

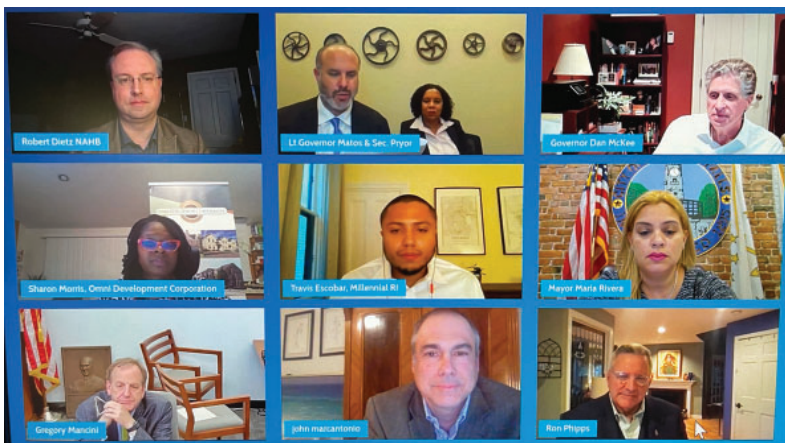
## NAHB, RIBA provide guidance at Gov. McKee's housing conference

NAHB chief economist is presenter at session to discuss Rhode Island housing crisis; RIBA's Marcantonio is on the panel.

By Paul F. Eno Editor

"Without additional construction, we won't be able to address the challenges to housing affordability."

That was the opening message from Robert Dietz, chief economist of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), as he offered the keynote presentation at the virtual Housing Rhode Island 2030 conference on May 13<sup>th</sup>, billed as the second of Gov. Daniel J. McKee's "community conversations" on critical issues facing the state.



**Panelists at the Housing Rhode Island 2030 conference on May 13<sup>th</sup> included RIBA Executive Officer John Marcantonio (bottom center). The main presenter was Dr. Robert Dietz of the National Association of Home Builders (upper left).**

Some 60 attendees participated.

"As Gov. McKee mentioned in his introduction, the housing market is hot. But, if I may use a literary see *CONFERENCE...page 32*

## The Clambake is back!

**WHEN:** Friday, Aug. 6<sup>th</sup>, 12 to 8 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Kempenaar's Clambake Club, 323 Valley Rd., Middletown RI 02842  
**COST:** \$40 for the first 200 members and their employees, \$86 after that and for non-members. All tickets must be paid when making reservations. RIBA reserves the right to limit the total number of discounted tickets allotted to each member company.  
**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** July 16<sup>th</sup>.  
**FOR SPONSORSHIPS AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Robin Barlow at (401) 438-7400.

Register early and get a genuine bargain on the Rhode Island Builders Association's biggest social and networking event of the year, and the first major in-



**The RIBA Clambake: old friends, new friends, and the best networking around!**

person event of the post-COVID era: The 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Clambake! Members: Watch your mail for full details.

This is the first time in many a year that the event

see *SPOTLIGHT: THE CLAMBAKE...page 3*

### FEATURED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES FOR JULY

Middle Section

#### RIBA joins NAHB in talks on lumber crisis

The Rhode Island Builders Association is working with the National Association of Home Builders and Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo to solve the supply crisis.

Pages 7 and 8

#### RIBA Golf Outing slated for August

After a two-year hiatus because of the COVID-19 pandemic, RIBA's Annual Golf Outing to benefit the Builders Helping Heroes charity is back on for Monday, August 30<sup>th</sup> at Wannamoisett Country Club.

Page 4

#### New House Speaker backs housing

See our interview with House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi on housing and affordability issues facing Rhode Island.

Page 27

#### Check out RIBA's new app

RIBA now has an app that will give members easy access to the "News & Information Podcast Series."

Page 14

# President's Message



Carol O'Donnell

## We have come through! Look forward to great things

It's wonderful to see that our state, the economy and the residential construction industry are finally coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. And so is the Rhode Island Builders Association. In fact, our first in-person Board of Directors meeting in 15 months, and the first of my presidency, took place on June 1<sup>st</sup>, albeit in the courtyard outside RIBA headquarters in East Providence. *Related story on page 10.*

We also look forward to our first Annual Clambake in two years: On Friday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, at Kempenaar's Clambake Club in Middletown, our first time at that great venue in many years. And, after a two-year hiatus, plans for our 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Rhode

Island Home Show are firmed up for April 7-10, 2022.

Business-wise, however, we come out of the pandemic facing a perfect storm: high demand, an unrelenting housing crisis, and soaring prices for building materials, especially lumber. But RIBA, along with our National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) partners, are in the thick of the struggle to bring down these costs. Working with none other than Gina Raimondo, our former governor and now the U.S. commerce secretary, and her staff, members like past RIBA President Bob Baldwin and the unstoppable Jack Bentz have been participating in conference calls and advising officials on how to mitigate this supply crisis.

Often, we have contributed industry information that officials were not aware

of. *Related stories on pages 7 and 8.*

RIBA has an eye on consistent growth as we continue through 2021, as the go-to source for our members when it comes to education, information, insurance and other critical resources. Our Education and Workforce Development Committee and the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership continue to keep us a prime provider of residential construction workforce training, including trade training in carpentry, electrical and plumbing.

This is possible only through your ongoing membership, active participation and support. Keep using your great member benefits, and encourage your non-member colleagues to join.

Let's look forward to a great rest of 2021, and an even better 2022!



### The Rhode Island Builder

Official publication of the  
Rhode Island Builders Association  
since 1951

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## DEADLINE FOR THE AUGUST ISSUE

All copy, ads and photos must be to us by

# Friday, June 25

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## Spotlight: The Clambake



...from page 1

# The 2021 event is on Be a sponsor!

has been held at Kempenaar's Clambake Club in Middletown.

The cost of a whole day of fun, food, drink, contests, games and networking is just \$40 per person for the first 200 people! Many are expected to attend, so the earlier you register, the better.

### Sponsorships!

RIBA can offer these bargain tickets because of our generous event sponsors, so please consider being one. There are three sponsorship levels, with more perks the higher you go. The more sponsors who sign on, the more people will be able to enjoy a fabulous day of fun. *See back cover for details.*

There will be clam cakes and chowder, not to mention hot dogs and little necks. The clambake at 5:30 will include steamers, lobster, sausage, fresh fish, potato, onion, corn on the cob and cole slaw, with chicken platters on each table and watermelon after dinner. Soda, beer and assorted drinks will be available all day. Lemonade and water are free, and there will be a cash bar.

Enjoy volleyball, horseshoes, basketball, the football toss, insulation toss, the RIBA-invented sport of plywood throwing, and more! At the end of the day, enjoy awards and many door prizes. Consider making this event your company's outing, and please help by becoming a sponsor. *See back cover.*



Above, the RIBA-invented sport of plywood throwing is a highlight at the Clambake, but it's not as easy as it looks. Below, Jeanine Lantini of Lighting & Design by J&K Electric concentrates on that bocce throw.



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# Looking Ahead

## July 2021

♦ **Ongoing: Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) - Basic Carpentry** - Recruiting continues for ongoing VESL classes. For details, contact Betty Bernal at (401) 500-9146 or [bbernal@ribuilders.org](mailto:bbernal@ribuilders.org), or register online at [RIBuilders.org/vesl-training-program-details](http://RIBuilders.org/vesl-training-program-details). *Related story on page 26.*

🔧 ♦ **July 9<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Topic is Understanding Quickbooks On-line®. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 21.*

🔧 ♦ **July 13<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is Windows and Doors. Taught at Rhode Island Builders Association Headquarters, East Providence. *Details on page 21.*

🔧 ♦ **July 14<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Topic is Commercial Energy Code and COMcheck. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 22.*

🔧 ♦ **July 15<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Topic is Residential Energy Code and REScheck. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 22.*

♦ **July 15<sup>th</sup>: 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course** - Taught at Rhode Island Builders Association Headquarters. *Details on page 25.*

♦ **July 16<sup>th</sup>: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is Quickbooks® Specifics. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 24.*

♦ **July 20<sup>th</sup>: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is Start and Grow Your Construction Business. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 24.*

🔧 ♦ **July 21<sup>st</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 4 Credit Hours** - Topic is Lead RRP Refresher. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 22.*

♦ **July 21<sup>st</sup>: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is Siding Specifics. Taught at Rhode Island Builders Association Headquarters, East Providence. *Details on page 26.*

🔧 ♦ **July 22<sup>nd</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Topic is Residential Estimating. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 23.*

🔧 ♦ **July 23<sup>rd</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is Wall Coverings and Sheathing. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 23.*



*More information, registration and payment for most RIBA events is available at [RIBUILDERS.org](http://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 29<sup>th</sup>: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is Deck Specifics. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 26.*

♦ **July 29<sup>th</sup>: Massachusetts Continuing Education for Contractors** - Topic is Code Review for Holders of the Massachusetts Construction Supervisor License. Taught at Rhode Island Builders Association Headquarters, East Providence. *Details on page 26.*

♦ **July 30<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is the Energy Code. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 23.*

## August 2021

♦ **August 6<sup>th</sup>: 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Rhode Island Builders Association Summer Outing and Clambake** - Kempenaar's Clambake Club, Middletown. *Details on page 1 and back cover.*

**August 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>: JLC LIVE Residential Construction Show** - Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence. Visit [NE.jlclive.com/](http://NE.jlclive.com/) for more information or see the centerspread of this issue.

♦ **August 30<sup>th</sup>: 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Rhode Island Builders Association Golf Classic** - Wannamoisett Country Club, 96 Hoyt Ave, Rumford, RI 02916. *Watch your mail for information.*

## April 2022

♦ **April 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>: 70<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:homeshow@ribuilders.org). *Watch for more information.*

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### Take more RIBA classes online at [RIBAEducates.com](http://RIBAEducates.com)

**Visit [RIBAEducates.com](http://RIBAEducates.com) for access to 24-7 continuing education not listed above! Online courses include Scaffold Safety, Workplace Safety, Confined Spaces, Ladder Safety and more, each worth one credit hour of state-mandated continuing education. All RIBA courses are FREE of tuition charges for members and their employees.**

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# RIBA thanks these companies for joining, renewing or applying for membership

## New Members

Coastal Home Improvements  
South Shore Repair & Remodeling  
Ocean State Tiling & Remodeling LLC  
Philip D'Orlando  
DanCin Painting and Home Improvements  
Kozel Contracting

Louis Blanchard  
Robert Carvalho Jr.  
Justin Coelho  
Philip D'Orlando  
Daniel Harris  
Justin Kozel

Jason Miller  
CF Pro Builders Corp.  
James Petrangelo  
Backyard Paradise Pools  
Wolfe Construction

Jason Miller  
Emilio Morales  
James Petrangelo  
Manuel Ponte  
Richard Wolfe

## Renewed Members

Atlantic Exteriors  
Bowse Builders  
Brunetti Home Inspections LLC  
Carriage House Custom Homes  
Churchill & Banks Companies  
Citrin Cooperman & Co., LLP  
Construction Industries of R.I.  
Craig Management Co., Inc.  
Crest Management Co., Inc.  
Cypress Design Co.  
Diamond Painting & Home Imp. Inc.  
DiStefano Brothers Construction Inc.  
DryZone Basement Systems  
EFC Construction Management Inc.  
Elco Painting Inc.  
Emidy Bros. Construction  
F. Paolino Homes Inc.  
Fortune 500 Inc.  
Gardner Woodwrights Ltd.  
George W. Smith & Sons Inc.  
Global Networking LLC  
Great In Counters  
Heritage Concrete Corp.  
Home Glow Enterprises  
J&L Landscaping Co., Inc.  
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Joseph Tavone Inc.  
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David Baglini  
Charles Bowse  
Paul Brunetti  
Mark Carter  
Richard Baccari  
Michael Crawley  
Timothy Scanlon  
Roland Ferland  
Brian Williams  
Jennifer Voll  
Vincent Bibby  
Peter DiStefano  
Todd Lutinski  
Edward Ferland  
Steven Elliott  
Michael Emidy  
Frank Paolino  
John Giusti  
Randall Gardner  
Gregory Smith  
Edwin Gonzales  
Tracey Cyr  
Sharon Courtois  
Alfred Almeida  
Jeffrey Seyboth  
Robert Vandal  
James Chappell  
Angelo Balassone  
Jamie Stebenne  
Kenneth Kazarian

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Lachapelle Remodeling LLC  
Legacy Builders LLC  
Lepore Construction Corp.  
Levesque Construction Inc.  
Lewis & Clarke Enterprises Inc.  
McLoughlin - Walker Construction LLC  
Mike Gorman Roofing Inc.  
Mike's Home Improvement Inc.  
Mill City Construction  
Miniati's Home Imp./Custom Homes  
MKB Home Improvements  
MRD Woodworking LLC  
Mutual Properties  
Nardelli Builders Inc.  
Narragansett Engineering Inc.  
National Building Products  
National Land Surveyors-Developers Inc.  
National Refrigeration Inc.  
Norbury Construction Co., Inc.  
Pariseault Builders Inc.  
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Daniel Nardelli  
Kimberly Grenier  
Maria Fratiello  
Norbert Therien  
Jack King  
Paul Norbury  
Debra Cotnoir  
Eliza Parker  
Keith Albanese  
Ted Franklin  
Jacqueline Pagel  
Peter Raposa  
Ray Keough  
John Morgan  
Ronald Cicerchia  
Roger Wilkie

## Applications/Pending Members\*

Mario Abelha  
John Alarcon  
Zakwan Asadullah  
Matthew Azevedo  
Matthew Bouressa  
Julio Brito  
Denise Brown  
Bryan Buckless  
James Carson

Amanda Chita  
Brian DeChambeau  
Courtney Donaldson  
Lisa Foster  
Christopher Frantz-Dale  
Mahran Izoli  
Jessica Krsticevic  
Adrian Lombard

Jake Milne  
Devon Nickerson  
Julio Perpetuo  
Edwin Reyes  
Chris Rigsby  
Brian Schmutzer  
Daron Snyder  
Joseph Varao

\*Subject to registration with the Rhode Island Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board. Company name will be printed once application is approved.



# RIBA, NAHB in talks with Raimondo, Commerce Dept. on supply costs

Former Rhode Island governor, now secretary of commerce, vows to make lumber issue a top priority.

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

“Communication is open directly between the residential construction industry and Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. The Rhode Island connection is fruitful, and we look forward to it being even more fruitful in the future.”

That’s the news from Bob Baldwin of R.B. Homes, who on May 17<sup>th</sup> participated in a conference call on the ongoing issue of lumber prices with Kevin Gallagher, a Rhode Islander who is now senior advisor to Sec. Raimondo, former governor of Rhode Island. Also participating were John Bentz of Providence-based Property Advisory Group; Chuck Fowke, chairman of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB); Keith Wingfield (NAHB Area 8 national area chairman); and James Tobin, NAHB executive vice president and chief lobbyist.

On May 22<sup>nd</sup> and May 28<sup>th</sup>, Sec. Raimondo personally participated in video calls on the issue. *Related story next page.*

“We have presented our case about how drastic price increases have been, especially for framing lumber and sheathing,” said Mr. Baldwin, a past president of the Rhode Island Builders Association and RIBA’s current state representative to NAHB.

“We stressed that prices have risen 450 percent or more for framing lumber and 600 percent or more for sheathing. We also presented evidence that, wherever they are in the United States, timber owners and loggers are getting less money for their logs,” Mr. Baldwin added.

Speaking with NAHB state representatives from Idaho, Montana and Maine, major lumber states, Mr. Baldwin learned that, between March 2020 and March 2021, the price per ton for logs of common spe-



Bob Baldwin and John Bentz

cies has fallen from \$30 to between \$22 to \$25 a ton.

“At the same time, Douglas fir logs from the Pacific Northwest and Montana has fallen from \$35 to \$15 a ton,” Mr. Baldwin said.

Participants in the calls have urged the Dept. of Commerce to look into the reasons for this, and into why the lumber companies are producing less wood at a time of such constricted supply.

The calls have also covered supply-chain matters, including issues with windows, doors, vinyl, roofing, concrete, copper and steel, and the impact on housing prices, underwriters and appraisers.

“We have made it clear that builders across the country are stopping projects because they simply can’t bid them anymore, not until there is some resolution to these supply issues.”

## Urging a summit

During the calls, the RIBA and NAHB representatives have requested:

1. Increased logging in federal forests

for timber management, starting with dead or burnt trees, access roads and other forest-management techniques;

2. A temporary suspension of the 9 percent tariff on Canadian lumber, and a permanent lumber agreement with Canada;

3. A housing, lumber-price and supplier summit involving all parties, including loggers, timber owners, lumber mills, railroaders, truckers, petrochemical companies, builders (small and large), etc.

## Doubling the tariffs?

On May 21<sup>st</sup> came a surprise announcement in the Canadian media that the U.S. intended to double the tariffs to 18 percent. This resulted in an emergency call between Sec. Raimondo, her staff and NAHB Executive Officer Jerry Howard the following day. The Commerce Dept. officials said they were totally unaware of this proposed increase. That conversation concluded with another request that the 9 percent tariff on Canadian lumber be suspended or eliminated, and with the proposal for a summit meeting on the lumber issue.

“The proposal for a summit seems to be gaining steam,” Mr. Baldwin stated.

“In addition, Sec. Raimondo has ordered her staff to make the lumber issue a priority based on the information we provided. They have been told to study the impacts, the options, and the solutions that Commerce can bring to the table.”

At the end of the May 29<sup>th</sup> call, she vowed to organize the proposed summit as soon as possible, according to Mr. Baldwin.

Communications with the Dept. of Commerce are ongoing. Watch for further updates.

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membership information  
contact Elise Geddes

401-438-7400 • or [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org)

# Raimondo vows action on material costs

## National Association of Home Builders

Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo acknowledged the depth of the lumber price crisis and its effects on the residential construction industry, home buyers and renters during a meeting with the NAHB senior officer team on May 28<sup>th</sup>.

"The residential construction industry is facing serious challenges because of supply chain constraints and the impact on home building, especially with respect to affordable housing. Today was a productive, positive conversation to begin to address these challenges," Sec. Raimondo, former Rhode Island governor, noted. "We take these issues seriously, and my staff and I are committed to continuing to work with all stakeholders, including reviewing relevant data and conducting analysis to identify targeted actions the government or industry can take to address supply chain constraints."

Sec. Raimondo and NAHB CEO Jerry Howard discussed working together on convening a summit that would include representatives from the U.S. government, the lumber supply chain and the home building industry.

"Commerce Sec. Raimondo understands that high lumber costs are adding tens of thousands of dollars to the price of a new home," said NAHB Chairman Chuck Fowke. "She heard our stories and acknowledged that she is concerned – and that President Biden is concerned – about the effect of the lumber price problem on the broader economy."

"There is a disconnect between lumber supply and housing demand," said NAHB First Vice Chairman Jerry Konter. "U.S. sawmill output increased 3.3 percent in 2020. But over the same period, single-family construction increased 12 percent to almost 1 million housing starts, and the remodeling market expanded 7 percent. We feel this mismatch between domestic production and rising demand for building materials is at the root of the unsustainable

increases in lumber prices."

Current prices according to the Random Lengths Framing Lumber Composite Index – the industry benchmark – have more than quadrupled since April 2020 to more than \$1,500 per thousand board feet. Lumber prices alone are adding nearly \$36,000 to the price of a new home, pricing millions of middle-class households out of the market at a level they previously could afford, NAHB analysis shows.

## Housing Affordability

Looking at domestic timber, NAHB Second Vice Chair Alicia Huey pointed out the decline in the domestic harvest, noting that as recently as the mid-1990s, roughly 10 billion board feet of lumber was harvested from the nation's forests each year. Over the last 10 years, the harvest has fallen below 3 billion board feet most years. Huey asked the secretary to advocate for better, more active forest management goals from U.S. national forests to help ease the current shortage.

NAHB Third Vice Chairman Carl Harris encouraged the secretary to push for a lasting softwood lumber agreement with Canada. "We need trade policy that actually serves the interests of the American people and increases housing opportunity for first-generation home buyers," he said.

The effect of high lumber prices on low- and moderate-income families is a top concern of NAHB and the Biden administration, noted NAHB Immediate Past Chairman Greg Ugalde of Torrington, Connecticut.

"My company works with many first-time, first-generation home buyers," said Mr. Ugalde. "After all these lumber costs get added to the price of a home, those first-time home buyers are often the first to be eliminated from the market."

He also acknowledged Raimondo's



Sec. Raimondo

long-standing commitment to the housing industry. "We met with you when I was NAHB chairman and you were the governor of Rhode Island, and we saw that you were a person of action when it came to housing affordability. We need your help again to protect first-generation home buyers."

Sec. Raimondo noted that NAHB proposed tangible ideas for moving forward on the lumber problem, including better forest management, increased production from the nation's sawmills, and working toward a more lasting agreement with Canada.

"I thank the NAHB and its leaders for constructive engagement on this issue and working with us to find a path forward," Sec. Raimondo said. For more information about how NAHB is addressing the lumber crisis, visit [NAHB.org](http://NAHB.org).



*The Rhode Island builder*

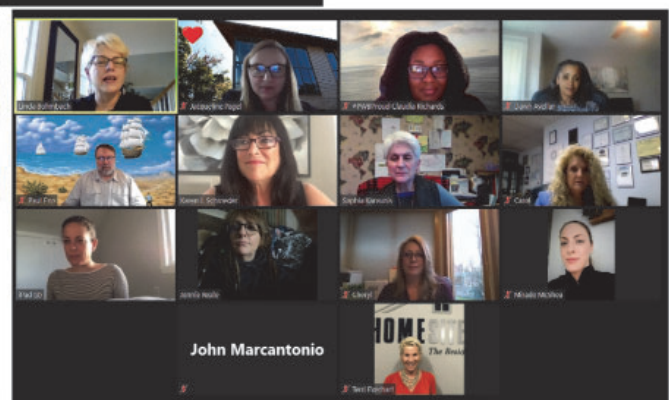
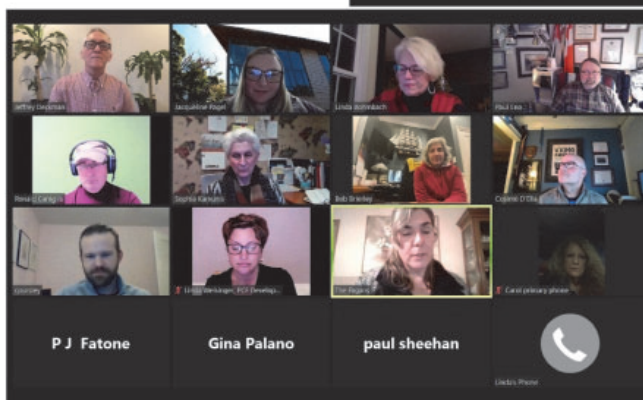
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## Professional Women in Building : PWB NEWS

***Thank you to all our members and guests who joined us virtually over the last year. We hope you have a wonderful summer and we can't wait to see you in-person this Fall!***



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Jacqueline Pagel - Vice President  
Sophia Karvunis -Treasurer/Secretary

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

# RIBA leaders return to in-person meetings; Magaziner addresses board in May

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Updates on legislation, trade training and the 2022 Home Show, along with an edge-of-your-seat report on the latest developments in the lumber crisis, all featured at the first in-person meeting of the Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors in 15 months.

The meeting took place on the lawn outside RIBA headquarters in East Providence.

There was a wide-ranging discussion about RIBA's future membership strategy, and Executive Officer John Marcantonio provided a complete update on the progress of the association's 2021 legislative agenda.

Mr. Marcantonio noted that RIBA's BuildPAC would hold a fundraiser in July, and encouraged all members to participate. He explained that the BuildPAC supports all candidates who are pro-housing, regardless of political party. *Related story on page 14.*

He also reviewed the progress of the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP), RIBA's educational arm for trade training, noting a new relationship with the Healthy Homes Coalition, a program of the Rhode Island Dept. of Health.

RCWP, which already uses trade training facilities in CHARIHO, Woonsocket, Central Falls, East Providence and Warwick, has plans to expand to the Easy Bay and Newport areas because of demand, Mr. Marcantonio reported.

Bob Baldwin, past RIBA president and a key member of the Education and Workforce Development Committee, reported that the Central Falls facility has expansion plans as well.

## Home Show returns!

After two years without a Rhode Island Home Show because of the COVID-19 pandemic, plans are for a big return to the Rhode Island Convention Center on April 7-10, 2022, Mr. Marcantonio announced.

All the Home Show vendors, sponsors and other supporters have been in a holding pattern since 2020, and are ready to



**On June 1<sup>st</sup>, the Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors meets in person for the first time in 15 months, albeit in the courtyard outside RIBA headquarters in East Providence. Ironically, in a normal year the June board meeting would take place at this spot anyway, just before the Annual Networking Barbecue.**

proceed, he said.

## Mass. classes to resume

Regarding RIBA's Contractor Development Program, Mr. Marcantonio reported that classes are full and expanding, and that classes required by Massachusetts will resume in July.

Classes required by Rhode Island have been ongoing. All classes will have an in-person option soon. *See pages 21-26.*

Professional Women in Building Council (PWB) Vice President Jackie Pagel offered an update on that popular program.

## Events back on the calendar

Mr. Marcantonio reported that the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Clambake, not held last year because of the pandemic, will take place at Kempenaar's Clambake Club in Middletown on August 6<sup>th</sup>, with a return to normal fall and winter events in the pipeline. *Related story on page 1.*

## The Lumber Saga

Mr. Baldwin, RIBA's state representative to the National Association of Home Builders, offered a blow-by-blow report on efforts by him and fellow RIBA member John Bentz, along with NAHB officials, to work with the U.S. Dept. of Commerce to resolve the ongoing lumber crisis. *Related*



**R.I. Treasurer Seth Magaziner addresses the RIBA board during its May 11<sup>th</sup> Zoom session.**

*stories on pages 7 and 8.*

## May Meeting

Guest speaker at the May 11<sup>th</sup> board meeting, held via Zoom, was Rhode Island Treasurer Seth Magaziner.

"You all play a vital role in helping us build a real 21<sup>st</sup> century economy in Rhode Island," Mr. Magaziner said.

"We need strong communities, good homes for people, and good jobs, and that's what you all do."

He pointed out that the American Dream and the sense of generational mobility has broken down, declaring his support for the residential construction industry as a major force to rebuild these pathways to progress for the middle class.



# Members spearhead campaign for Gold Star Monument



**On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, a crew excavates, then pours the base, for the Rhode Island Gold Star Families Memorial Monument at the Veterans Cemetery in Exeter.**

“They gave their tomorrows for your today.”

That’s the thought that launched a national campaign for monuments to honor Gold Star Families in all 50 states.

In Rhode Island, a fundraising campaign aims to install a Gold Star Families Memorial Monument at the Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery in Exeter, and members of the Rhode Island Builders Association are volunteering time and labor to do the work.

Gold Star Families are those who have one or more members who gave the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country in the armed forces. Initiated in an effort by Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea and led by Gold Star Family members, a committee has partnered with the Woody Williams Foundation and United Way of Rhode Island to raise funds for Rhode Island’s monument.

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Matt Olson from Richard E. Olson Hydraulic Backhoe Svc., along with men from John Strafach & Sons, dug and poured the cement foundation for the memorial, to be erected in the fall.

Fundraising is under way for the memorial granite sculpture, which will cost about \$75,000. If you can help, please visit the website [Hwwmohf.kindful.com/?campaign=339098](http://Hwwmohf.kindful.com/?campaign=339098).

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Paul Bernard of Newport Modular Homes

# From newspaper man to home builder!

By Paul F. Eno Editor

It's a pretty unusual combination: newspaper man and home builder. But for Paul Bernard, who once owned a weekly newspaper, *The Village Voice* in Assonet, Freetown, Berkley and Lakeville, Massachusetts, the building bug bit him and never let go.

"I got started working for contractors in the summer, when I was 16 or 17 years old. By the time I was 21, I was on my own," he recalls.

Today, Paul has been in the residential construction business for 50 years.

"I was a stick builder, but with stick building you have to deal with a lot of people. You have to wait for the subs to come, and you can go home frustrated," Paul states. "With modular, the house is like 85 percent done, and you don't need a gigantic crew."

He built his first house in Fall River in 1974.

"You always remember your first car. Mine was a 1947 Chevy I got for \$75! And builders always remember their first house."

And is Paul active in the Rhode Island Builders Association? "Devoted" would be a more accurate description.

"I rely on RIBA! I get most of my leads at the Rhode Island Home Show, the Annual Clambake and even the Christmas Party, and I'm very happy to see that those events will be back within the next year!" he says.

"You're building friends through RIBA, and we can all benefit from such a great organization," Paul adds.

"RIBA is one of my greatest sources of knowledge, and every month we get the exceptional *Rhode Island Builder* magazine to keep up with the latest news in the building industry."

Newport Modular hung in there during the pandemic, however, and Paul and his crew are putting up houses in several spots in

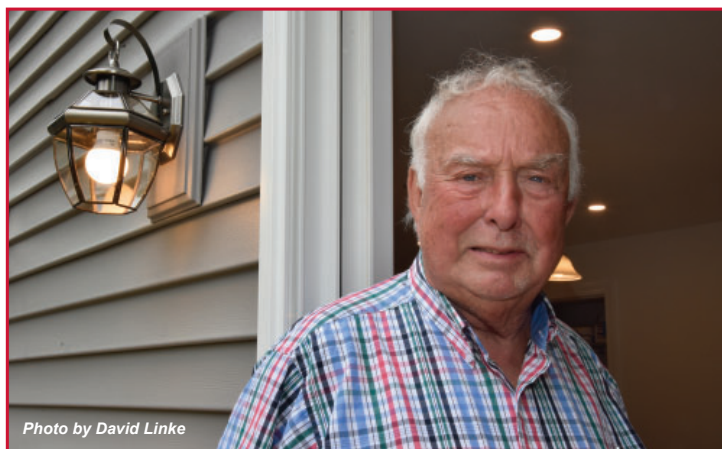


Photo by David Linke  
**Paul Bernard steps through the door of one of Newport Modular's newest homes.**

eastern Massachusetts.

And, even with all those years under his belt, Paul is still eager to learn. In fact, he enrolled in RIBA's Carpentry Career Training Program (CCTP) and took classes at the East Providence Career and Technical Center.

"At my age, I realize that it's important to keep in tune with the changes in the industry and to keep up with the codes. It was really something! The class ran three nights a week for 26 weeks, and the instructors were amazing."

Paul was afraid RIBA's Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP), which runs the CCTP and other trade training classes, wouldn't accept someone of his age, but his fears were unfounded.

"I had some fun with Ron Caniglia (of RIBA's Education and Workforce Development Committee), who checks in on the classes to see how everybody is doing," Paul states.

"Ron walked up to me and said, 'How old are you? I must be older.' I said, 'I'm 78!' Ron looked surprised. He wanted to be the old guy, but he couldn't be that night!"

It wasn't just Paul who learned during the CCTP course. He helped the rest of the class learn something new too.

"I approached the trade training managers, Cheryl Boyd and Lou Cotoia, about taking the class on a field trip to the New England Homes modular home factory in Claremont, New Hampshire. They decided to invite the plumbing and electrical classes too, and we ended up with two buses!"

That was on a snowy day in February, and the students were thrilled, according to Paul.

Now he's interested in taking the RCWP's plumbing class.

As he learns, Paul keeps everything with Newport Modular ship shape from his company's home base on snazzy Thames Street in Newport. He has four employees, and his wife helps him with the computer/e-mail end of things. Newport Modular works all over southeastern New England.

What does the future hold for Newport Modular? Paul pulls no punches.

"I have no intention of retiring. That's a dirty word to me!"

"And if anyone walks to visit that New England Homes factory in Claremont, just give me a call!"

## Newport Modular Homes

**Principal:** Paul A. Bernard

**RIBA member since:** 2012

**Focus:** New Homes

**Founded:** 1974

**Based:** Newport, Rhode Island



# Preservation Trades Council aims to educate workers for historical restoration

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

A brand new group allied with the Rhode Island Builders Association has set out to educate workers specifically for historic preservation projects.

*The Rhode Island Builder* recently sat down with Providence Preservation Society Executive Director Brent Runyon, the man at the helm of the new Preservation Trades Council (PTC).

"I modeled it after a statewide preservation group in Michigan. It has an advisory council of people involved in trades, housing and residential development," Mr. Runyon.

PTC is just getting started but already offers five-week courses in window restoration (the Window and Workforce Training Program). There are ambitious plans for relevant courses to begin in the fall.

The PTC already involves a number of RIBA members who work in restoration, including Dean Martineau of Dean W. Martineau Carpentry & Painting, Noel Sanchez of Casa Buena Builders, Justin Zeller of Red House Custom Building, and Robert



Brent Runyon and Dean Martineau

Cagnetta of Heritage Restoration, all well known in the preservation trades.

"It's a great idea. We need more people involved with preservation," Mr. Martineau said. "It's a great business for builders and remodelers. There are higher dollar amounts because of the time and care required, and the high quality of the materials."

More workers skilled in restoration are needed, Mr. Martineau stressed.

"There is a huge need for it in Rhode Island because the housing stock is so old, and much of it is historic and worth preserving," he added.

Mr. Runyon stated that the PTC is just

getting started, and that the group hopes to enhance what RIBA trade training already offers.

"RIBA provides tons of training, but primarily geared toward new construction," Mr. Runyon said.


"As Executive Officer John Marcantonio has pointed out, many of the older builders and remodelers are retiring and there are all too few younger people to whom they can pass on their skills. That is leaving a skills gap."

PTC is exploring ways to pass on those skills and fill that gap, then connect trainees with jobs, according to Mr. Runyon.

"The RIBA members involved with us are people I know who do restoration work and know what skills are needed," he added.

"Some 75 percent of residential buildings in Providence alone were built before World War II. At the same time, there is a huge push to turn old commercial buildings into residential assets."

Watch for more news on PTC as it develops.

See [PPSRI.org/programs-events/training-programs](https://PPSRI.org/programs-events/training-programs) for ongoing information. 

## RIBA now has an app for its podcast series

With seven productions in the "RIBA News and Information Podcast Series" under its belt, the Rhode Island Builders Association now has a free app available for members as an easy way to access the podcasts on all smart devices.

"The app is barebones at the moment," says podcast co-host Paul Eno. "But those who use it will have access to all podcasts with one tap, and will receive notifications when new podcasts are posted."


The app is currently available via a download from a link: <https://4762596.igen.app>. The app icon is the RIBA logo.

There are plans for the app to be avail-

able in the online Apple Store and Google Store, but the process might take several months.

"The process is very complex," Mr. Eno says.

Meanwhile, there are initial plans to expand the app into a general tool for RIBA members, with access to other member resources.

The podcasts, posted regularly since early 2020, have covered critical topics for the COVID crisis, and other subjects that are pertinent all the time, such as contractor registration laws and the latest enforcement policies. 



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# RCWP UPDATE

## Plumbing/HVACR grads are ready to hire!

Twenty graduates received certificates and OSHA-10 cards for completing the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership's (RCWP's) 26-week pre-apprenticeship Plumbing/HVACR Program as the group gathered with instructors and RCWP staff in Warwick on June 8<sup>th</sup>.

To observe COVID-19 protocols, the gathering took place at the Centerville Road Park & Ride lot. That site was used throughout the course as a meeting place to distribute materials, tools and supplies for the students to work on their projects, according to RIBA Director of Workforce Programs Cheryl Boyd.

Instruction was completed online via Microsoft Teams.

"It was so exciting to see the students practice soldering," Ms. Boyd commented.

During their training, participants also received their Lead Safe RRP certification.

Program grads are available to hire now, and they have expressed their aspirations to get to work in the trade.

Employers can reach our students by posting their jobs at RCWPJobs.com or by calling Dawn Avellar at (401) 438-7411, ext. 306, or e-mailing [davellar@rcwpri.org](mailto:davellar@rcwpri.org).

All applications are available online for RCWP's autumn training programs in carpentry, electrical, plumbing, Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL), and weatherization. Visit [RIBuilders.org/training-programs](http://RIBuilders.org/training-programs).

### Your source for labor

RCWP is the free employer source for new and upskilled workers in the home building and remodeling industries.

As residential construction continues to boom in southeastern New England, we need more skilled labor. Employers are interested not only in new workers but in upskilling current ones.



**At top, accompanied by HVACR instructor Rob Sherwood and plumbing instructor Kevin Masse, proud graduates display their certificates. Below, students work with solder, copper pipe and fittings as part of a hands-on group project.**

At the same time, many people in the labor force are thinking about changing careers. And, as COVID-19 restrictions gradually lift and more people are vaccinated, still others are planning a return to the workforce.

To meet the labor issue from all these angles, the Rhode Island Builders Association has expanded its workforce development programs through RCWP, RIBA's affiliate training and educational organization with a mission to provide residential construction trade training for those interested in careers

in the residential construction industry

The stated goal of RCWP is to serve employers and the educational needs of Rhode Island by recruiting from and training its diverse populations, not just for job opportunities, but with the employability skills employers demand. And to empower them toward a well-respected, financially stable, entrepreneurial career.

Thanks to funding from the Real Jobs Rhode Island program, classes are free of charge for employers and potential employees. Visit [RCWPri.org](http://RCWPri.org).





# **Featured Products & Services for July 2021**



*A Rhode Island Builder Magazine Special Section*



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**West Haven Lumber, West Haven, CT • 203-933-1641**

**www.finetco.net • Page 16**

## At Pella® Windows: Easy-Slide Operator

**T**he Easy-Slide Operator – Pella® Corporation's innovative new hardware solution – has been named winner of the Best of Show at the 2021 International Builders' Show, which was held virtually February 8-10, 2021.

The judges were especially impressed with Pella's game-changing, patent-pending slide mechanism,

which replaces the traditional crank to open and close casement and awning windows. The Easy-Slide Operator was selected by a panel of 18 industry and media judges.

The recently launched hardware solution allows homeowners to open and close casement and awning windows by easily sliding the operator up to open and down to close the window.

The Easy-Slide Operator is currently available on Pella Impervia® fiberglass casement and awning windows. The company plans to expand the availability of Easy-Slide Operator to additional product lines in late 2021.

Visit <https://www.pella.com/ideas/windows/features-options/hardware/easy-slide-operator/> for more information or, better yet, visit one of Pella's four convenient locations!

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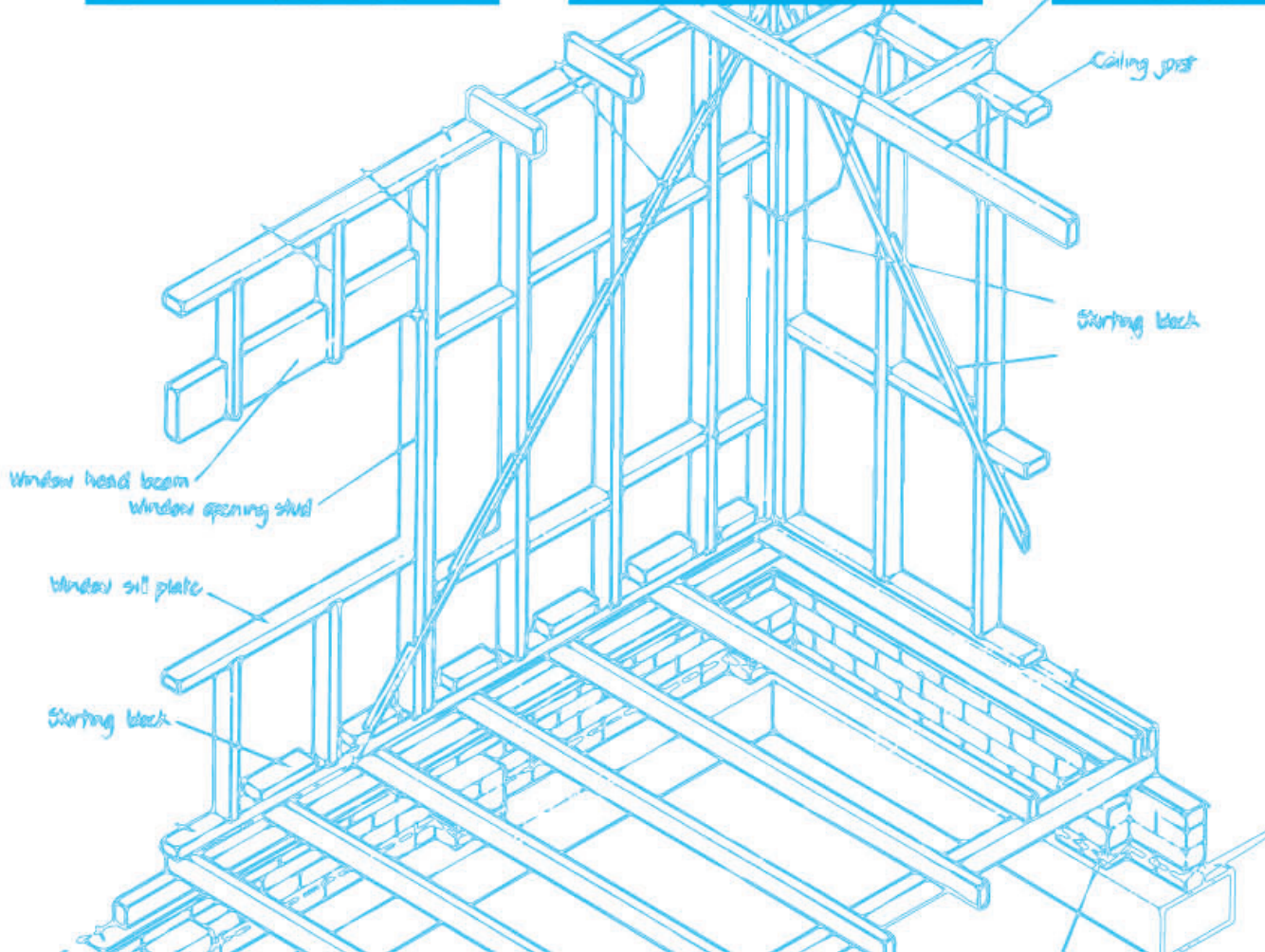
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In-person classes resume on a limited basis in July. Others remain on the Zoom online conferencing platform. Meanwhile, the Rhode Island Builders Association continues the Contractor Training Program, expanding its educational offerings for members and their employees! Call for details and to register, contact RIBA Professional Development Manager Bob Salvas at (401) 438-7400 or e-mail [bsalvas@ribuilders.org](mailto: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.*

### 2 Credit Hours: *Understanding QuickBooks® Online* *July 9<sup>th</sup>*

### 2½ Credit Hours: *Windows and Doors* *July 13<sup>th</sup>*

**WHEN:** Friday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 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](mailto:bsalvas@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

This course will help the owners and employees of construction companies to better understand QuickBooks® Online and will encourage good bookkeeping practices.

The instructor is Bill Cunningham.

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.



**WHEN:** Tuesday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 8 to 10:30 a.m.

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

**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](mailto:bsalvas@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Don Hamel to learn window and door installations.

You must pre-register for this course. **This is an in-person class, and seating is limited.** There will be no admittance to the class without pre-registration.

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




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**IN-PERSON classes will be limited in size and will take place at RIBA Headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy Bldg 3, East Providence RI 02914.**

**All up to date COVID-19 protocols will be followed.**

**For more information, contact Bob Salvas, [bsalvas@ribuilders.org](mailto:bsalvas@ribuilders.org) or call (401) 438-7400.**





2 Credit Hours:

## Commercial Energy Code and COMcheck®

July 14<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Wednesday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 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 Steven Turner, this class will review how the COMcheck® software makes it easy for architects, builders, designers, and contractors to determine whether new buildings/alterations meet IECC or state-specific code requirements.

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:

## Residential Energy Code and REScheck®

July 15<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Thursday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 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 Jeremy Dagold, this class will review how the REScheck® software makes it easy for architects, builders, designers, and contractors to determine whether new buildings/alterations meet IECC or state-specific code requirements.

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.



4 Credit Hours:

## RRP Lead Refresher

July 21<sup>st</sup>

**WHEN:** Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 8 a.m. to noon

**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 Scott Asprey, this four-hour class is a refresher course for contractors who have their lead renovator/remodeler certification, and it is coming up for renewal. We will review lead hazard controls and update attendees with any changes to regulations.

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.




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5 Credit Hours:

## Residential Estimating

July 22<sup>nd</sup>

**WHEN:** Thursday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 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 instructor Justin Zeller, this course covers basic construction math and how it is used to estimate the labor and material costs of a residential construction project.

A knowledge of blueprint reading is advised before taking this 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.



2½ Credit Hours:

## Wall Coverings and Sheathing

July 23<sup>rd</sup>

**WHEN:** Friday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 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.

Taught by Larry Desormier, this course covers Chapter 7 of the Rhode Island One and Two Family Dwelling Code with an up-close look into the codes that specifically cover wall coverings and sheathing.

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.



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# RIBA Contractor Training

2½ Credit Hours:

## Energy Code

July 30<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Friday, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 8 to 11 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 Larry Desormier, this class covers Chapter 11 of the Rhode Island One and Two Family Dwelling Code. The class will also take a detailed look into the effects of the energy code.

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.



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## QuickBooks® Specifics

July 16<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Friday, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 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.

Join instructor Bill Cunningham to dive deeper into project and cost accounting with QuickBooks®.

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.



## Start and Grow Your Construction Business

July 20<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Tuesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 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 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.





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## 8 Hour Lead Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course

July 15<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Thursday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 7:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**WHERE:** This is an in-person class at Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees.

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

**FOR INFORMATION & TO REGISTER:** Contact Martin Misenhimer at [mmisenhimer@ribuilders.org](mailto:mmisenhimer@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

Learn everything you need to know to comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule (Lead Paint Removal Training Classes).

This course is required to obtain or renew a Lead Safe Remod-

elers/Renovator certification, which is necessary for work in all pre-1978 buildings. This course covers the EPA's Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) requirements in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

A written exam is given at the end of the course. A passing grade allows attendees to apply for certification through the Rhode Island Dept. of Health and the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Pre-registration and a photo are required for your certificate. This must be a head shot only. E-mail it to [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org) at least five days before the class.

Again, you must pre-register for this course. **This is an in-person class, and seating is limited.** There will be no admittance to the class without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.



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## Siding Specifics

July 21<sup>st</sup>

**WHEN:** Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 8 to 10 a.m.


**WHERE:** This is an in-person class at Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees.

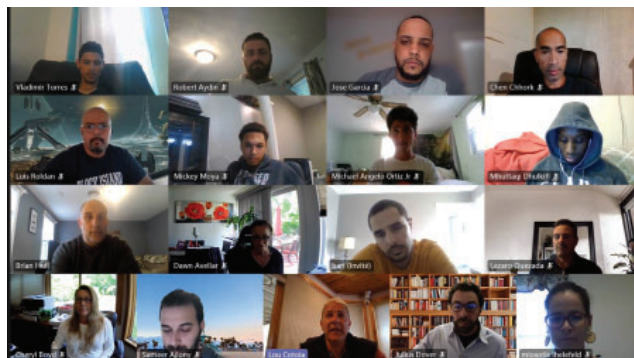
**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

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

Join instructor Chris Boilard of CertainTeed® for hands-on training with CertainTeed Siding Product Group's Mobile Training Vehicle and Application Specialist.

You must pre-register for this course. **This is an in-person class, and seating is limited.** There will be no admittance to the class without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for this class to be free. 

## New VESL class begins



**A new Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) basic carpentry class began via Zoom on June 1<sup>st</sup>.** Students are enthusiastic about learning, and potential employers are welcome to visit the class. For details, contact Betty Bernal at (401) 500-9146 or bbernal@ribuilders.org or visit [RIBuilders.org/vesl-training-program-details](http://RIBuilders.org/vesl-training-program-details). More Trade Training News on page 12.

## Deck Specifics

July 29<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Tuesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 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.

Taught by instructor Patrick Kidd, this class will cover: Critical connections for decks, corrosion considerations, understanding continuous load-path (gravity/uplift/lateral), and concrete anchorage.

You must pre-register for this course. **This is an in-person class, and seating is limited.** There will be no admittance to the class without pre-registration.

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

## Massachusetts CSL Continuing Education

July 29<sup>th</sup>


**WHEN:** Thursday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

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

**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.

For those with a Massachusetts Construction Supervisor License (CSL), this will be a six-hour code review continuing education class. **This is an in-person class, and seating is limited.** There will be no admittance to the class without pre-registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free. 


## Did you know?

Did you know there's a FREE job hosting site for companies in the construction trades in Rhode Island, northeastern Connecticut and southeastern Massachusetts? Our construction career training participants and recent graduates are actively seeking employment, and their resumes can be found on the job portal of **RCWPjobs.com**.

For a limited time, any job posting added on RCWPjobs.com will also get its own custom-created post to be shared on social media. So don't hesitate to sign up for your free account and start posting your

jobs today.

To learn more about how to post a job on this website, please contact the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP) affiliate of the Rhode Island Builders Association (RIBA) at (401) 438-7411 or email cboyd@ribuilders.org

RCWPjobs.com is Rhode Island's industry-specific residential construction job portal made just for you, no matter which positions you are looking to fill within your organization. 

# K. Joseph Shekarchi

## Speaker of the R.I. House of Representatives

*K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Warwick) was first elected to the Rhode Island House of Representatives in 2012 and was elected speaker in January of this year. Previously, he was House majority leader, and chairman of the House Labor Committee.*

*A 1980 graduate of Mount St. Charles Academy, Speaker Shekarchi graduated from Suffolk University in 1984, returning to earn his law degree in 1990. In addition to his duties as a legislator, he has been a successful attorney in private practice for over 25 years and has been legal counsel to the Warwick Housing Authority for the same period. He is a former Warwick city solicitor.*

*A lifelong Warwick resident, Speaker Shekarchi is the former chairman of the Rhode Island Auto Dealers Hearing Board and a former member of both the Rhode Island Judicial Tenure and Discipline Board and the Coastal Resources Management Council.*

*A prolific legislator, he has nailed his colors to the mast when it comes to addressing the state's housing crisis.*



**THE BUILDER:** From your perspective, what is the current state of housing in Rhode Island?

**SHEKARCHI:** That's an easy answer. As your readers know, we have a tremendous shortage of housing. Inventory is roughly one-third of what it has been historically. Prices are through the roof, especially post-COVID.

**THE BUILDER:** What are the social implications of this crisis?

**SHEKARCHI:** Clearly, people have to make decisions about paying rent vs. being able to eat, and how to support their families. The difficulties of obtaining the basic necessities of life are causing many to move into very crowded situations, sharing homes and apartments. During the pandemic last year, we saw how unhealthy it is to have two or three families living in the same home.

**THE BUILDER:** You've said that the housing crisis has business implications also.

**SHEKARCHI:** First of all, without enough housing stock, many big employers who might want to relocate here can't find housing for their workforce. So, it gives them pause. That even affects us when employers want to move to Massachusetts, because Rhode Island is a lower-cost housing option. So border communities like Woonsocket and Cumberland have seen sus-

tained increases in housing demand driven by cross-border workers coming to Rhode Island to live.

We've seen this in parts of South County too, with Pfizer coming into Connecticut. In our respect, it helps that we're a lower-cost option than Massachusetts or Connecticut, but we're pricing ourselves out. The parity is getting closer and closer because there are not a lot of good real estate deals left in Rhode Island.

It's more and more difficult for us to increase the inventory of new homes. The regulatory processes, the large-lot zoning requirements, Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) permitting, the Army Corps of Engineers, issues of drinking-water capacity, sewer capacity...these are all very important factors that limit the growth of new housing stock.

**THE BUILDER:** Particularly with some of the legislation you've sponsored, do you feel that we finally have a statewide housing policy on the way?

**SHEKARCHI:** Yes. Part of our legislative package this year is a bill I sponsored to create a housing czar who would do two things. First, to coordinate. We have some very strong advocates for low- to moderate-income housing. Rhode Island Housing and HousingWorks RI are just two examples, one a state agency and the other a private sector not-for-profit.

We don't have one coordinated policy like Massachusetts does. So, a housing czar would help coordinate a statewide housing policy. We can have metrics. The General Assembly can call that person before various committees to find out what we're doing right and what we're doing wrong...and basically tell the General Assembly what we need to do to help alleviate this problem.

**THE BUILDER:** Can you tell us about the two legislative commissions now being formed and how they can help with the housing crisis?

**SHEKARCHI:** One commission will review the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, to be chaired by Dr. June Speakman, a professor at Roger Williams University. They will have one year to conduct studies, have hearings and report their findings to the General Assembly.

Also, there will be a larger and more diverse legislative commission to study all aspects of land use, preservation, development, production, regulation, zoning, housing and the environment. They

see *INTERVIEW...next page*



## ***INTERVIEW...from previous page***

will also have a year to conduct hearings and find out the best way to modernize and update our land-use policies. We haven't done that since 1990.

In the last 30 years, since both of these issues were addressed, there have been dramatic changes with the environment, with housing, with tax credits, with large-lot zoning, with capacity issues with water and sewer systems, and more. Take Jamestown, for example. Half the island has municipal drinking water and half doesn't. Parts of Warwick don't have municipal drinking water.

There's a hodgepodge of regulatory agencies, and every one of them can become an impediment to the ability to construct a home, to build up housing stocks.

We want to look at zoning. If we can zone a commercial building, why can't we automatically allow mixed zoning so that we could have a park or re-use of some of the old commercial buildings as housing?

We'll look at tax credits. We've used historic tax credits in the past to spur development. We might want to continue that practice, but now use it to spur affordable housing or a combination thereof. Suppose 51 percent of any tax credit we give you will have to be used for affordable housing, workforce housing.

We want to make sure that a young family getting started or a young professional graduating college wants to stay in Rhode Island to either build a business, stay in a family business, or get a job with one of the employers coming here, staying here and growing.

Fidelity just announced 500 new jobs in Rhode Island. We have to make sure those people have good homes in good areas, so they can raise families.

**THE BUILDER: With any potential reform of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, how could you be sure that it's going to have any more teeth than the original law did?**

**SHEKARCHI:** That's one thing we'll be looking at, but we also want to consider ways to incentivize communities. We have some federal infrastructure money that Sen. Jack Reed and our congressional delegation were able to obtain for us. So, we now have ways to incentivize the expansion of a sewer line or drinking-water line, or to improve the capacity of a system. Another approach could be to tap city and town aid for communities that just refuse to even make an attempt at affordable housing. There are a lot of tools available.

We need to look at expanding our housing authorities here in Rhode Island. They do a very good job operating and managing it, but we need to stimulate them to grow, to increase their housing stock, because that helps everybody. There's just a tremendous need for more housing all across the spectrum, especially on the lower economic side of the scale.

This commission will have a broad base of people from all walks of life to balance its work.

**THE BUILDER: Getting back to the notion of a statewide housing policy, how would you envision cooperation between state government, local governments and the private sector in solving the housing problem overall?**

**SHEKARCHI:** That will be one of the functions of the two commissions we discussed, to find best practices. But, it will really come down to the housing czar, someone whose full-time job will be crafting the best housing policy.

There are 49 other states we can look at for examples. What are they doing in Arizona to solve their housing problems? What are they doing in Texas? Right now, we don't have anyone who looks at the whole picture, the comprehensive housing policies that exist throughout the country.

What's the best place for us to emulate? We might find a policy here or a strategy there that would work for us. I think we all realize, though, that there's no one silver bullet, no one-size-fits-all policy that will get this done. It's going to be a collaborative, long-term, sustainable effort of prioritizing it, funding it and making it happen.

**THE BUILDER: In addition to housing, what is your overall pro-business policy going forward?**

**SHEKARCHI:** The immediate goal is to help all Rhode Island businesses recover from this COVID crisis. Just last Friday (May 21<sup>st</sup>) the General Assembly passed, and the governor signed, legislation that would help small businesses attract more workers. People have been staying home and collecting unemployment rather than working, so now we'll be able to expand the WorkShare Program in Rhode Island to help people collect unemployment but also go back to work.

I want to look at our tax policies to make sure we're competitive with our neighbors. We've increased the minimum wage to help workers go back to work. We want a sustainable path. I was author of the Qualified Jobs Incentive Tax Credit, with over 3,000 Rhode Islanders participating in that program at no cost to the state. It helps generate high-paying, private-sector jobs.

We're looking at a lot of creative ways to be receptive to the business community, and we need to look at what other states are doing and to make sure that businesses thrive here. For example, we signed a 20-year deal with IGT and Twin River, two very successful, growing companies, the third largest source of revenue in the state, locking them in by giving them contracts and extending their current contracts. Gov. Don Carcieri was the original author of that 20 years ago, and I give him and the General Assembly credit for that.

If IGT didn't have that lottery contract, there's no reason for them to keep their 1,100 jobs here in Rhode Island. Zero. We want Twin River and Bally's Corp., which are exploding with growth, to stay here in Rhode Island and to pay better wages.

We have 39 cities and towns, a beautiful coastline, and Narragansett Bay. Rhode Island is a desirable place to live, and we have great institutions. We're looking at what's going to happen with our hospital systems – will they merge or not – and what will be best for patient care, for job protections. The health sector is a very large employer in Rhode Island.

**THE BUILDER: Speaking of jobs, can you comment on the importance of career and technical education in the state, with which the Rhode Island Builders Association is heavily involved through Real Jobs Rhode Island?**

*see INTERVIEW...next page*

## **INTERVIEW...from previous page**

**SHEKARCHI:** Yes. Especially during the pandemic, skilled workers have been much in demand, especially in the residential construction industry, which was deemed essential. Those who could do those skilled jobs operated all through the pandemic with precautions and protections, but they operated. We need that skilled workforce!

When I put together the “skinny budget” back in December, we made sure there was extra money put into the Real Jobs Rhode Island program for that reason: To help train and grow the skilled workforce. We’ve set up a training center in northern Rhode Island, with CVS, to help make sure there is enough staffing for pharmacies in the future. We’ve done one with Electric Boat, with the Community College of Rhode Island and with New England Tech. It’s important for us to work collaboratively with them to keep that pipeline of education for people interested in working in the trades.

**THE BUILDER:** What’s your overall message for the residential construction industry?

**SHEKARCHI:** Hope is on the way! I hear you loud and clear. We’re doing everything we can to increase housing stock, to help with the regulatory burdens.

As I’ve said many times, it’s not always the state. It’s the cities and towns that somehow can become burdensome. We have passed

the “quorum bill,” which RIBA supported. Sometimes local boards can’t get a quorum together for a meeting. That can mean a delay, or two delays. That’s 60 to 90 days for a development application. This bill will help eliminate that.

Also supported by RIBA, we’ve limited the practice of sharing building inspectors, who sometimes couldn’t return a phone call because they were working for two, three or even four towns at once. We’ve also made permitting changes, so that once a project has been accepted by a city or town, they have to act within 45 days.

We will continue to make changes like this not to supplant local authority, but to make sure they act in a timely manner. As your readers know, the worst thing you can do to a builder is not to say “yes” or “no,” it’s to not act. So, help is on the way.

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# Mass. awards \$2.5 million to fund first-time homeowner education

As of the beginning of June, the Massachusetts Division of Banks (division) awarded over \$2.5 million in grants to fund first-time homeownership education programs and foreclosure prevention counseling centers throughout the Commonwealth. The funds awarded through the Chapter 206 grant program went to a total of 21 organizations, including 10 foreclosure prevention regional centers and 11 consumer counseling organizations.

Chapter 206 grants assist homeowners who are often experienc-

ing some type of financial hardship caused by either a loss of or reduction in income or a medical issue as well as prospective homebuyers who are determining if homeownership is right for them.

The division administers funding of these grants with fees associated with the licensing of mortgage loan originators. Funded organizations served over 9,000 Massachusetts consumers and homeowners in 2020.

"Over the past year, due to the pandemic emergency, it has been more important than ever to help keep the people of the Commonwealth in their homes. The division remains committed to providing resources and consumer education at this critical time," said Edward A. Palleschi, undersecretary for consumer affairs and business regulation.

"The organizations receiving Chapter 206 grants aim to make homeownership feasible for many by offering guidance to prospective home buyers and a lifeline to those struggling with home retention. The value of that work is priceless."

Since the inception of the grant program in 2008, the Division has awarded over \$18 million to organizations that have been able to assist almost 60,000 consumers thanks to these grants.

R I  
B A

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://MassHousing.com).



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# Housing starts cool as costs climb

## National Association of Home Builders

Housing production fell in April because of the increased costs of building materials that have priced out potential home buyers.

Overall housing starts decreased 9.5 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.57 million units, according to a report from the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The April reading of 1.57 million starts is the number of housing units builders would begin if development kept this pace for the next 12 months.

Within this overall number, single-family starts decreased 13.4 percent to a 1.09 million seasonally adjusted annual rate. The multifamily sector, which includes apartment buildings and condos, increased 0.8 percent to a 482,000 pace.

Overall permits increased 0.3 percent to a 1.76 million unit annualized rate in April. Single-family permits decreased 3.8 percent to a 1.15 million unit rate. Multifamily

permits increased 8.9 percent to a 611,000 pace. Looking at regional permit data compared to the previous month, permits are 8.4 percent higher in the Northeast.



## RFP issued for Zero Energy projects

Rhode Island Housing (RIH) and the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (OER) have issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the 2021 Zero Energy for the Ocean State (ZEOS) Program.

This program offers up to \$750,000 in grants to design and construct affordable, energy efficient housing to serve low- and moderate-income Rhode Islanders.

This program is the result of a public-private partnership between RIH, OER and National Grid to stimulate innovative, replicable solutions that use cost saving, clean-energy technologies in homes.

Program partners seek proposals from qualified teams to design and construct affordable, energy-efficient, Zero Energy Buildings (ZEBs) that use technologies such as solar, storage and electric heat pumps, and enable demand-response participation.

The RFP documents are now posted on the RIH website at: [RIHousing.com/rfps-rfqs](http://RIHousing.com/rfps-rfqs). All applications are due by 5 p.m. on Friday July 30<sup>th</sup>.



## CONFERENCE...from page 1

reference, it is 'the best of times and the worst of times,'" said Dr. Dietz. "If you're an existing homeowner, home prices are raising your wealth. If you're an aspiring homebuyer or renter, you definitely have affordability challenges."

We can expect rapid economic growth in the rest of 2021, but accompanied by rising interest rates, according to Dr. Dietz.

"Building materials have become very expensive, and supply chains are a mess," he added. "We're also seeing continued demand in the single-family and remodeling markets, where telecommuting is going to remain the case for many people, even as in-person working is able to return to normal."

In discussing housing affordability, Dr. Dietz tied into some Rhode Island-specific data from the NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Opportunity Index (HOI).

"Back in 2012, the HOI in Rhode Island was above 80. That means that 80 percent of new and existing home sales in Rhode Island were affordable for the typical family. Today, that has declined to 68," he stated.

"That downward trend was driven by the fact that we've seen a 29 percent increase in home prices over the last five years."

Dr. Dietz went into greater depth on issues related to interest rates, the cost of building materials, shortages of skilled labor, and the cost added to construction by restrictive regulations. To increase production, he urged officials to reduce regulatory burdens, support the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, allow quicker permit approval, enable more town house and "missing middle" construction, avoid taxes and fees on residential construction, and facilitate more housing production through rehabilitation of existing buildings.

A panel discussion followed Dr. Dietz's presentation. This

included Rhode Island Builders Association Executive Officer John Marcantonio.

"What's happened over the last 20 years or so is that we have lost builders, sometimes to other states where it's easier to build," Mr. Marcantonio said. "We have small builders who might build three, four or five units a year. They're no longer building those. Overburdening regulations and other factors have hampered that."

He also pointed out that "generational transfer" is less common in the residential construction industry.

"Father teaches son or daughter about home building, and that knowledge and experience are transferred: We've lost that in a big way. And our industry is aging out. So, when we talk about the industry lacking labor, it's actually going to be lacking builders in many areas."

Mr. Marcantonio pointed out that there are many specialized contractors, as in roofing, siding, painting and flooring.

"But we're losing the person who builds and develops the units. So, for us, workforce development - contractor development - is a big issue."

Other panelists included Brenda Clement of HousingWorks RI at Roger Williams University, Travis Escobar of Millennial RI, Realtor® Ronald Phipps, Sharon Morris of Omni Development Corp., Karen Santilli of Crossroads Rhode Island, President Gregory Mancini of the North Kingstown Town Council, and Central Falls Mayor Maria Rivera.

Along with Gov. McKee, co-hosts of the event included Lt. Gov. Sabina Matos, and Rhode Island Secretary of Commerce Stefan Pryor. House Majority Leader Christopher R. Blazewski (D-Providence) represented Speaker of the House K. Joseph Shekarchi, who was dealing with the aftermath of a fire at his law office.

View the entire Housing Rhode Island 2030 conference at the Facebook page of Gov. Daniel J. McKee.



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