

A MEMBER'S GUIDE TO NAVIGATING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

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This information was current as of June 10, 2020.

DBR officials preview 'new normal' for contractors in RIBA podcast #2

The second of the Rhode Island Builders Association's News & Information Podcast series, RIBA's most recent member benefit, was posted on major podcast apps on May 29th.

Featuring Rhode Island Dept. of Business Regulation Director Elizabeth Tanner and Deputy Director Julietta Georgakis, this edition is entitled "COVID Update and the New Normal." RIBA Executive Officer John Marcantonio and podcast host Paul Eno interviewed the DBR officials about the latest COVID-19 jobsite safety requirements, and about what the residential construction industry can expect as the "new normal" going forward.

Members welcome the new podcasts.

see *PODCAST...* page 30



Dept. of Business Regulation Director Elizabeth Tanner, left, and Deputy Director Julietta Georgakis update RIBA members on COVID-19 guidelines and discuss the "new normal" for the residential construction industry in the latest RIBA News & Information Podcast.

RIBA sees contractor development, job training as key to employment recovery

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Expansion is the direction for the workforce development and contractor training programs as the Rhode Island Builders Association steps up to support not only the residential construction industry but to help the region recover from recent job losses.

That's the report from RIBA Executive Officer John Marcantonio as the association boosts these programs in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

"There has been a tremendous response to our

classes and training, both from members who want to expand their skill sets and from new people coming into the industry after job losses in other fields," Mr. Marcantonio said.

"As of June 2nd, participation in our continuing education classes is, and in some cases has exceeded, where it was before classes went online in March," Mr. Marcantonio said.

"There are people in our state whose jobs have gone away and who have an interest in joining our industry.

see *JOBS...* page 31

FEATURED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES FOR JUNE

Middle Section

Updated Member Benefit Guide

Pull-Out Section at Center

R.I. Bar Assn. honors Engustian

The Rhode Island Builder's Association's general counsel, Christine J. Engustian, has been honored by the Rhode Island Bar Association.

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What is the legal fallout from the pandemic?

The Rhode Island Builders Association's general counsel takes us through the legal implications of the COVID-19 crisis for contractors.

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Grads of RIBA job training are ready to work for you

COVID-19 can't stop RIBA's dynamic job-training programs. Recent and soon-to-be graduates of the carpentry, plumbing and electrical programs are ready for hiring!

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Multifamily design in flux?

What will the pandemic do to the design of multifamily housing in the age of social distancing?

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In the wake of COVID-19

Exodus from the cities, and permanent changes at the jobsite?

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

How might the COVID-19 crisis change the housing market and home buyers? Could there be a few silver linings for residential contractors?

According to a number of experts, the answers are yes and yes.

Among other things, builders have seen single-family home sales jump as renters (who can afford to) flee small urban apartments for the wide open spaces, according to CNBC real estate correspondent and Emmy Award-winning journalist Diana Olick.

"In the initial four weeks of the national shutdown, sales of newly built homes began falling precipitously, down 85 percent from



Face masks aren't the only precautions that might become semi-permanent on the jobsite. Photo by Steve Mason, courtesy LOPCO Contracting.

normal spring activity by the fourth week," Ms. Olick reported on April 28th.

In the two weeks before that, however, the numbers began to climb, according to Ms. Olick, who cited figures from John Burns Real Estate Consulting (JBRC), which tracks hundreds of builders nationwide.

"We're still down roughly 65 percent, but more positive news is coming out of the new home market, particularly for builders," Devyn Bachman, manager of research at JBRC, was quoted as saying in May.

Home sales nearly ground to a halt at the end of March, as the coronavirus pandemic forced an economic shutdown that scuttled open houses and shattered consumer confidence. Now, demand appears to be coming back, especially for newly built homes.

In her research, Ms. Bachman found demand for new construction heavily skewed toward renters, especially young couples

with two incomes who feel secure in their employment.

"We have experienced an increase in sales, as well as continued website engagement activity," Stephen Paul, executive vice president at Mid-Atlantic Builders, a small company that has communities in Maryland and Northern Virginia, was quoted as saying.

All three of those sales were for spec homes that were either completed or under construction for a quicker delivery. He added that his company rarely builds on speculation, "however I think buyers would rather just walk through a new home and buy it."

Paul said that Mid-Atlantic is now starting to plan more speculative homes.

Zillow, the nation's largest real estate listing site, reported last week a slight increase in overall search traffic after volume had dropped dramatically. Redfin, a real estate brokerage, also reported an increase potential buyer inquiries to agents.

While the overall numbers are still very low, the builders may recover first for several reasons, not the least of which is they appeal to the newly germophobic.

"It's safe, it's clean, it's new, and it's easy to show at this point," said Bachman. "Lots of the builders have set up virtual tours on their websites, the sales agents are setting appointments for consumers to come in and tour models in a safe distance manner.

see NEW NORMAL...page 30

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DEADLINE FOR THE AUGUST ISSUE

All copy, ads and photos must be to us by

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July 2020

♦ **Ongoing: Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) - Basic Carpentry** - Recruiting continues for a VESL class to begin in September. For details, contact Betty Bernal at (401) 500-9146 or bbernal@ribuilders.org, or register online at <https://ribuilders.org/vesl-training-program-details>. Current classes continue online.

🔧 ♦ **July 9th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Topic is Deck Building Specifics. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 14.*

🔧 ♦ **July 10th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Topic is Conflict Resolution in Construction. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 14.*

🔧 ♦ **July 13th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is Social Media and Digital Marketing. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 23.*

🔧 ♦ **July 14th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is the Rhode Island Energy Code. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 23.*

🔧 ♦ **July 16th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Topic is Residential Blueprint Reading. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 23.*

♦ **July 20th: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is "Does Your Website Have the WOW Factor?" Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 25.*



🔧 ♦ **July 21st: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is the Rhode Island General Law for Building Codes. *Details on page 23.*

♦ **July 23rd: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Topic is Residential Estimating. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 24.*


🔧 ♦ **July 24th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Topic is Blower Door and Air Leakage Testing. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 24.*


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 continuing education credits. Contact RIBA for confirmation.


  **July 24th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Topic is Understanding Your Construction Business. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 24.*

  **July 27th: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is Building Planning. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 24.*

 **July 29th: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is "Start and Grow Your Construction Business" Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 25.*

 **July 30th and 31st: OSHA 10-Hour Course** - 7:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day. Taught via Zoom. Course is FREE for members and their employees, \$125 for non-members. For more information and to register, contact Elise Geddes, egeddes@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 25.*

April 2021

 **April 8th-11th: 70th Annual Rhode Island Home Show, Featuring the Rhode Island Flower & Garden Show and The Energy Expo** - Call (401) 438-7400 or e-mail homeshow@ribuilders.org. *Details on page 9 and at RIBAHomeShow.com.*

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Timothy A. Stasiunas

President's Message

Secret to success: Be unique

Just a few short months ago, my thoughts were about how, nationwide and here in Rhode Island, the economy was by all accounts doing better than most of us have seen in a long time. There were certainly pockets geographically and individual sectors that weren't as robust as they could have been, but all in all we were doing pretty well.

Keeping that in mind: Historically, the economy ebbs and flows over time, so my feeling was that the good times wouldn't last forever. Fast forward just a few months, and here we are in what I would call mid-coronavirus. We certainly are starting to see some light at the end of the tunnel.

As I write this in the last week of May, some businesses have begun to open up. In fact, as of June 1st, restaurants will be open for limited seating. I hope that by the time you read this in early July, we'll be in "Phase Three," as it's being referred to, and on our way to fully opened businesses.

One thing I do know is that it's going to be different. I'm not completely sure how, but with the current rate of un-employment and chances that a good portion of those jobs may not come back, we may be in for some tough sledding in the months ahead.

Knowing that the economy is cyclical, and having been blindsided by it myself sometimes over the years, I've tried to set myself apart from what the other guy is doing. How do I stand out in the crowd of my peers?

One advantage you and I already have is that we're members of the Rhode Island Builders Association. By being part of our

organization, we're telling potential clients that our standards are higher than the next guy's, and that's a big plus! For nearly 75 years, RIBA has set its members apart from the average contractor.

But there has to be more. You need to do something better or different than everyone else. When talking with friends, neighbors or business associates, your clients need to convey that you did what no other contractor does or that you did it better. Now we all know the basics of good customer service: Being responsive to a potential customer goes a long way. Knowing your business inside and out, selling yourself and not just the product or service you provide. Yes, price is important too. But if you're ahead of the pack, customers will see the value if you charge a little more than the next guy.

But the real key to survival and future success is specializing in what you do or sell. It doesn't matter what you do: If you're a painting contractor, find something in that field that you can be unique at. I'm sure that if you put some research into it, there's some angle that will put you at the top of the heap. If you're a carpenter, maybe some specialty framing or finish work will set you apart.

For me, being in the site business (which everybody and their brother is) I got away from working for general contractors and focused on alternative septic system design, installation and maintenance. That has served me well over the years, along with our building development business, allowing me to create my own work rather than relying on someone else to keep me busy.

The important thing is, start now while there's time, and don't wait until the last minute. Find out how you can set yourself apart. Whether it's a service you provide or a product you sell, be unique and be the best, you're already ahead of the game with RIBA by your side.



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For most RIBA members:

Clients are adapting to the 'new normal'

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

How are members of the Rhode Island Builders Association coping with the “new normal” as summer gets into full swing?

The term “getting used to it,” probably sums it up.



Jesse Maynard

“We are finding that most homeowners are getting used to the new ‘norm’ and understand it will be like this for a while,” reports Jesse Maynard of Maynard Construction BRC Inc.

“We’ve noticed that homeowners are becoming more accepting of us in their homes. What’s helping most and keeping the homeowners comfortable is excessive communication,” Mr. Maynard explained. “They want to know what’s going on and who will be in their home.”

Communication is always key in any relationship with a client, according to Mr. Maynard, but now it’s paramount.

“I feel this is becoming more necessary for homeowners to remain comfortable and eager moving forward.”



Thomas E. D'Angelo

Experiencing a different twist on the health situation is Thomas E. D'Angelo of Terry Lane Co. / Progressive Realty Group.

“Since my jobsites are outside, with no close contact and relatively few people, it’s business as usual,” said Mr. D'Angelo, who does a great deal of work with surveyors, excavation and septic systems.

“The problem is trying to meet with town or state people with questions when they're working from home or allowing no admittance (to their offices). Deed research availability has delayed many land surveys,” he added.

Even as the pandemic seemed to be subsiding in early June, industry commentators predicted that the jobsite precautions it

prompted would be with us for the foreseeable future.

“From a renewed emphasis on jobsite safety to longer project-delivery times...the virus has upended many facets of the industry. Companies that try to return to a business-as-usual mentality will face a harsh new reality,” Joseph Natarelli, leader of Marcum LLP’s national Construction Industry Group, said.

According to Mr. Natarelli, there will be eight major areas of change, including:

- Making jobsites cleaner and safer;
- Continued distancing, and the use of technology to communicate at a distance with clients and some employees;
- Projects will take longer;
- Telecommuting will be the norm for those who can do it;
- The influence of labor unions will grow;
- Demands for certain kinds of building and remodeling projects will change (fewer hospitality centers and more health-care facilities, for example);
- Recalibration of supply chains back to the United States;
- Off-site building, such as modular homes, will become more desirable.

Share your own thoughts and experiences about the health crisis and the new normal with your fellow RIBA members: Contact the editor at builder@newriverpress.com or pfe@newriverpress.com or call (401) 527-5345.



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Officials: No major delays in reviews, inspections

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

"We are not having any timing issues with permit applications or reviews."

That's the report from Tiverton Building Official William L. Moore, who stressed that the town is using e-permitting.

"We are using the ViewPoint Cloud portal for permitting. The only reason permits take time to be issued is when applicants don't submit enough information in order for us to review the project. It is a problem constantly!" Mr. Moore said.

"We need plans for almost anything that requires a permit, except for roofs and windows. We also need some type of site plan for most other building permits. Applicants should always submit a site plan, and construction plan for all permits no matter how small the project. If you do not, you will most certainly stop at zoning review or building review," he added.

Tiverton is the most recent Rhode Island municipality to adopt e-permitting, in November 2018.

As *The Rhode Island Builder* speaks with building officials around the state, the issue of not enough information from applicants is a frequent theme.

Meanwhile, the State Building Office, a new arm of the Dept. of Business Regulation (DBR), continues to monitor the issue of permitting and inspections.

"I can't say enough about how proud I am of the Building Office and of how quickly they adjusted to the COVID crisis," said DBR Director Elizabeth Tanner. "When it came to e-permitting, we were weeks ahead of every other state. We didn't miss a beat."

Such was not the case in all municipalities, however.

"There were certain municipalities that were a bit slowed up until they figured things out," Ms. Tanner said. "But with e-permitting and the ability to process what needs to be done on the Web, it's been remarkable, and I'm very impressed with the staff."

If you are having issues with permitting, reviews or other processes, contact the Rhode Island Builders Association at (401) 438-7400.



Engustian honored

Christine J. Engustian, Esq., general counsel of the Rhode Island Builders Association, has been honored with the Victoria M. Almeida Servant Leader Award from the Rhode Island Bar Association.

The award is presented "to an individual who demonstrates the principles and values of servant leadership and who is a beacon of light and hope to others by illuminating the path to greater justice for all. A servant leader is one who puts the needs of an organization or others before oneself. A servant leader has the innate quality of wanting to serve others and, for that reason, takes the care to ensure the needs of others are met," a statement said.




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- Up to 3 of your own Facebook posts will be shared by the RI Home Show's Facebook page May 2020 – April 2021
- A new exhibitor directory will be developed on RIBAHomeShow.com which will categorize exhibitors by industry and service-type. Each exhibitor will have the opportunity to provide a brief description, as well as social media handles for their directory listing and promote your show specials
- The website floor plan will transition to a new interactive floor plan that will allow users to interact with each exhibitor's booth space and learn more about the services, products and promotions that you will be offering at the show.

For those exhibitors moving forward to the RI Home Show in 2021, and who want to be a part of the exhibitor social media campaign, please contact Robert Yoffe at 781.639.5200 or email bob@yoffeexpo.com to secure your participation. Then, visit ribahomeshow.com/program to fill out the form to begin.

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Member Profile: Paul F. Eno of New River Press

He was going to be a priest

In October 1990, the Rhode Island Builders Association's then-executive director, Ross Dagata, hired a moonlighting *Providence Journal* news editor to temporarily write for and edit RIBA's monthly news magazine, *The Rhode Island Builder Report*.

"I guess RIBA is still checking me out," quips Paul F. Eno nearly 30 years later.

Today, after 355 issues and two national awards, Paul's name is still on the magazine's masthead and his byline on most of the articles. In fact, the Connecticut native has always been an independent contractor for RIBA, with his work as magazine editor so engrossing that he soon left the ProJo to start his own media company, New River Press, with RIBA providing 85 percent of the company's work to this day. And he's one of the association's most visible members, present at virtually every RIBA meeting and event, camera and notebook in hand.

"I've missed one RIBA Board of Directors meeting in 29 years, and that was when I had the flu," Paul recalls.

But there's a lot more to Paul's background than a quick switch from community journalism to covering residential construction issues. For one thing, he was supposed to have been a priest.

"I entered the Roman Catholic seminary at the age of 14, when you could still do that," he remembers. "I spent the next eight years in seminaries, graduating on the college level."

But there were clouds on the horizon. Parallel with Paul's seminary training was an unauthorized foray into paranormal research, beginning in 1970. Complicating issues was the fact that he switched from the Roman Catholic to the Eastern Orthodox Church in 1975, continuing his studies for the priesthood at an Orthodox seminary near New York City. While the Catholic seminary faculty had tolerated Paul's paranormal studies and, on occasion, supported him, the Orthodox seminary faculty didn't want to hear it. So, out the seminary door Paul went, involuntarily, in 1977, about two years before he would have been ordained.

"I dusted myself off and turned to the only other thing I knew how to do – write," Paul says.

He did some graduate work at Trinity College in Hartford, then



Paul Eno covers the 2016 RIBA Clambake at Francis Farm, Rehoboth, Mass. He had been up in a boom lift, taking aerial photos of the event.

put a few articles he had published in church newspapers into a portfolio, sending it to virtually every newspaper in New England.

"I had never taken a journalism course in my life, and the only paper that even admitted I existed was the *Pawtuxet Valley Daily Times* (now the *Kent County Daily Times*) in West Warwick."

Ted Holmberg, *The Times*'s Perry White-ish editor, liked a sample article Paul wrote, and hired him as a reporter.

"I soon learned that editors considered *The Times* the worst daily newspaper in New England. I only got in because I ducked through the revolving door."

But the plucky Paul made a go of journalism, becoming managing editor of the Smithfield-based *Observer* newspaper group in 1980, then moving to the *Journal* in 1984.

A busy guy, Paul had a third parallel life as a military reservist. He did some service that he can't discuss, took a hiatus, then ended up in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, where he did a great deal of active duty on account of his unusual skill set. Because of federal law, the ProJo had to keep his job open while he was deployed in 1984, heading an intelligence photographic team in the Caribbean in the wake of Operation Urgent Fury, the invasion of Grenada.

And 2020 isn't only Paul's 30th anniversary as editor of this magazine. It's his 50th anniversary as a "paranormal adventurer," as he calls it. He has written eight books on the subject and lectures, with his son Ben, all over America and in Europe. You've probably seen him on the History, Discovery and Travel Channels, and you may even have heard his radio show, "Behind the Paranormal with Paul & Ben Eno," on the air since 2008 and carried by CBS Radio from 2009-2014. It's now based at WOON AM & FM in Woonsocket, with an estimated 3 million global listeners.

Paul also has a thing for New England history and has written two books on that subject. In fact, his *Rhode Island: A Genial History*, co-authored with Channel 12's Glenn Laxton, is used in several school districts.

"But I found a true home in RIBA, among honorable people I'm proud to be associated with," Paul says.

Each month for the last 30 years, he has covered RIBA events, followed and researched residential construction industry issues and legislation, interviewed the movers and shakers, edited every article, and done full design and layout for the magazine every month.

Does Paul have retirement plans?

"No way," he says. "My predecessor, the legendary Norman Medrech, also a ProJo alumnus, ran the magazine until he was 86. So, I have 19 more years to go."

New River Press

Principal: Paul F. Eno

RIBA member since: 1996

Focus: Magazines, books, television, radio

Founded: 1990

Based: Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Professional Women in Building : PWB NEWS

Happy Independence Day from your PWB Council!

We look forward to seeing you this fall. Stay well and be safe.



Smithfield Plumbing Networking Event

Fall 2020 Date TBD

PWB Officers

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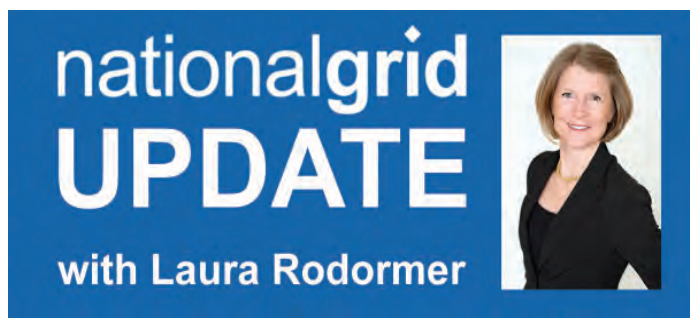
Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH), a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to preserving, creating and sustaining affordable, healthy homes, plans to develop a new, ultra energy-efficient, four-story, 30-unit, affordable housing apartment building at 200 Gordon Street in Providence.

The project team, which includes Providence-based Union Studio Architecture & Community Design and Petersen Engineering, is aiming to achieve PHIUS+ certification (PHIUS.org) for this project.

Passive house is a voluntary standard for energy efficiency in a building, resulting in ultra-low energy buildings that require little energy for space heating or cooling. Passive House Institute U.S. (PHIUS+) is the largest Passive Building Certification in North America. It is a well-recognized design and construction standard and quality assurance system.

The project was recently approved for funding from Rhode Island Housing, enabling the project team to proceed with finalizing their design and to begin construction. The project goals including being fossil fuel-free, using air-source heat pumps and heat pump water heaters, and having PV (solar) to bring the project as close as possible to Net Zero.

National Grid will support this project in a variety of ways including providing incentives for the building's overall energy performance; for the installation of high-efficiency heating, cooling and hot water equipment; and for achieving Energy Star Homes®, DOE Zero Energy Ready and PHIUS+ certification.



National Grid's Residential New Construction (RNC) program team, comprised of Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Raters, Certified Passive House Consultants and Passive House Verifiers, will provide free training and verification services through its Zero Energy Pilot.

The Pilot was launched in 2018 with a goal to support the increase in zero energy buildings in Rhode Island.

The project team aims to begin construction in September 2020 and be ready for occupancy by early 2022. National Grid's RNC team will coordinate educational tours of this project while under construction and will develop a series of case studies highlighting the key design and construction features.

For more information about this project, or to learn more about National Grid's RNC Program and Zero Energy Pilot please contact (888) 887-8841.



From the Board of Directors

RIBA steps up with job training

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

"With the historically high unemployment we're having, workforce training is going to be a huge priority" for the Rhode Island General Assembly.

That was the word from William Walsh, the Rhode Island Builders Association's government affairs representative, as the RIBA Board of Directors held its first-ever online meeting via Zoom, on June 2nd. There were 30 participants.

Mr. Walsh's comment comes at a time when RIBA has already been working for many months to establish itself as the lead-

ing provider of job training for the residential construction industry in southeastern New England, according to Executive Officer John Marcantonio

"When the call came from the Dept. of Labor and Training to help prepare unemployed people for new careers in our industry, we were already set up to provide that," Mr. Marcantonio said.

When the pandemic hit, the association's Contractor Development Program, as well as the job training in carpentry, electrical and plumbing, made the required transition to online classes within two weeks.

"The enrollment keeps growing every

month," he told the board.

He emphasized that the effort to meet the unemployment challenge is collaborative among RIBA and its industry partners.

He also stressed that RIBA's first priority as the pandemic began was to keep member companies up and running by, among other things, convincing state leaders to declare residential construction essential.

Mr. Marcantonio also provided a complete report on RIBA's status, which is very positive, though the traditional summer events will not take place because of crowd limits.

For details, call (401) 438-7400.





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Though classes have temporarily moved to Zoom online conferencing (see page 1), the Rhode Island Builders Association continues the Contractor Training Program in July, expanding its educational offerings for members and their employees! Call for details and to register, contact RIBA Professional Development Manager Robert Salvas at (401) 438-7400 or e-mail bsalvas@ribuilders.org.

Continuing Education

Courses headlined in **RED** on The RIBA Contractor Training Pages qualify for 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, and must provide class certificates as evidence of completion.

5 Credit Hours:

Deck Building Specifics

July 9th

WHEN: Thursday, July 9th, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Mike Guertin to learn about flashing a deck ledger; deck stair codes and building details; along with site-built underdeck drainage system and manufactured system overview.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



***As an added benefit
to RIBA's Education Program,
our instructors are happy to speak
with class attendees by phone,
after class, if they have
additional questions
or issues to discuss.***
***For information, contact Bob Salvas,
bsalvas@ribuilders.org
or call (401) 438-7400.***

2 Credit Hours:

Conflict Resolution in Construction

July 10th

WHEN: Friday, July 10th, 8 to 10 a.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Taught by Jeff Deckman, this course will give you the tools to limit unproductive conflicts, resolve conflicts, and maximize your ability to keep your teams focused and working together.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



***RIBA reserves the right
to limit the number of attendees
from a single company
at courses taught on-site.***

***For information, contact Bob Salvas,
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RIBA MEMBER BENEFIT GUIDE

RIBuilders.org

Comprehensive RIBA Member Benefits

- Member Solution Services
- Complimentary Education Programs
- Workforce / Trade Training for Employees
- Vital Information Resources
- Legislative Advocacy at State House
- Monthly Magazine
- Business Marketing Opportunities
- Full-Service Insurance Agency
- Member to Member Referrals
- Medical and Dental Plans
- Complimentary Jobsite Safety Service
- Discounts and Rebates
- Social Events and Networking



Find Work/Hire Members

Services include member-to-member referrals, the new and improved RIBAlist.com consumer website, the huge, consumer-based Rhode Island Home Show, held every year since 1948, and the annual *Membership Directory and Buyer's Guide*.

Complimentary Education! (Thousands \$ in value)

Online or in person, our contractor education programs are some of the best association based programs in the country and are designed for your professional development—they are always tuition free! Classes and seminars are given monthly for both owners and their employees. Subject matters include codes, safety, estimating and so much more! Most classes are also eligible for Rhode Island continuing-education credits. MA education credits are also available.

Workforce / Trade Training for Employees (Thousands \$ in value!)

As a member of RIBA, you can send current or prospective employees to trade training. Upskill your current workforce or enroll them in a 26 week pre-apprentice training before you hire them. With 6 locations and Spanish speaking options, this trade training program is one of the best in the Federation — Carpentry, Electrical, and HVAC / Plumbing available.

Complimentary Safety Services

RIBA has a complimentary Safety Service that includes jobsite visits to guide members toward proper workforce-safety procedures, OSHA compliance and lower insurance rates. This is a totally confidential service, and it can save you thousands of dollars!



From RIBA's Executive Officer

Dear Members of the Rhode Island Builders Association:

Please take the time to pull this special Member Benefit Guide out of the magazine or, if you're getting this as a new member, be sure to keep it as your designated resource to quickly reference and recognize everything you have available to you at RIBA.



From the complimentary educational services for you and your employees, the new Safety Service, trade training programs for new hires, networking, business referrals, legislative advocacy and member solution-services, your trade association is structured to help you with every aspect of your business.

Our goal is to make it easier than ever to understand what's included in your membership. So, when you have a chance, give us a call – we'll get you connected to the services we have that can help protect you, make you money, improve your knowledge, keep you safe, and help your business thrive!

I also need your help with a larger cause. Please share this message with your industry colleagues and ask them to join! Our services, advocacy and industry-leading resources depend on membership. With so much to offer, our mission is to reach out and serve. Helping someone join is easy, just have them call the office at (401) 438-7400 and we will take it from there!

Thanks again for being a member, for being a part of this thriving, 70 year old resource, and for allowing us to serve your needs. Please always feel free to call us with any issue, as we are always here for you!

All my best,

John Marcantonio *Executive Officer*

Vital Information Resources

Members stay in the know with information they can only find through RIBA, including the award-winning, monthly Rhode Island Builder magazine; update e-mails from Executive Officer John Marcantonio, national updates from the National Association of Home Builders, member podcasts and so much more! This is a true advantage in the marketplace!

Solution Services

Industry-based professionals are available to find answers for you and to help you with your most troubling issues – from permitting, to new-regulations compliance, to financing resources, the solutions staff at RIBA gives you peace of mind and lets you know that you're not alone out there!

Insurance & Bonding

RIBA has its own full-service, in-house insurance agency – The Builders Insurance Group (BIG). Members will find a rewarding service experience, trusted advice on insurance products, and the knowledge that the resources of this RIBA subsidiary go toward helping the industry.

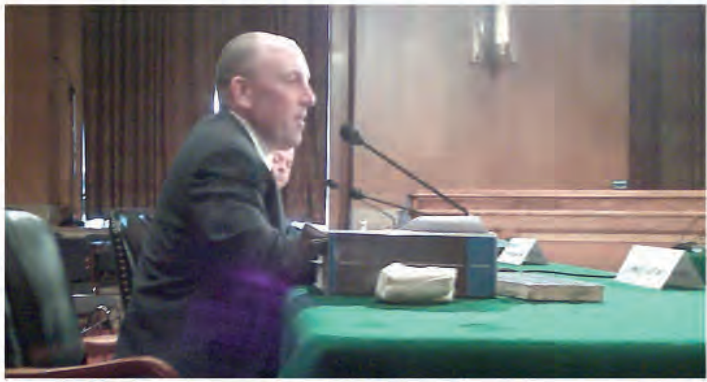


Medical & Dental Plans for You and Your Employees

Speaking of insurance, RIBA offers complete health and dental plans for you and your employees. The dental plans, in particular, are the best available when it comes to cost. RIBA has its own pool and its own rate.

**To access member resources,
please call us today 401.438.7400.**

RIBuilders.org



Powerful Legislative Advocacy

RIBA represents you locally, at the State House and on the federal level with all things regulatory, and with very effective political lobbying. We track every bill that affects you, and we put in legislation to help the state's housing needs. Feel free to join our committees, get updates on bills, and advocate with the executive officer on key legislation.



Socialize, Network & Enjoy!

RIBA has events! Take advantage of big, fun events like our Annual Clambake, Golf Classic, monthly network events, Christmas parties, cookouts, annual meeting.... And if you like to socialize, and make this your focus, just let us know.

Save Money Every Day

With your dual membership in RIBA and NAHB, enjoy over 20 different programs that give discounts and rebates on products you use every day. The Member Rebate Program pays thousands of dollars a year to builders for products they already buy. The Member Advantage program offers discounts on major national products and services that can save you a bundle.

Money-saving discounts that benefit you, your business and your family nahb.org/Savings

SAVINGS

To access member resources, please call us today 401.438.7400.
or e-mail Elise at egeddes@ribuilders.org



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In fact, bulletproof shields are made of acrylic. That's how durable RDI outdoor



railings are. Transform truly is railing redefined! Several stock configurations are available as complete kits. Talk to us at FINETCO for full kit options, or mix and match components to create a custom look to Transform your client's deck. Check out Transform Railing Systems at Coventry Lumber and our affiliates. Remember: At FINETCO, "one simple call does it all!"

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2½ Credit Hours:
*Social Media
and Digital Marketing*
July 13th

WHEN: Monday, July 13th, 8 to 10:30 a.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor David Englund for this course, which will provide guidance on how to use social media platforms to grow your construction business.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



5 Credit Hours:
*Residential
Blueprint Reading*
July 16th

WHEN: Thursday, July 16th, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This course will provide students with an introduction to the area of residential blueprint reading, construction documents/calculations, and project specifications.

During this course, students will learn to read the legend, details, specifications, effectively use a scale ruler and find the different trade sections of blueprints/drawings in order to perform work required.

The instructor is Carlos Lora.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



2½ Credit Hours:
*Rhode Island
Energy Code*
July 14th

WHEN: Tuesday, July 14th, 8 to 10:30 a.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This class covers Chapter 11 of the Rhode Island One and Two Family Dwelling Code, with a detailed look into the effects of the Energy Code.

Past Rhode Island State Building Commissioner Jack Leyden is the instructor.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



2½ Credit Hours:
*Rhode Island General Law
for Building Codes*
July 21st

WHEN: Tuesday, July 21st, 8 to 10:30 a.m.
WHERE: Online via Zoom
COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Instructor Jack Leyden will provide an overview of how codes are adopted in Rhode Island, and cover general laws that apply to building codes.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



For RIBA
membership information
contact Elise Geddes

401-438-7400 • or egeddes@ribuilders.org



RIBA Contractor Training

5 Credit Hours:

Residential Estimating

July 23rd

WHEN: Thursday, July 23rd, 8 to 1 p.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Taught by Carlos Lora, this will be an extension of the Blueprint Reading class. *See page 23.* The course will cover basic construction math and how it is used to estimate the labor and material costs of a residential construction project.

Knowledge of blueprint reading is advised (or completion of the Residential Blueprint Reading class).

You must pre-register for this class. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



2 Credit Hours:

Understanding Your Construction Business Model

July 24th

WHEN: Friday, July 24th, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

In order to grow a business to the next level, you need a good understanding of your business model. This class with instructor Bill Cunningham will discuss the nine building blocks to a repeatable and scalable business.

There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



2 Credit Hours:

Blower Door and Air Leakage Testing

July 24th

WHEN: Friday, July 24th, 8 to 10 a.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Rhode Island's building code requires all new homes and some remodeling projects to be tested for air leakage. Learn when the test can be done, how it is done, and how to prepare for it.

The instructor is Jeremy Dagold

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



2½ Credit Hours:

Building Planning

July 27th

WHEN: Monday, July 27th, 8 to 10:30 a.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This class will cover chapter 3 of the one-family and two-family dwelling code. We will be covering items such as design criteria, minimum fire separation for town houses and two-family dwellings, lighting, ventilation and flood hazard construction.

Jack Leyden is the instructor.

You must pre-register for this class. There will be no admittance to the Zoom session without pre-registration. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



For RIBA
membership information contact Elise Geddes
401-438-7400 • or egeddes@ribuilders.org

OSHA-10 Course

July 30th - 31st

WHEN: Thursday and Friday, July 30th and 31st, 7:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees, \$125 for non-members.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before first class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This is a 10-hour class, held over two days. The course is geared to train safety directors, job foremen and field employees in OSHA construction standards. It highlights the areas of major safety concerns, with the intent to reduce accidents on the job site, saving time and money.

Each person completing the course will receive a copy of the OSHA Standard 29 CFR Part 1926 and an OSHA-10 certification card. Every person working on a municipal or state construction project with a total project cost of \$100,000 or more must have card certifying their completion of an OSHA 10-Hour training



**Additional Classes
Offered by RIBA this Month**

Deadline to register is one day before class.
For more information and to register: Contact Bob Salvas
at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

program on their person at all times while work is being performed.

According to the requirement, the rule applies to "any private person or entity bound by a contractual agreement to provide goods or services to a contractor/developer who must physically enter the place where work is being performed or business is being conducted."

This does not apply to sales representatives, vendors, or to those delivering building materials and supplies/products to a construction site. (Fines can range from \$250 to \$950 per offense, on each day in which a violation occurs.)

You must pre-register for this course. Non-member payment is due upon registration.

Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



Does Your Website Have the WOW factor? July 20th

WHEN: Monday, July 20th, 8 to 10:30 a.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor David Englund and learn the powerful "must-have tools" of improving engagement on your website to gain the homeowner customers you want.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants will receive instructions on how to log in to the Zoom session. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



Start and Grow Your Construction Business July 29th

WHEN: Wednesday, July 29th, 8 to 10:30 a.m.

WHERE: Online via Zoom

COST: FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One day before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Bob Salvas at bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

If you're looking to start your own business or perhaps re-start your business after the health crisis, this class with instructor David Lucier will cover all aspects of successful business ownership. It's a must for those who don't have a lot of business experience.

You must pre-register for this course. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



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Award-Winning Monthly Magazine of The Rhode Island Builders Association

Christine A. Engustian

General Counsel of the Rhode Island Builders Association

Christine J. Engustian is a graduate of the College of the Holy Cross and Boston University School of Law. She is admitted to practice law in Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New York, and in the United States District Court for the District of Rhode Island, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court (Mashantucket, Connecticut) and Mohegan Gaming Disputes Court (Uncasville, Connecticut). In 2009, Ms. Engustian became the first Rhode Island lawyer to earn the designation of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Accredited Professional (AP) from the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). She has been RIBA's general counsel since 2012, the first woman to hold this position, while continuing to run her own law practice. Active in the Rhode Island Bar Association, Ms. Engustian was recently honored with that group's Victoria M. Almeida Servant Leader Award. See page 8.



THE BUILDER: What legal considerations should residential contractors be aware of during the COVID-19 crisis?

ENGUSTIAN: The contractors need to be very mindful of the requirements and safety procedures imposed by the state for conducting their businesses during the COVID-19 crisis. They will be held to those requirements and, consequently, will potentially open themselves or their businesses to liability if injuries or damages result from the failure to comply.

Therefore, the contractors need to read every instruction and requirement set forth by the state as it relates to the construction industry and implement all necessary measures.

They should also check with the local municipalities in which they are working to make certain there are not additional mandates, through mayoral or council orders, that have been imposed upon them as contractors.

THE BUILDER: Are you aware of any legal issues that have arisen for contractors in this scenario?

ENGUSTIAN: No, I am not aware of any particular legal issues other than compliance with the orders set forth by state government on the manner in which contractors are to perform their work.

THE BUILDER: How are real estate transactions being affected? Closings?

ENGUSTIAN: Purchases and sales of property, and other real estate transactions such as a refinancing, have continued through the pandemic. Attorneys are taking measures to protect themselves, their staff, their clients and other parties to a transaction by following guidelines of wearing masks and gloves, keeping appropriate

distances from participants to a transaction, sanitizing conference rooms, etc.

There does not seem to be any "slowdown" in that area.

THE BUILDER: From a legal standpoint, do you see a "new normal" shaping up? Or will the old normal eventually return?

ENGUSTIAN: I think it's highly likely, if not inevitable, that some of the virtual platforms that have been utilized during the pandemic for court hearings or for municipal board hearings will continue in certain types of cases or circumstances after the COVID-19 crisis ends.

In addition, because of time and efficiency considerations, driving distances and the like, more professionals, including attorneys, may regularly seek to use telephonic or virtual alternatives to in-person meetings.

THE BUILDER: What's your general message to contractors on the legal front?

ENGUSTIAN: My general message to contractors is to take it upon themselves to learn of and comply with all state-imposed requirements for operating their businesses during this COVID-19 crisis and to check continuously with the Dept. of Business Regulation for any updates or changes to those requirements so they may not be caught unaware and suffer any negative consequences.

In addition, I strongly encourage every contractor who is not yet a member of the Rhode Island Builders Association to join immediately. RIBA does an outstanding job in keeping contractors informed of all relevant issues for the success of their businesses and, with the COVID-19 crisis, RIBA has not only successfully advocated that the construction industry be deemed a provider of essential services (and thereby allowed to operate), but it has also been the constant source of information for contractors on state-imposed protocols for operating their businesses and performing their work.

THE BUILDER: What does RIBA's general counsel do, and how does it benefit members?

ENGUSTIAN: My role as RIBA's general counsel is essentially to serve as its trusted legal advisor. I provide legal advice, counselling and services to RIBA on all matters relating to the operation of the association, but my work assignments are mostly driven by present issues facing RIBA and that have been identified as priorities by the CEO, John Marcantonio.

The benefit to RIBA's members is that there is a legal advisor guiding the association on matters of import to the residential construction industry and the trade association that directly serves contractors.

Job training, VESL looking ahead

While it's too early to say just when students in the Rhode Island Builders Association's job training programs will get back to the actual classrooms in Woonsocket, Chariho, East Providence, Warwick and Central Falls, the classes continue via live teleconference, and they continue to grow.

"We have many graduates from programs that wrapped up during the second week of March, and they're ready to work!" said Cheryl Boyd, the Rhode Island Builders Association's director of workforce programs.

The graduates come from training in all three of the trade courses, along with the Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) program.

Each course involves 200 Hours of training over 26 weeks, following the curriculum from the Home Builders Institute (HBI), the education arm of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

Training includes manufacturer demonstrations, employability skills, OSHA 10 certification, Lead Safe RRP training/certification, basic first aid training, and the awarding of a tool kit upon completion of the courses.



From left, job-training students do window-install prep and concrete in Chariho, and plumbing and HVAC instruction in Woonsocket.

Resumés are posted at RCWPJobs.com, and employers who haven't already done so can sign up for a free account.

"Every employer should be posting job openings on the site," Ms. Boyd added.

To learn more, contact Elise Geddes at RIBA, (401) 438-7400 or e-mail egeddes@ribuilders.org.

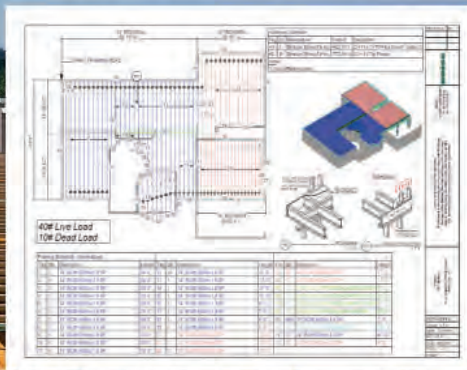
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What will COVID-19 do to multifamily housing design?

National Association of Home Builders

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced residents to look at a number of their everyday experiences — including the way they live.

In residences such as single-family homes or townhomes, residents may be looking to incorporate spaces such as home offices and exercise rooms to be able to remain productive while safely in-place. In multifamily developments, however, there are additional components to consider when attempting to follow important health guidelines.

The areas of real change will occur based on two components: health and safety protocols, and consumer demands. Building codes may dictate some changes for the former, while the latter may affect more of the design and functionality of living spaces. In many cases, health and wellness trends will accelerate what was already occurring in the market — whether it’s a rise or a decline.

For example, traditional clubhouses had already been going through changes in multifamily developments, and because of the need for social distancing — especially in large open spaces — that trend will likely continue as those spaces are reworked to something more functional and more intimate, observed Chris Lessard, president and CEO of Lessard Design International.

“Clubhouses were purely social,” he noted. “That has already changed to be smaller, more intimate workspaces.”

see MULTIFAMILY...page 30



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CommonWealth Builder Program is open for business

With the Bay State seemingly on the good side of the COVID-19 crisis, MassHousing reminds developers that the Commonwealth Builder Program (CWBP) is open for business.

CWBP is a \$60 million fund intended to spur the construction of single-family homes and condominiums that are affordable to households with moderate incomes, particularly in communities of color. CWBP:

- Provides subsidies of up to \$150,000 per unit, and no more

than \$5 million per single project;

- Supports production of homes affordable to households earning between 70 percent and 120 percent of area median income (AMI).

Projects eligible for the CWBP are in Boston, the Commonwealth's 26 Gateway Cities (Attleboro, Barnstable, Brockton, Chelsea, Chicopee, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Methuen, New Bedford, Peabody, Pittsfield, Quincy, Revere, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Westfield and Worcester) or qualified census tracts.

Projects involve 20 units minimum, with at least 10 workforce-affordable units

CWBP funds new construction or adaptive re-use projects only; no scattered-site proposals will be funded. Preference will be given to:

- Mixed-income developments,
- Projects with units restricted to residents with incomes at 70 percent of AMI,
- Developers requesting less than \$150,000 per unit.

For more information, please contact MassHousing's Rental Business Development Team at mfdev@masshousing.com or call (617) 854-1298.

Multifamily project funded in Cambridge

MassHousing is providing a total of \$45 million in affordable housing financing to an affiliate of the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA), for the modernization and preservation of the 198-unit Daniel F. Burns Apartments.

The MassHousing financing will allow the CHA to make extensive renovations to the Burns Apartments, including the installation of sustainable building systems, and will extend affordability for low-income senior citizens and residents with disabilities for at least 20 years.

MassHousing is providing the CHA with a \$43.7 million tax-exempt permanent loan and a \$1.2 million tax credit equity bridge loan. The MassHousing financing generated \$36.8 million in federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit equity. The transaction also involved \$59.6 million in construction financing from Wells Fargo and \$11 million in financing from the Cambridge Housing Authority. Wells Fargo was the tax credit syndicator.

The Burns Apartments consist of 198 housing units in two, six-story midrise buildings located at 30-50 Churchill Ave. in Cambridge. All of the apartments will have one bedroom except for one two-bedroom unit.

The CHA will substantially modernize building systems at the Burns Apartments by improving the building envelope, plumbing, heating and cooling systems. The CHA will also make roof repairs and replace most interior components, including kitchen and bathroom repairs, and will renovate common areas both inside and outside of the buildings.

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 has expanded its education programs to include courses required for work in Massachusetts.

Bear in mind that most Massachusetts government services must be done online during the COVID-19 crisis.

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.



NEW NORMAL...from page 2

They're actually able to show the new home, where in several markets it's very difficult to see resale listings at this point."

There is also far more supply of newly built homes for sale, twice the supply of existing homes at this point. The existing market was already in a shortage before the pandemic hit. This spring, when listings usually surge, sellers pulled their homes from the market, not wanting buyers coming through but also concerned that values would drop.

Builders can also add incentives more easily, like specific amenities and finishings, and some are increasing real estate commissions to drive demand. Most of the big builders also have in-house mortgage services, making the process much easier for buyers already dealing with the difficulties of social distancing.

"I do think consumers are hungry for a deal, especially the first-time buyers," said Bachman. "If you're working on a quick move-in or one of the speculative inventory sales, you might be able to get some sort of discount in the new home market at this point, which is very attractive to that group."

Government lockdowns may have long-lasting impacts on not just how but where Americans choose to live. The drive to dense, urban areas by the millennial generation may reverse course, es-

pecially as some worry about second shelter-in-place orders after the economy reopens.

Staying at home is hard enough, but the smaller the home, the harder that is. Urban apartment dwellers often don't have the luxuries of separate home offices, basements for exercise equipment, or back yards for private outdoor time.

As more companies become more comfortable with their employees working from home, attitudes toward longer commutes may also change — not to mention that gas prices are currently extremely low. Some workers may soon be able to come to the office one or two times a week, and some not at all.

Millennials, the sharing generation, have been more apt to use public transportation, and they look for walkable neighborhoods with retail and restaurants nearby. As builders develop these types of neighborhoods even farther from urban cores, more millennials are likely to come.



MULTIFAMILY...from page 28

Instead, the thoughtful design of shared building areas might become more important, taking their cues from the hospitality industry and allowing for adaption based on a variety of occupant densities.

Flexibility

Flexibility and purpose will not just affect amenity spaces, but individual units as well, especially as more people potentially shift to a work-from-home environment.

"The sanctuary of someone's home now has the added burden of operating as backup for makeshift employment," noted Ben Kasdan, principal at architecture firm KTGy.

"This means being flexible enough to use different spaces in different ways than we intended or purposefully planning for flexibility to do whatever they need to do, whether it's working out, working, whatever."

That means workspaces within units will likely expand from small cubbies to a more expansive space, Mr. Lessard observed, including more ample storage for work items. This may be a challenge, as multifamily units have begun to trend smaller, with creative adaptations such as a kitchen islands being dedicated as desktops.

Flexibility will also play a role in the design of developments overall. Mixed-use projects, for example, may become more frequent, given how essential grocery stores and neighborhood restaurants have been during this pandemic. Accessibility may become more prominent as well.

Air Quality

Spending extensive amounts of time at home has also piqued interest in indoor air quality, including better filtration and/or ventilation, and non-volatile organic compound (VOC) paints and sealants, noted Mr. Kasdan. Natural ventilation and access to natural light are also going to be in further demand both from a wellness standpoint and work-from-home standpoint.

"Fresh air and air circulation should help prevent viruses," Lessard concurred, which has generally been decreasing in multifamily buildings, especially high rises...."



PODCAST...from page 1

"I found the podcast to be overall very good! Frankly, I'm amazed, considering this is the second RIBA podcast," commented Joseph A. Cracco of Modern Yankee Builders. "I think Paul is an excellent MC/host. And John always comes off as a natural when public speaking," Mr. Cracco added.

"Nice work! Now let's start creating content about something like kitchen remodeling!"

RIBA podcasts are available on all major podcast apps, including Apple Podcasts and iTunes. They may be listened to online or may be downloaded. Future podcasts will be password-protected to ensure that this remains a members-only benefit. Members will be sent their passwords in the e-mails announcing each podcast.

Members also may subscribe to the podcasts via their favorite app, and will be automatically informed when a new one is posted. As an alternative, free RIBA News & Information Podcast apps are now being developed for Apple and Android devices. Members will be informed when these apps are available in online app stores.

The first podcast in the series, posted on May 7th, offered the latest updates on the COVID-19 situation as it related to the industry in Rhode Island at that point, along with tools RIBA offers to help contractors deal with the crisis.

Podcasts are numbered for easy reference, and are being posted at least once a month, and more frequently if deemed necessary.

"Our goal is to find innovative ways to communicate and to keep our members informed as fully and as often as we can," said Mr. Marcantonio. "While news and updated information are the primary thrust, we invite suggestions for other features members want to hear."

If you have suggestions or comments, contact Mr. Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400 or jmarcantonio@ribuilders.org.



JOBS...from page 1

RIBA will be their pipeline," he added. "Responding to the massive unemployment in the state, we will offer self-employment and trade training to those who want to start on a different path."

This message was reinforced by two leading economists recently, who stressed that, in a down economy, career training and further education for all contractors and their employees are crucial to staying in business and growing that business. See the June *Rhode Island Builder* for full coverage of that issue.

"Long before COVID-19, RIBA was positioning itself to provide these training opportunities," Mr. Marcantonio said. "This is a huge benefit and is driving interest in new membership."

RIBA's Workforce Development Program prepares new workers for the residential construction industry and upsills current employees in the industry. It's available free of charge to employers and participants in RIBA's extensive system of classes in carpentry, electrical and plumbing. And there are plans to further expand the offerings. *Related story on page 27.*

The Contractor Development Program offers a huge curriculum of tuition-free classes for contractors and their employees. These include classes that fulfill continuing-education requirements for Rhode Island and Massachusetts. They include:

- Advanced Framing
- Dealing with Challenging Employees
- Frost-Protected Shallow Foundations
- Marketing and Social Media in a Crisis
- Hiring Best Practices for Builders
- Waterproofing Walls and Roofs
- Residential Energy and Indoor Air Quality
- Residential and Commercial Blueprint Reading
- Residential and Commercial Estimating
- Blower Door and Air Leakage Testing
- Deck Codes and Construction
- Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator 8-Hour Initial Training
- Accounting and Cash Flow...and more.

"The Contractor Development Program is expanding and evolving to reflect what we are hearing from both new contractors and existing RIBA members," commented RIBA Member Services Coordinator Elise Geddes.

"One of the more requested topics for classes and seminars has been building codes. That's of interest to new contractors as well, and they also want more classes to help them establish their businesses, such as cash flow, scheduling, blueprint reading and estimating," Ms. Geddes added.

"We are always looking for feedback from our members, because the topics they are looking for to better their businesses is what new members are sure to be needing and wanting - and that is the purpose of the CDP."

Depending on the course, some are offered on-site and others online. Until the COVID-19 crisis passes, however, all courses are being offered by live teleconference on the Zoom platform.

For details on RIBA classes and to register, contact Bob Salvas at (401) 438-7400 or bsalvas@ribuilders.org, or visit RIBAeducates.org. For information on RIBA membership, contact Elise Geddes at (401) 438-7400 or egeddes@ribuilders.org.



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see RENEWALS...page 33

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