their costs, and they look for the best opportunities. With solar, there are many incentives attached. Currently, these incentives push developers toward greenfields.

THE BUILDER: What's the position of municipal planning and zoning authorities on solar-farm development? Is there any consistent statewide policy?

KELLY: There is an emerging, unified voice at this point. There's been a great deal of organization on this point by municipalities. Some of that has been done through the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Planning Association (RIAPA). Grow Smart Rhode Island has been involved.

The overarching policy has been pretty much what I've been saying: That everyone is very excited and enthusiastic about shifting to renewable energy, but they aren't willing to endorse that at the expense of farmland, forests and open space.

THE BUILDER: Has that policy been codified in any
see *INTERVIEW...next page*

INTERVIEW...from previous page

ordinances?

KELLY: South Kingstown has a solar ordinance, and North Kingstown does as well. In fact, the state Office of Energy Resources (OER) is working on a model local ordinance that all towns can tie into. RIAPA has offered assistance in drafting that.

One thing we're seeing, and this isn't a criticism, is that a developer of solar facilities, or another professional within the energy industry, will come forward with proposed regulatory language. The performance standards might be okay, but it may show absolutely no knowledge of the legal framework we have to work with in Rhode Island. Every state has its own set of zoning laws.

These folks are qualified to talk about solar, but they're not qualified to talk about zoning. But nothing has moved forward at this point.

THE BUILDER: We've talked off the record about the situation in California, where no one agency seems to be in charge of energy policy. Is there a guiding agency in Rhode Island that sets energy policy?

KELLY: OER has been at the forefront when it comes to setting policy. They are in communication with local planners when it comes to solar.

THE BUILDER: Where's the usual Rhode Island NIMBYism when it comes to solar farms, or is this just not being covered by the media?

KELLY: The only neighbor issue I've heard about was post-construction at one site, and had to do with site stormwater runoff.

THE BUILDER: The unintended environmental consequences of solar farms have been mentioned in other areas of the country, such as passing birds being vaporized by the thousands. Have you heard any talk about that in Rhode Island?

KELLY: We discussed an example of that outside Las Vegas, and when you have temperatures getting up to 120 degrees, that can happen. But I haven't heard of anything like that around here.

THE BUILDER: As these solar-farm projects develop, what other zoning or planning issues do you foresee?

KELLY: I'm interested to see how the state legislation evolves. I think it would be very unfortunate if the state got heavily involved in how local ordinances are written for this. Looking at where the state puts their "energy," and at the programs and incentives they have in place, this is where they should be concentrating, not in trying to manage local ordinances.

see KELLY...page 27

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NAHB: Shortages of framing lumber more widespread than ever

According to survey, shortfall is worst since 1994, when national trade association began tracking the numbers.

National Association of Home Builders

Shortages of framing lumber are now more widespread than at any time since the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) began tracking the issue in 1994, according to results from the May 2018 survey for the NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index.

More than 30 percent of single-family builders responding to the survey's special questions in May reported this shortage, outdistancing the other 22 listed building products and materials by a wide margin. In second place were trusses (with a shortage reported by 24 percent of builders), followed by lightweight steel and OSB (at 20 percent each) and plywood (at 19 percent).

The survey taken last year revealed a much better picture: The shortage percentages for these items were significantly lower –

21 percent for framing lumber and under 15 percent for all other products/materials.

It's probably not a coincidence that the top five items on the 2018 list are made of lumber or steel, as each of these building materials has been targeted by the Trump administration with new import tariffs over the past year.

As noted above, the May 2018 reading of 31 percent is the highest the shortage percentage for framing lumber has been since NAHB incorporated the question into its HMI survey in September 1994. The second-highest reading of 24 percent was recorded in October 2004, when the nation was in the midst of a housing boom and the annual rate of housing starts often exceeded 2 million (compared with the current rate of about 1.3 million).

Read more analysis from NAHB Senior Economist Paul Emrath at Eyeonhousing.org.

Meeting with the commerce secretary

Meanwhile, NAHB Chairman Randy Noel, CEO Jerry Howard and senior staff met one June 19th with Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross to discuss the growing problem of escalating lumber prices that are being exacerbated by tariffs on Canadian lumber imports into the U.S.


Following the meeting, Mr. Noel issued the following statement:

"Today, we discussed with Sec. Ross our mutual concern that lumber prices have risen sharply higher than the tariff rate would indicate, and that this is hurting housing affordability in markets across the nation. Rising lumber prices have increased the price of an average single-family home by nearly \$9,000 and added more than \$3,000 to the price of the average multifamily unit.

"We applaud Sec. Ross for acknowledging the gravity of this situation and expressing a willingness to look into the possibility that factors other than the tariff may be manipulating the market.

"We also encouraged the secretary to return to the negotiating table with Canada. It is essential that the two sides resume talks and hammer out a long-term solution to this trade dispute that will ensure U.S. home builders have access to a stable supply of lumber at reasonable prices to keep housing affordable for hard-working American families."

Find out more at NAHB.org.



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KELLY...from page 25

Many of us were surprised in 2017 when Gov. Gina Raimondo signed an executive order that we as a state were going to try and meet the targets of the Paris Agreement. That was great. But if that's the goal, it might be good to look at the development incentives that have been most successful since she took office. Perhaps additional items could be tacked on to incentivize more urbanized solar-farm development.

Again, it's about the incentives. I wouldn't expect developers to be interested in much less than that. They're investing, they're building the arrays, and they're following the incentives. That's completely reasonable. So, let's push the incentives to achieve a smarter approach.

THE BUILDER: With so many solar-farm developments in place or in planning, do you feel that all this has been thought through? Are we moving too quickly?

KELLY: I do think it's moving very fast. But my expertise is in zoning and planning, not solar as such.

However, I think there are reasons for the speed. Incentives have fallen in line, and the technology continues to advance at a rapid rate. Just like with flat-screen TVs and smart phones, things get cheaper and more advanced.

Rhode Island was a little bit behind the curve compared with, say, with a state like Massachusetts, which put out guidance and sample ordinance language a few years ago, trying to get ahead of

this. Maybe that's a function of them having a stronger economy and a bigger state. They saw more solar development, so they got out in front of it. Other states are doing a pretty good job with this, so there's no reason for us to reinvent the wheel.

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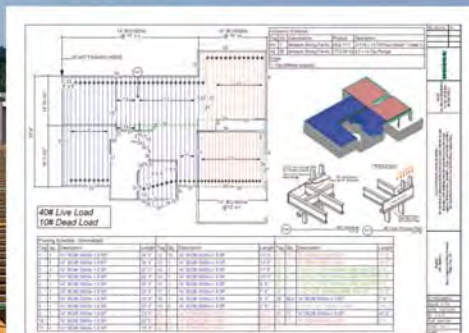
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'Co-living' could bring changes to zoning, housing design

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Necessity, as the old saying goes, is the mother of invention. And in this case, the invention might have profound implications for local zoning and for the design of some future housing.

The necessity: Finding a place to live as smaller households multiply and some municipalities balk at building more housing at higher densities. The invention: "co-living," an opportunity for developers that's probably coming to Rhode Island sometime soon.

While the idea of individuals sharing living quarters and the accompanying costs is nothing new, the concept in Rhode Island usually is limited to college students while they're in school, or to the occasional young professional until he or she can afford a place of their own. The co-living concept as it's now evolving envisions a more permanent arrangement.

The 175-unit "Quarters," one example of co-living, opened in Chicago's Fulton Market District in May, developed by the Germany-based Medici Living Group. Medici is the world's largest co-living provider, with other developments in Germany, the U.S. West Coast and New York.

The concept involves dormitory-style apartments meant to attract young professionals, entrepreneurs and millennials with all-inclusive, community-style housing and built-in networking



"Quarters," the Medici Living Group's new co-living development in Chicago. Photo Courtesy Medici Living Group

opportunities.

Apartments accommodate one to five people, with a kitchen, one or more bathrooms and furnished, move-in-ready bedrooms ranging from 77 to 198 square feet. Rents average \$1,600 per bedroom per month, but that includes utilities, wi-fi and Netflix. And it's much cheaper than single apartments in these high-cost urban areas. Rental contracts, at least in Medici's developments, can be as brief as three months, with an average stay of just over a year

company-wide, according to Gunther Schmidt, Medici's CEO.

It's all in the comfort of your own home or, rather, everyone's home.

"This new trend in living is not about a single room but about the whole experience," Mr. Schmidt said. "We not only offer an easy housing solution but also a community that shares similar ideas and passions. The networking opportunities are endless, and Quarters has weekly events to help build your social network."

The company has ambitious plans for more co-living developments in New York City and Long Island. While the company was mum when The Rhode Island Builder asked about specific plans it might have in Boston and Providence, Mr. Schmidt indicated that it won't be long before co-living comes to southern New England.

"We're seeing massive demand, and we're really reacting to that demand," he said. "I think you're going to see this expand in every city."

At first glance, Providence would seem the logical location for any new co-living development in Rhode Island. But because of the state's small size, developers probably would consider other communities as well.

At least initially, co-living could be a shock to the Rhode Island system, which includes many local zoning doctrines that date from the 1950s, along with a helping of institutionalized NIMBYism.

"Around here, there will have to be an entirely new learning curve on this," commented John Bentz of the Providence-based Property Advisory Group, a developer of workforce housing. "They're talking about communal living, communal baths. It's a whole different concept, and that can be hard to sell in Rhode Island."

Nathan E. Kelly, associate principal at the Horsley Witten Group's Providence office and immediate past president of the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Planning Association, was more optimistic.

"I think it's all good. We should be excited by the opportunities!" Mr. Kelly stated.

HOUSING...from page 21

- The Dept. of Health should produce a health-impact assessment about the affect affordable housing, or lack thereof, has on public health.

- The Special Legislative Commission to Study the LMIHA should be extended for the 2019 legislative year, and should further review municipal affordable-housing plans.

- The commission should hold a series of "on the road" meetings with local officials, planners, and educators from colleges and universities.

- Neighboring states should be included in the affordable-housing discussion with a view toward possible regional solutions.

- Since the affordable-housing shortage is a national problem too, there should be more federal input in the Rhode Island discussion.

Watch *The Rhode Island Builder* for more information as this issue develops.

GRANT PROGRAM...from page 1

are crumbling in older urban areas.

The MIGP is modeled after the highly successful MassWorks grant program in Massachusetts, which, on a competitive annual basis, funds municipal and other projects that support economic development and job growth.

Successful enactment of the MIGP legislation was a cooperative effort between the legislative leadership, especially Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio and House Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello; the Rhode Island Builders Association; Grow Smart Rhode Island; the environmental community, including the Environment Council of Rhode Island; the League of Cities and Towns, and other groups.

"Now that the law to establish this grant program has been enacted, the program is one step closer to reality," said RIBA Executive Officer John Marcantonio. "We thank the legislative leadership for spearheading support, and we look forward to working with lawmakers to get the program funded."

Housing advocates have called for 3,500 new dwelling units to meet projected demand over the next 10 years and to lower the currently out-of-reach housing prices.

"This can't be done unless existing drinking-water systems, sewers and storm-water systems are upgraded, and new ones built. Once in operation, this grant program will go a long way toward solving that problem," Mr. Marcantonio added.

MIGP would be different from the existing Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank, which concerns itself primarily with environmental projects and energy-efficiency programs. Specifically, MIGP grants would target "design, construction, building, land acquisition, rehabilitation, repair and other improvements to publicly-owned infrastructure including, but not limited to, sewers, utility extensions, streets, roads, curb-cuts, parking, water-treatment systems, telecommunications systems, transit improvements, and pedestrian ways."

Grants also would "assist municipalities to advance projects that support job creation and expansion, housing development and rehabilitation, community development projects in areas or districts that communities have determined are best suited to efficiently accommodate future growth


and redevelopment, largely in previously developed areas with some level of existing or planned infrastructure."

The law specifies that there will be at least one open solicitation period each year to accept and consider new applications.

Municipalities would be able to apply for grants singly or jointly. MIGP grants would supplement other local, state or federal financial assistance.

The measure (Senate Bill 2239 Sub A and House Bill 7102 Sub A) was sponsored in the Senate by Sens. Ryan W. Pearson (D-Cumberland), Adam J. Satchell (D-Warwick), Louis P. DiPalma (D-Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Tiverton), Dawn Euer (D-Newport, Jamestown) and James A. Seveney (D-Bristol, Portsmouth, Tiverton).

Bill sponsors in the House included Reps. John G. Edwards (D-Portsmouth, Tiverton), Kenneth J. Mendonca (R-Portsmouth, Middletown), Shelby Maldonado (D-Central Falls), Patricia A. Serpa (D-Warwick, Coventry, Warwick) and Kenneth A. Marshall (D-Bristol, Warren).


For more information, contact Executive Officer John Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400 or jmarcantonio@ribuilders.org. 

LEGISLATION...from page 2

tion process as well as the educational and experience standards for applicants seeking registration as professional land surveyors. The legislature passed these bills in concurrence on May 31st, and the governor signed the measure on June 4th.

House sponsors were Reps. Robert E. Craven Sr. (D-N. Kingstown), Jared R. Nunes (D-Coventry, W. Warwick), Carol Hagan McEntee (D-S.Kingstown, Narragansett) and Jason P. Knight (D-Barrington, Warren).

Senate sponsors were Sens. V. Susan Sosnowski (D-New Shoreham, South Kingstown), Erin Lynch Prata (D-Warwick, Cranston), Elizabeth A. Crowley (D-Central Falls, Pawtucket), Walter S. Felag Jr. (D-Bristol, Tiverton, Warren) and Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Barrington, Bristol, East Providence).

For more information on these bills, contact Executive Officer John Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400 or jmarcantonio@ribuilders.org. 


SKILLS...from page 19

events and/or students, please call (401) 641-4477 or e-mail the state SkillsUSA office at jklemp@skillsusari.org.

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For more details, go to: www.SkillsUSA.org. 

CLAMBAKE...from page 1

contests, events, prizes, food and drink. Each ticket includes two free beers. With over 600 people expected to attend, this is RIBA's premier social event of the year, and it just keeps growing!

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As always, great food will be featured throughout the day. Beginning at noon, there will be clam cakes and chowder, hot dogs, and little necks on the half shell. The traditional clambake at 5:30 will include steamers, barbecued chicken, brown bread, fish and all the fixings. Soda, beer and assorted drinks will be available all day. Soda and water are free, and there will be a cash bar.

Enjoy volleyball, horseshoes, basketball, the football toss, the insulation toss, the RIBA-invented sport of plywood throwing, and more! At the end of the day, enjoy awards and many door prizes. Once again, please consider a sponsorship! 

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