

## O'Donnell team reelected to lead RIBA in '21-'22



President  
Carol A. O'Donnell

Vice President  
James G. Deslandes Sr.

Treasurer  
Jason M. DaPonte

Secretary  
Alexander A. Mitchell

*Story on page 3*

## Despite housing crisis, R.I. lags nation in building permits per capita

**Persistent shortage doesn't dampen demand.**

**By Paul F. Eno** *Editor*

Despite a continuing crisis in the state's affordable housing supply, Rhode Island is dead last in America when it comes to building permits for new housing units issued per capita, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, gathered for 2020 and the first few months of 2021.

Per capita data reflect building permits issued per 1,000 residents, as opposed to the total number, where states with smaller populations tend to rank lower anyway.

Rhode Island stands at 1.3 permits issued per 1,000 residents, lowest in America. Next lowest in New England is Connecticut, with 1.5 permits per 1,000 residents, followed by Massachusetts at 2.4, New

Hampshire at 3.1, Vermont at 3.2 and Maine at 3.9.

Leading the nation is the always-booming District of Columbia, with 10.7, followed by Idaho with 10.4, and Utah with 9.7.

Rhode Island issued a total of 1,374 building permits for new housing units in 2020, 976 of them for single-family units, also lowest in the nation.

### ***The Pandemic Effects***

Just what effects of the COVID-19 pandemic most affected Rhode Island can be hard to quantify. But chief among them have to be the soaring price of lumber and other building materials (*Related story on page 8*), along with disruptions in the supply chain and current labor shortages.

None of this has put a damper on the unprecedented demand for construction and remodeling services. Nationally, in fact, building permits for new housing  
*see PERMITS...page 32*

**FEATURED  
PRODUCTS AND  
SERVICES FOR  
NOVEMBER**

*Middle Section*

**COVERAGE AND  
PHOTOS FROM  
RIBA's 2021  
ANNUAL  
MEETING**

*Pages 9-11*

**Will there be  
a statewide  
housing policy?**

*The Rhode Island Builder sits down with Senate President Dominick Ruggerio to discuss this and other housing priorities.*

*Page 27*

**The Home Show  
returns in April!**

Reserve your exhibit space now for the Rhode Island Builders Association's biggest marketing event of the year, the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Rhode Island Home Show, and get your ad into the 2022 *RIBA Directory and Buyer's Guide*.

*Page 16*

**Housing Fact  
Book released**

HousingWorks releases the 2021 *Housing Fact Book*, and there are some stark findings about affordability in Rhode Island.

*Page 3*

# President's Message



Carol O'Donnell

## A critical year, and RIBA has come through!

At our Annual Meeting on October 12<sup>th</sup>, we began by recognizing the person who arranged our Annual Meetings for the past 20 years, Elizabeth Carpenter. Liz was a friend to each and every one of us. Because of that friendship, she took much joy in coordinating this event and making sure that everyone here had a wonderful evening.

Those of us who had the pleasure of interacting with Liz were missing her that evening! We honored her with a moment of silence in gratitude for all that she did for RIBA, and the passion with which she did it.

As for my other feelings that evening, I had to say that becoming president of

the Rhode Island Builders Association in 2020, at the first Annual Meeting in history where everyone had to wear masks certainly set the tone for a challenging year. However, beginning under the leadership of my predecessor, Tim Stasiunas, RIBA has navigated this pandemic with great success.

Much of what RIBA achieves is done behind the scenes, and that was certainly the case during the pandemic. Negotiations to keep the residential construction industry open and to draft realistic jobsite protocols were just two of the accomplishments.

Not only have we helped keep everyone working to provide good homes for the people of Rhode Island, but we have also provided for the future of our industry. RIBA is now charged with growing contractors with all the education they need to succeed.

Our Contractor Development Program now provides all the courses needed to meet continuing education mandates, and other courses to strengthen our businesses.

And RIBA now guides future contrac-

tors from their very first days in the industry. Our diverse and intensive trade training opportunities have become a national model for other HBAs.

Now, we even help recruit new building officials and help with Minority Business Enterprise certification.

RIBA continues to work hard to make the need for more housing production a front-and-center issue in Rhode Island. Legislative leaders are now on board, and housing has become a top priority at the State House. In fact, some game-changers are in the works, such as a statewide housing policy, and a state "housing czar" to guide it.

Thanks for these successes go to our dedicated members who volunteer their time, and to our hard-working staff. Together, we make it all work!

To all of you, and to our expanding membership, which has crossed the 1,000-company mark since the downturn of 2008, thank you for the honor of another year as your president.



### The Rhode Island Builder

Official publication of the  
Rhode Island Builders Association  
since 1951

#### Officers of the Rhode Island Builders Association

President ..... Carol O'Donnell  
Vice President..... James Deslandes Sr.  
Treasurer ..... Jason M. DaPonte  
Secretary ..... Alexander Mitchell

#### The Rhode Island Builder Report

Publisher..... John Marcantonio  
Editor ..... Paul F. Eno

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## DEADLINE FOR THE DECEMBER ISSUE

All copy, ads and photos must be to us by

# Friday, October 29

E-mail material to [builder@newriverpress.com](mailto:builder@newriverpress.com)  
or fax: (401) 356-0913

For RIBA  
membership information contact Elise Geddes  
401-438-7400 • or [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org)



## 2021 Fact Book has stark warnings about housing and health in R.I.

The *2021 Housing Fact Book* takes a sobering look at the relationship between housing and health, to show how critical healthy, affordable homes are to Rhode Islanders.

Released on October 15<sup>th</sup> by HousingWorks RI (HWRI) at Roger Williams University, the *Fact Book* bases its findings on the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) criteria from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

“In Rhode Island, the primary driver of the health risks posed by the state’s housing is the age of our housing stock, with nearly three-quarters predating safety regulations for contaminants like lead and asbestos,” said HWRI Communications Coordinator Amy Cola.

“Older homes also pose hazards related to accessibility, and cost more to heat and cool. Housing of any age can lead to health risks if not maintained or kept clean. Untended safety repairs can lead to burns, trips and falls, posing risks especially to the youngest and oldest members of any household,” Ms. Cola stated.

According to the *Fact Book*, of the 66,588 children aged five and under in Rhode Island, 73 percent live in units built before 1980, and 48 percent of those are aged three and under. Of those aged 65 or older, 23 percent (40,243) have a disability and live in a home constructed before 1980.

“The affordability crisis in Rhode Island has only been exacerbated by the effects of COVID-19,” said Brenda Clement, Director of HousingWorks RI. “Urgent housing needs across the state, and the continued barriers to the development of new homes, underscore the need for state and local leaders to remain vigilant in their efforts to ensure adequate funding. With the state’s per capita investment—at \$18.34 in 2020—continuously remaining the lowest per capita state investment in New England, the time for government leaders to produce, preserve and sustain Rhode Island’s housing inventory is long overdue. We must make the necessary investments today to ensure a prosperous future for Rhode Island and its residents long-term.”

Other key facts regarding affordability from this year’s *Fact Book* reveal:

- More than 140,000 Rhode Island households, nearly 35 percent, are housing cost-burdened. Cost-burdened households pay more than 30 percent of their income on housing, leaving less money for households to spend in support of our local economies.

see *HOUSING...* page 32



# Construction Loans

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# Looking Ahead

## November 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 [RI-Builders.org/vesl-training-program-details](http://RI-Builders.org/vesl-training-program-details). *Related story on page 31.*

♦ **November 4<sup>th</sup>: 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course** - Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 24.*

♦ **November 5<sup>th</sup>: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is Time Management for Contractors. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 24.*

☞ ♦ **November 10<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Topic is Mold Awareness Training. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 22.*

♦ **November 12<sup>th</sup>: RIBA Contractor Training** - Topic is Photography for Your Construction Business. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 25.*


☞ ♦ **November 16<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors -1 Credit Hours** - Topic is Advanced Building Science and Zero Energy Homes. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 22.*

☞ ♦ **November 18<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2 Credit Hours** - Topic is Understanding Quickbooks Online®. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 23.*



☞ ♦ **November 19<sup>th</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours** - Topic is Social Media and Digital Marketing. Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 23.*



*More information, registration and payment for most RIBA events is available at [RIBUILDERS.org](http://RIBUILDERS.org).*

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

 Indicates a RIBA-sponsored event.

  **November 23<sup>rd</sup>: Continuing Education for Contractors - 2½ Credit Hours - Topic is How to Start and Grow Your Construction Business.** Taught via Zoom.  
*Details on page 23.*

 **November 30<sup>th</sup>: 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course** - Taught via Zoom. *Details on page 26.*

## *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.*

## *February 2022*

 **February 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> - International Builders Show** - **Orlando, Florida.**  
*Visit [Buildersshow.com](http://Buildersshow.com).*

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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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CALL RIBA AT (401) 438-7400. Non-members: \$20 per credit hour. For information about online or on-site courses:  
Contact Bob Salvas, [bsalvas@ribuilders.org](mailto:bsalvas@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.*

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

## New Members

Thomas Cerbarano	TommaHawk Home Improvements	Michael Masse	KG the Handyman
Charles Paradis	Paradis Construction	Dennis Mello	DJM Construction Services
Michael Sepe	Sole Source Construction	John Monacelli	John Monacelli
Carla DeStefano	SWAP Inc.	Brandon Morissette	Morissette Landscaping
Jerry Anderson	Lansing Building Products	William Muller	The Gutter Gods
Michelle Black	DJ Black Remodeling	Frank Passarella	Frank Passarella
Dean Bogda	Dean Restoration	Christopher Phinney	Elmwood Carpentry
Christopher Boyd	C.R. Boyd Construction	James Pray	James Pray
Paul Bradish	Handy Hubby	Brian Rodrigues	Brian Taylor Rodrigues
Christopher Condon	Ocean Ridge Construction	Victor Rodrigues	Victor Rodrigues Handyman & General Construction
Shaun Curley	Curley & Sons Inc.	Lucas Tiberio	Lucas Tiberio Jr.
Stephen Deleo	Stephen Deleo	John Zambarano	Zambarano Home Improvement
Steven Fonseca	Ace Concrete & Epoxy LLC	Sandra Fedyakov	East Shore Builders
Everett Gibbons	Concrete Concepts RI	Peter Ashby	Refined Properties LLC
Shane Krahenbill	Pro-Green Cleaning & Disaster Spec.		
Eric Leduc	Eric Leduc		

## Renewed Members

California Closets/Creative Closets	Mary B. Cool	Lincoln Energy Mechanical Services Inc.	Anthony Vessella
CAP Design Build LLC	Arthur Klidonas	Memo Construction Inc.	Ladd Meyer
Case Construction Co.	Frank Gustafson	MJM Construction Inc.	Kelly O'Connell
Chris Electric Ltd.	Christopher Kalil	Moran Properties LLC	Steven Moran
Don Jestings & Sons LLC	Donald Jestings	Newport Modular Homes	Paul Bernard
Durkin Cottage Realty	James Durkin	Omega Financial Corp.	Mark Marcus
Edgewood Arms Inc.	Ryan Taylor	Q's Pressure Washing LLC	Christy Querceto
Fortin Place LLC	Zach Schartner	Read's Landscape Const. Inc.	John Read
GreatScapes LLC	Stephen Puget	REPM, INC.	John Boucher
H.I.P. Const. LLC d/b/a Rebath of R.I. & Southern Mass.	Sean Senno	Rite Glass Inc.	Russell Carpentier
Hardwood Design Inc.	William Bivona	Services Plus Corp.	Romualdo Defreitas
Holland Electric Inc.	Rick Holland	Shalvey Brothers Landscape Inc.	Thomas Shalvey
J.A.M. Construction Co., Inc.	John Marshall	Stateside Vinyl Siding Co.	Ronald Lariviere
Kay-Cor Contractors, Inc.	Herc Salustio	Stephen's Masonry Inc.	Stephen Feole
Kitchen & Countertop Center of NE	Dan Gauthier	Swell Construction	Martin Parker
Lehigh Realty LLC	Carol Gohl	Turgeon Home Improvement	Thomas Turgeon
		Wm. J. Lamar & Sons Inc.	William Ricci

## Applications/Pending Members\*

Cory Colwell	Kadijatu Minah
John Garrett	David Rave
Dennis Marini	Anthony Russo
James McCarthy	Mike Vellucci
Richard Meffert	

\*Subject to registration with the RICRLB. Company name will be printed once application is approved.

There are so many great reasons to be a RIBA member

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# NAHB appeals to White House for relief on material costs, supply chain woes

## National Association of Home Builders

With builders continuing to grapple with lumber price swings and building material supply chain disruptions, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) sent a letter to President Joe Biden on October 6<sup>th</sup>, urging the White House to take the following actions:

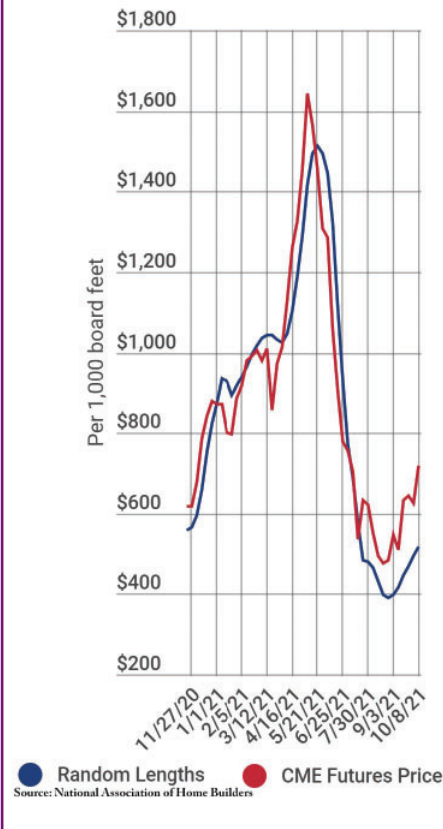
- Redouble its efforts to address lumber price volatility, which has seen cash prices climb by more than 25 percent over the past month;
- Address supply chain bottlenecks for lumber and other building materials and supplies, which are causing significant delays and keeping home prices about 20 percent higher than they were a year ago; and
- Return to the negotiating table with Canada to develop a new softwood lumber agreement that will end tariffs on lumber shipments into the United States.

## Key Issues

NAHB's letter stated that these are "three key issues that continue to trouble our members, each extremely problematic but, when combined, will severely hamper the ability to provide affordable housing and provide jobs to strengthen the economy."

"Since the early days of the Biden

The Latest Framing Lumber Prices



administration, NAHB has been actively engaged with the White House on these issues," an NAHB statement said. "We held

several meetings with top administration officials, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge, and this ongoing dialogue culminated with a White House building materials summit this summer that was organized by NAHB."

NAHB continued: "While lumber prices have fallen sharply since peaking in mid-May, prices have been moving upward over the past month. This is why NAHB continues to urge the administration to make it an important priority to address lumber and building material supply chain issues that are contributing to price volatility and harming housing affordability."

NAHB's letter to the president stated:

"On behalf of the 140,000 members of the National Association of Home Builders of the United States (NAHB), I am writing to once again alert you to the volatile lumber prices NAHB and its members have experienced over the course of this year. When compounded by severe disruptions in the supply chain impacting all building materials and components, the housing sector and the economy cannot help but be negatively affected."

See the entire letter to President Biden at [nabh.org/-/media/NAHB/advocacy/docs/top-priorities/lumber/biden-lumber-letter-october-2021.pdf](http://nabh.org/-/media/NAHB/advocacy/docs/top-priorities/lumber/biden-lumber-letter-october-2021.pdf).

## EPA reverts to old WOTUS rule that was tempered under Trump

## National Association of Home Builders

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently halted implementation of the "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS) regulatory definition as finalized under the Trump Administration's Navigable Waters Protection Rule (NWPR), reverting to a pre-2015 WOTUS definition.

The September 3<sup>rd</sup> announcement was an abrupt reversal because the agencies had previously committed to a series of public hearings, followed by a two-step fed-

eral rulemaking process, during which the WOTUS definition as finalized under the NWPR was to remain in effect nationwide.

To help builders and developers understand how to move forward with ongoing or planned projects, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) developed FAQs to provide interim (unofficial) guidance based upon the Clean Water Act (CWA) statute, existing regulatory guidance documents, and past practices by the agencies during previous instances of changing interpretations of the WOTUS regulatory definition.

NAHB will continue to press the agencies for additional guidance concerning the status of the ruling by the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona to vacate the NWPR, timing of expected field hearings by the agencies on a new WOTUS definition, and a timeframe for when the Biden administration will propose a new WOTUS regulatory definition under the CWA.

You can access the WOTUS FAQs at [NAHB.org/advocacy/industry-issues/environment/waters-of-the-us/wotus-faq](http://NAHB.org/advocacy/industry-issues/environment/waters-of-the-us/wotus-faq).

For more details, contact Mike Mittelholzer at [mmittelholzer@nabh.org](mailto:mmittelholzer@nabh.org).

# O'Donnell vows to continue RIBA growth, successes

President O'Donnell's announcement that RIBA membership has now exceeded 1,000 companies brought a standing ovation.

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

"Becoming president of the Rhode Island Builders Association in 2020, at the first Annual Meeting in history where everyone had to wear masks, certainly set the tone for a challenging year. However, beginning under the leadership of my predecessor, Tim Stasiunas, RIBA has navigated this pandemic with great success."

With those words, Carol A. O'Donnell of CRM Modular Homes began her second term as RIBA's president. The election and installation of officers took place on October 12<sup>th</sup>, following dinner at the Quidnessett Country Club, North Kingstown.

"Not only have we helped keep everyone working to provide good homes for the people of Rhode Island, but we have also provided for the future of our industry. RIBA is now charged with growing contractors with all the education they need to succeed."

The evening began with networking and an open bar, generously sponsored by Consolidated Concrete and Douglas Lumber Kitchens & Home Center.

At 6:30 p.m., President O'Donnell opened the meeting with fond words in memory of the late Elizabeth Carpenter, linchpin of the RIBA staff for 23 years, and a moment of silence.

Assisted by RIBA General Counsel Christine Engustian, Immediate Past President Timothy A. Stasiunas presided over the election and installation of officers and the Board of Directors for 2021-2022, along with installation of officers of RIBA's Professional Women in Building Council for 2021-2022.

Also re-elected were Vice President James Deslandes of Deslandes Construc-



**RIBA President Carol A. O'Donnell is sworn in for her second term by Immediate Past President Timothy A. Stasiunas during the Annual Meeting on October 12<sup>th</sup>.**

tion Inc.; Treasurer Jason DaPonte of Saniveri, Kimball & Co., LLP; and Secretary Alexander Mitchell of Meridian Custom Homes.

Elected as local directors, with terms expiring in 2022, were Peter DiStefano of DiStefano Brothers Construction Inc., Donald Hamel of Andersen Corp., Kenneth Jones of Ken Jones Construction Inc., Jesse Maynard of Maynard Construction BRC Inc., Maria Fratiello of National Building Products, Janelle Photopoulos of Blakely Interior Design, Matthew Semonik of Arnold Lumber Co., Jordan Stone of Peregrine Group LLC, and Carla DeStefano of SWAP Inc.

Elected as local directors, with terms expiring in 2023, were: Michael Artesani Jr. of W. Artesani & Sons Inc., David C. Baud of Baud Builders Inc., Kenneth Coury of Riverhead Building Supply, Matthew O. Davitt of Davitt Design Build Inc., Larry

Desormier Jr. of Desormier Construction LLC, Tanya Donahue of R.I. Kitchen & Bath Inc., Scott Grace of Overhead Door Garage Headquarters, Vincent J. Marcantonio of Marcantonio Design Builders, Nicholas Reuter of Picerne Real Estate Group, Ramon Feliz of Complete Construction, and Robert Goodreau of Property Advisory Group.

Elected as local directors, with terms expiring in 2024, are: Frank Bragantin of Ferland Corp., Joseph A. Casali of Joe Casali Engineering Inc., William Dawson of Bank 5, Robert F. DeBlois Jr. of DeBlois Building Co., Michael DeCesare of DeCesare Building Co., Sean Finnegan of Coventry Lumber Inc., Thomas Kelly of Ecologic Spray Foam Insulation Inc., Dean W. Martineau of Capstone Properties, Kevin Moran of Moran Home Improvements, Jonathan Paine of J.D. Paine Design & Build, along with Marc Petrowicz of Unilock.



For RIBA

membership information contact Elise Geddes  
401-438-7400 • or [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org)





▲ President O'Donnell, right, receives a bouquet of flowers from RIBA Operations Manager Robin Barlow, on behalf of the staff and members.



Mr. Stasiunas swears in the other RIBA officers. From left are Secretary Alexander A. Mitchell of Meridian Custom Homes; Treasurer Jason M. DaPonte of Sansiveri, Kimball & Co., LLP; and James G. Deslandes Sr. of Deslandes Construction Inc.

▲ The newly installed members of the RIBA Board of Directors: See the complete list on page 9.



▲ President O'Donnell swears in Jacqueline Pagel of Pella Windows Inc. as vice president of the Professional Women in Building Council.



Enjoying some after-dinner conversation are, from left, Jacqueline Pagel of Pella Windows (a Premier Sponsor of the event), vice president of RIBA's Professional Women in Building Council; and, from DiStefano Brothers Construction Inc., Peter and Rosemary DiStefano.

▲ Catching up on the news at the Annual Meeting are, from left, new Local Director Ramon Feliz of Complete Construction; Richard Godfrey, former executive director of Rhode Island Housing; past RIBA President David A. Caldwell Jr. of Caldwell and Johnson Inc.; and Local Director Maria Fratiello of National Building Products, a Premier Sponsor of the event..







▲ Ms. O'Donnell offers her second inaugural address.

Meeting up at the Annual Meeting are, from left, Paola Fernandez of Centreville Bank, RIBA Local Director Ronald J. Caniglia of Stand Corp., and J. Alberto Fernandez of Heavenly Homes.



▲ No doubt talking insurance are Charles Lowe from the Builders Insurance Group (BIG) and RIBA Treasurer Jason DaPonte of Sansiveri, Kimball & Co., LLP



▲ It's David A. Caldwell Sr. of Caldwell and Johnson Inc. and Paul Sheehan of Sheehan Building Co., Inc.

*The Rhode Island Builders Association thanks the generous sponsors and donors who helped make our 2021 Annual Meeting such a success!*

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*(Special thanks to Consolidated and Douglas for sponsoring the open bar!)*

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# Finnegans rappel for charity

If you happened to be driving through Providence on Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, and you glanced toward the Regency Plaza, you would have had an eyeful.

For there, rapeling down the 12-story building, you would have seen none other than Evan Finnegan (complete with Spiderman costume) and brother Ryan Finnegan of Coventry Lumber/FINETCO® descending the side of the building.

No, they weren't a few sheets of plywood short of a truckload. They were, in fact, courageously raising money for charity: the Towering Stories charity to benefit the Providence Community Library.

"This is part of a long FINETCO tradition of giving back," Evan Finnegan said.

The Finnegan brothers were joined by a number of other experienced climbers, each of whom had raised at least \$800 for the library.

"Providence Community Library provides the people of Providence with free library resources and learning services. The funds that we raise will hopefully take it to a new level by helping the library pay for books, computers, innovative programming, and many other improvements that are needed," Evan Finnegan continued.

"I enjoy helping others who are in need, and this was an opportunity that Ryan and I immediately jumped in on. Giving back is very fulfilling, and seeing the impact we can have on other people's lives for the better is what it all about."

A FINETCO company statement said: "Supporting events like Towering Stories is part of a long tradition of giving back for FINETCO and the Finnegan family. In addition to personal causes,



***Diggin' the Spiderman costume at left is Evan Finnegan, with brother Ryan, after they rapelled down the side of the Regency Plaza in Providence for charity on September 25<sup>th</sup>.***

the FINETCO Charitable Foundation has supported dozens of charities over the years, including A Wish Come True Foundation, Rhode Island Community Food Bank, Special Olympics, Operation Stand Down, Providence Animal Rescue League, and various youth athletic leagues, just to name a few."

RI  
BA

## RIKB wins PRO award

The Professional Remodeling Organization New England (PRO New England) recently awarded RIKB Design Build, based in Warwick, the 2021 PRO Gold Award in the category of Entire House Under \$500,000.

The winning entry consisted of a first-floor remodel with a 72 square-foot addition to the kitchen.

"Nearly every original wall in the home was relocated to create a more advantageous floor plan," a company statement said.

The dining room was relocated from the rear of the home to the front, next to the kitchen. A first-floor guest suite was added as well as a half bath, and plentiful storage closets and cabinets.

See the project on the RIKB Design Build Houzz page: [Houzz.com/hznb/](https://houzz.com/hznb/)

projects/narragansett-bay-whole-house-remodel-pj-vj~6423728

RIKB Design Build was presented the PRO Award at PRO New England's Virtual Evening of Excellence event on Wednesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. This year, there were 75 projects submitted for PRO Awards across sixteen categories.

A panel of 11 independent reviewers judged the project entries in a blind evaluation.

Projects were judged on a 70-point scale with points awarded for how well the project met the client's needs and enhanced the functionality and aesthetics of the space, innovative uses of materials and methods, the ability to overcome obstacles creatively, the craftsmanship displayed in the work, and the presentation of the project.

RI  
BA

## ONE Neighborhood Builders nabs honors

ONE Neighborhood Builders was recently named a 2021 Wi-Fi At Work Award winner by WifiForward, a coalition of companies, organizations, and public sector institutions working to keep communities connected over the Internet.

The award recognizes organizations that have kept communities connected via Wi-Fi during this time. ONE Neighborhood Builders was recognized for ONE|NB Connects, its free community WiFi project launched in 2020 amid the pandemic to reach over 1,000 households in the Olneyville neighborhood of Providence. Residents there struggled to access the internet for school and work connections.

WifiForward awarded a total of 16 Wi-Fi At Work Awards this year.

RI  
BA



# Energy loads vs. energy codes

## nationalgrid UPDATE

with Laura Rodormer



The energy load of a home is the amount of energy it will need to maintain a comfortable temperature throughout the year. There are many factors that affect a home's load, including:

- Airtightness
- Windows (quality and quantity)
- Insulation
- Equipment and appliances
- Geometry, orientation, shading, etc.

But, if we know all these things, is it possible to calculate how much it will cost to heat and cool a home for an entire year (assuming normal occupant behavior)? In fact, we can essentially determine the "miles per gallon" (mpg), so to speak, of a home before it's even built. It is called a HERS (Home Energy Rating System) score. And, just like mpg, the lower the number, the better.

If this information is easily determined before a house is even built, why isn't it included in the listing? Would you buy a new car without knowing the mph? Then why are Rhode Island home buyers content to buy a home without knowing the HERS?

Maybe it's about "code assumption."

Your average home buyer might not know everything about the building codes, but they can make certain assumptions about a new home because it passed code inspection: The roof won't blow

away in a storm, the deck won't fall off the house, an electrical short circuit won't cause a fire, the pipes won't leak, etc.

But what about the energy code? Because a new home has passed the energy code, can a home buyer assume that the house will have a reasonable load and annual energy cost? You'd like to think so, but that isn't necessarily the case.

Rhode Island has included weakening amendments in the energy code that essentially holds it back to 2009. In contrast, most municipalities in Massachusetts are currently using the 2021 IECC with strengthening amendments. A HERS Score of 55 or lower is mandatory. This is the same for many parts of New York.

A HERS Score of 55 ensures the home buyer that the house has a reasonable load that will result in reasonable energy bills.

Can we say the same for a home that was built to energy code standards that are over a decade old and has not received a HERS rating? Don't your clients want to know what they're buying?

While many of the states around us are actively working to improve their energy codes, Rhode Island stagnates in an outdated version that is "loosely" enforced. This is unfortunate for the builders in our state. Without the incremental code advances, many builders have not been exposed to the principles and techniques behind these advances. Because of this, many of them will not be prepared when the energy code is hastily brought up to date because of market pressure.

It's time for Rhode Island to advance the energy code and adopt a HERS rating compliance path to protect not only the home buyers, but the builders who will pay the price (literally and metaphorically) for not being exposed to the advancements that are rapidly happening around us.

National Grid's Residential New Construction Program provides HERS scores for new construction homes. Visit [Nationalgridus.com/RI-Home/Energy-Saving-Programs](http://Nationalgridus.com/RI-Home/Energy-Saving-Programs).



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Bob Forcier of Forcier Realty

# RIBA's oldest living past president made waves locally, nationally

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Lyndon B. Johnson is in the White House, and John Chafee is governor of Rhode Island. Over at Lloyd Long Oldsmobile in Warwick, you can pick up a brand new F-85 Club Coupe for \$2,288. Chuck roast is 48¢ a pound at Almacs.

If you happen to belong to the Home Builders Association of Rhode Island (HBARI), you can nab a family health insurance plan for \$71.45 per quarter. Going to the Annual Clambake? Get the whole day at Francis Farm, including a lobster with all the fixings, for \$10.

It's late 1968, and Robert R. Forcier of Coventry has just become the 11<sup>th</sup> president of the HBARI. At 36, Bob is the association's youngest president up to this point.

Fast forward to 2021, and *The Rhode Island Builder* catches up with Bob, now the oldest living past president, at the Rhode Island Builders Association's 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Classic at Wanamissett Country Club in Rumford. Bob and his wife of 64 years, Carol, have just jetted up from Florida to see family and hit the links with the RIBA gang on August 30<sup>th</sup>.

"My dad was a builder, and I attended my first National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) convention, in Chicago, when I was 24 years old," recalls Bob, the patriarch of West Warwick-based Forcier Inc., now Forcier Realty, who will turn 90 on Jan. 15, 2022. "That's how I was introduced to how magnificent this organization really is."

Brought up in the residential construction business, Bob started out working for his dad, Regis Forcier and Forcier Inc. as soon as he graduated from West Warwick High School. According to Regis's biographer, Mathias P. Harpin, Bob was in for a shock.

"Right away, he found his father a lot different than the dad he knew at home. Regis had come up the hard way, and now he intended that Robert would come up the same way also."

After a year of driving nails and hanging doors, Bob decided that college wasn't such a bad idea. Off he went to study business, marketing and advertising at Nichols College in Dudley, Massachusetts. Taking two years after that to serve in the Army, Bob then headed to Bryant College to further polish his business skills.

After marrying Carol Groves in 1957, Bob plunged back into the residential construction world.

"I built 13 houses (in Coventry's Hopkins Hill area), and I was



supposed to sell them too! But by the time the weekend came around, I was too tired to do any selling," Bob says. "I told my dad that, after I got back from my honeymoon, I would put on a suit and sell instead of build. I never put on the overalls again!"

The whole deal blossomed into a prosperous partnership between Regis and Bob. They called it House of Regis, and their motto was "Fit for a King," a cute twist on the "Regis" name, if you paid attention in Latin class. Forcier-built houses started going up all over Kent County. Early developments included Lakeview Terrace in Coventry, built in the late 1950s.

Whereas Regis had been building about 25 houses a year, with Bob at his side, the number soared to about 100. When Regis retired, Bob took the helm at Forcier Inc., "the undisputed boy wonder of the Rhode Island home building world," as Mr. Harpin put it.

## 'Section8' Pioneer

Bob expanded quickly. In 1958 he built the first "Section 8" housing in America ... a nine-story, 100-apartment complex for the elderly in Pawtucket. In fact, NAHB recognized Forcier Inc. for introducing the country to privately owned, publicly subsidized housing in the apartment market during the 1960s.

In 1965 Bob started building general multi-family housing, getting in early on the apartment boom of the time. Eventually, the line-up included Foxfire Apartments in West Warwick, Evergreen Apartments in East Providence, Centennial Towers in Pawtucket, Central City Plaza in Coventry, Pocasset Apartments in Cranston, Park Central in West Warwick, and even Graduate Student Housing at the University of Rhode Island.

By 1980 Bob was phasing out of construction and concentrating on property management and development.

Bob joined HBARI in 1956 and quickly became known as a tireless worker for the association. He moved up the leadership "ladder," becoming chairman of the all-important Home Show Committee and, in 1959, a local director. Bob was elected secretary in 1960, then vice president.

Upon becoming president in 1968, Bob nailed his colors to the mast.

"Our association (has) reorganized to provide for a dynamic and moving force for many years to come.... Our first goal is to

see **FORCIER...next page**

## **FORCIER**...from previous page



**Bob (at far left), and Carol (seated) are proud of their family. From left are grandson Jay Baldassarre and daughter Dayle Baldassarre, son Dean, son Bill (holding great-granddaughter Winnie, Billy's daughter), and grandson Billy.**

stress solidarity in our present quality membership."

Achievements of the Forcier Administration were many. But first things first: On Oct. 21, 1969, Bob led the Annual Meeting in changing the HBARI's name to the Rhode Island Builders Association.

A new Community Development Committee was set up to work with the state's new Dept. of Community Affairs, local planning and zoning boards as well as tax assessors. A new Manpower Committee was established to work with the state Dept. of Education to develop carpentry courses for career and technical schools. The Rental Housing Council got busy working on fire codes, along with landlord and tenant issues.

## **On the National Stage**

Bob's talent and leadership were recognized nationally, and he has served as NAHB vice president and life director, and as chairman of the NAHB Political Action Committee (Build PAC). In that capacity, Bob recalls fun times playing golf with none other than Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill (D-Massachusetts), speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1977-1987, and other luminaries.

As if that weren't enough, Bob was a Rhode Island alternate delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1984 and ran as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1988.

A listing of Bob's civic activities and honors would require another magazine.

Adding up the numbers from his long career in residential construction, Bob has built over 2,000 single-family homes, over 2,000 apartments and four nursing homes comprising over 800 beds, over 1,500 condominium units and 100 graduate student housing units. In addition, Bob ventured with the National Housing Partnership in Washington, D.C., and built several hundred apartment units there.

"RIBA has certainly modernized since those days," Bob comments. "Education for those in the residential construction industry has become more important than ever. Anyone who wants to succeed needs to be educated!"



*To Bob Forcier  
With best wishes.  
Ronald Reagan*

**In his capacity as National Build-PAC chairman, Bob rubbed elbows with the movers and shakers in Washington. Above, he meets President Ronald Reagan. Below, Bob lunches with some big names in December 1983. At far left is Vice President Dan Quayle. At right is Speaker of the House Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill (D-Mass.). Bob is second from right, with Congressman Tony Coelho (D-Calif.), primary sponsor of the Americans with Disabilities Act.**



He added: "And we can't live without the magazine! I have to say that RIBA helped make Forcier Inc., with all the support they provide."

At 89, Bob is still president of Forcier Realty, which firmly remains a family business. He and Carol live full-time in Florida now, and of their five children (William, Dayle, Elizabeth, Rebecca and Dean), Bill and twins Betsy and Becky work with Bob.

All we can say is: What a run!



# The Home Show returns in 2022!

**WHEN:** Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup>  
**WHERE:** Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence  
**FOR INFORMATION & TO EXHIBIT:** Contact Bob Yoffe at (800) 963-3395



After a two-year hiatus because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Rhode Island Home Show returns with a flourish in 2022!

The Rhode Island Builders Association's biggest event of the year, the 70th Annual Home Show will feature hundreds of exhibitors, along with features that have drawn the crowds in the past: the Rhode Island Flower Show, the Garden Experience, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Energy Expo.

With two years of pent-up homeowner

demand and the desire for home improvement projects at record highs, Home Show crowds are expected to be enormous.

Reserve your exhibit space now, at discounted RIBA member rates, for what's bound to be an epic event! Even though exhibits have expanded out into the Convention Center concourse, space is still at a premium. But people will want to buy the goods and services you offer.

Reserve your exhibit space now!



## Ad campaign under way for RIBA 2022 Directory

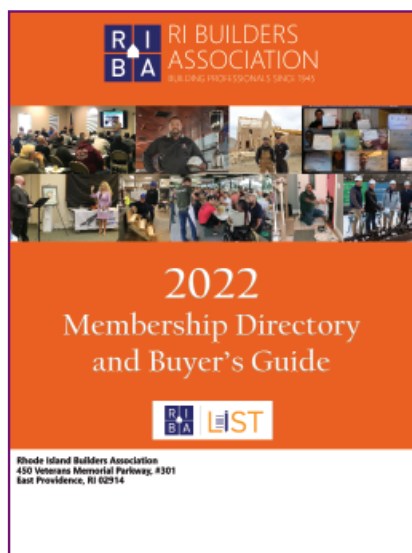
Get the most out your membership by being a part of the robust company listings that will appear in the Rhode Island Builders Association's *2022 Membership Directory & Buyer's Guide*.

This go-to resource is distributed far and wide to consumers who are looking for contractors, remodelers or builders. In addition to the printed publication being available at the Rhode Island Home Show in April 2022, all listings are also available online at RIBAlist.com.

We are working hard to make sure your listing is accurate. That's why we mailed every member a form to double check the records we have on file. If you have any questions, please reach out to your membership manager Elise Geddes at (401) 438-7400 or [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org).

### Advertising campaign begins

The RIBA *Membership Directory and Buyer's Guide* remains popular with contractors and the public alike, and it's a fixture at the annual Rhode Island Home Show. There's no better venue to



showcase your business to that "everybody" audience.

Members should have received full information by mail about *Directory* advertising. The low advertising rates remain the same as in previous years.

And remember: There are special package ad rates when you advertise in both RIBA publications – the *Directory* and the award-winning monthly *Rhode Island Builder* magazine. And new this year: On-air advertising opportunities offered by the RIBA News & Information Podcast, which will be monthly starting in 2022.

Once again, RIBA will have a drawing for one advertiser to win an additional ad: free, full-page and full-color. Any advertiser who purchased their *Directory* ad by November 1<sup>st</sup>

will be eligible for the drawing.

The final deadline for *Directory* advertising is November 19<sup>th</sup>.

Use the advertising information package you received from RIBA.

Ad details are also online at [NewRiverPress.com/ribaads](http://NewRiverPress.com/ribaads), or call Paul or Jonathan Eno at (401) 250-5760, ext. 1.





**A Rhode Island Builder Magazine Special Section**



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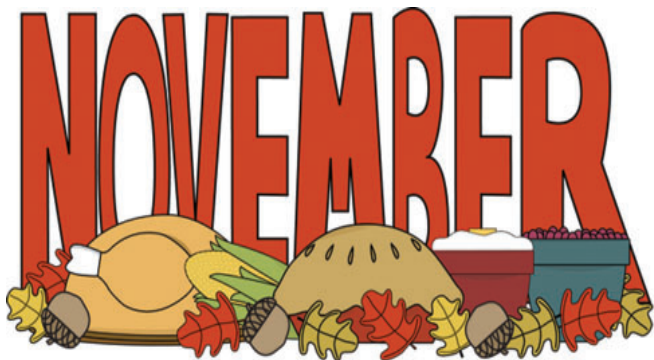
E.L. Morse Lumber  
2502 Cranberry Hwy.  
Wareham, MA  
(508) 295-1170

Welco  
7 North Union Ave.  
West Haven, CT  
(203) 933-5421

Waterford Building Supply  
7 Industrial Dr.  
Waterford, CT  
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FINETCO's Appliance Center carries many major brands of appliances and is constantly looking for new brands to better serve you.

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

[www.finetco.net](http://www.finetco.net) • Page 18

## At Pella® Windows: Easy-Slide Operator

The 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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Want to learn more about the PWB?

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





# RIBA Contractor Training

**Reminder:** The Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board (CRLB) requires 2.5 continuing education credits every year to renew your Rhode Island registration. The Rhode Island Builders Association (state approved provider code #1) offers all the courses you need to fulfill these requirements. Check out this month's offerings on these pages, or at [Ribuilders.org](http://Ribuilders.org) and [RIBAEduces.com](http://RIBAEduces.com). RIBA makes it simple for you to earn your credits quickly and easily. Have questions? Want to become a member? Give us a call at (401) 438-7400. And remember, courses are always free for RIBA members and their employees.

## 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 fulfill continuing education requirements before his or her next renewal date, as stated above, and must provide class certificates as evidence of completion.*

2 Credit Hours:

### *Mold Awareness Training* *November 10<sup>th</sup>*

**WHEN:** Wednesday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 9 to 11:30 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](mailto:bsalvas@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

Learn the basics of mold: how to prevent mold from growing in your construction project and how to deal with it when you find it. The instructor is Christopher Sanford.

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.



1 Credit Hour:

### *Advanced Building Science* *and Zero Energy Homes* *November 16<sup>th</sup>*

**WHEN:** Tuesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 8 to 9:30 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](mailto:bsalvas@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Jeremy Dagold to explore basic design considerations required to achieve low-load homes, construction techniques that are critical to achieve high-performance buildings, and provide an overall understanding of the certification process.

Finally, the provisions of the voluntary Rhode Island Residential Stretch Code will be summarized.

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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or [egeddes@ribuilders.org](mailto:egeddes@ribuilders.org)*



2 Credit Hours:  
*Understanding  
QuickBooks® Online*  
November 18<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Thursday, November 18<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.

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.



2½ Credit Hours:  
*Social Media  
and Digital Marketing*  
November 19<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Friday, November 19<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.

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 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:  
*Start and Grow  
Your Construction Business*  
November 23<sup>rd</sup>

**WHEN:** Tuesday, November 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.

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 anyone who doesn'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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## RIBA Contractor Training

### 8 Hour Lead Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course

November 4<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Thursday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**WHERE:** Online via Zoom.

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options. There is a \$25 materials fee for all participants.

**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.

Join instructor Scott Asprey to 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 Remodelers/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 [mmisenhimer@ribuilders.org](mailto:mmisenhimer@ribuilders.org) at least five days before the class.

Again, 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.



## Time Management for Contractors

November 5<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Friday, November 5<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.

There is never enough time in the day to get everything done! Come and learn some professional tips on maximizing your time from a productivity expert, instructor Margo Crawford.

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.





## Photography for Your Construction Business

November 12<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Friday, November 12<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 instructor Bill Parmentier, this class will show you how to best use photography to enhance and grow your construction business.

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.



## BIG offers advice for the 'fall forward'

As we “fall forward” in November, Builders Insurance Group (BIG) reminds you about the important, simple and life-saving habit of testing and changing the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

“It is so important to take time each year to check your household detectors,” said Chuck Lowe, certified insurance counselor at BIG.

“Equally important is to be sure your devices are not expired. It’s suggested that homeowners replace smoke detectors every 10 years,” Mr. Lowe added.

The National Fire Protection Association reports that roughly 71 percent of smoke alarms that failed to operate had missing, disconnected or dead batteries.

Please remember to check and replace the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors along with all the devices that help keep you and your loved ones safe and secure in your home.

Have an insurance question? Contact our experienced agents at BIG: (401) 438-4244.



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## 8 Hour Lead Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course

November 30<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Tuesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**WHERE:** Online via Zoom.

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees. Non-members, call for pricing options. There is a \$25 materials fee for all participants.

**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.

Join instructor Scott Asprey to 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-

ers/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 [mmisenhimer@ribuilders.org](mailto:mmisenhimer@ribuilders.org) at least five days before the class.

Again, 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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# Dominick J. Ruggiero

President of the Rhode Island Senate

*Sen. Dominick J. Ruggiero (D-Providence, North Providence) has served as Senate President since March 2017. The “dean,” or most senior member, of the Senate, he had been majority leader since November 2010, and served as majority whip from 2003 through 2010. Sen. Ruggiero previously served as a member and as vice chairman of the Senate Labor Committee, chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Labor and Transportation, and as a member of the Senate Finance Committee, the Senate Rules Committee, the Senate Labor Committee, and the Joint Committee on Accounts and Claims. He also previously served as deputy majority leader. First elected to the Senate in 1984, Sen. Ruggiero previously served in the Rhode Island House of Representatives from 1981 through 1984, and was a member of the House Labor Committee and House Corporations Committee. He served as a policy aide for the Office of the Lieutenant Governor from 1977 through 1981.*



*A 1966 graduate of La Salle Academy, Sen Ruggiero attended Bryant College and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in 1974 from Providence College. He is retired as an administrator of the New England Laborers' Labor-Management Coop Trust. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Wanskuck Library and as a member of the Sons of Italy, Loggia Vittoria and the DaVinci Center Development Committee.*

*As president, Sen. Ruggiero serves as an ex-officio member of all standing Senate committees. Among his legislative initiatives is “Building a More Vibrant Rhode Island,” aimed at removing barriers to development, including needless and costly delays in building inspections.*

**THE BUILDER:** The Senate has created many reforms through the years to help reduce construction costs and timeframes. Now that housing is a bigger and bigger issue, what needs to happen to coordinate a statewide housing policy to increase supply?

**RUGGERIO:** I’m excited that we have a state “housing czar” coming on board soon. I know that doesn’t directly affect housing production, but I think the housing czar is a great idea. I commend House Speaker Joseph Shekarchi for suggesting that. Also this year, we established a funding stream for affordable housing, which we never had. In March, voters approved a \$65 million housing bond referendum, which will provide additional money for affordable housing.

We also established online permitting to make the construction process easier.

**THE BUILDER:** So, you see a housing policy coming together around a housing czar?

**RUGGERIO:** Yes, and that’s exactly what we need right now. We need some direction. We have a lot of good people at work in the housing arena, but it has to be a concerted effort.

**THE BUILDER:** Do we have a timeline on a housing czar?

**RUGGERIO:** We approved that in the state budget, and someone will have to be found to fill the position. That will be the administration’s job.

**THE BUILDER:** Housing production requires good drinking water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure, and there are

always some issues with funding. Could some of the federal COVID-19 money the state has received be applied to maintenance and expansion of this infrastructure?

**RUGGERIO:** It could be, but we’re waiting to see what will happen in Washington, where major infrastructure legislation is pending. As we speak, they’re debating the amount of money that would be sent to the states to address infrastructure needs, but I think that would provide funding, so we wouldn’t have to address the issue with COVID money.

**THE BUILDER:** Could you support use of some of that infrastructure money to gap-fill municipal projects that need to be catalyzed?

**RUGGERIO:** If you look around, you see a lot more water breaks and other infrastructure problems. And it’s not just us. It’s throughout the country, and that’s because we have an aging infrastructure, which has to be repaired or replaced. The water problems in places like Flint, Michigan? That could come here.

Whether it’s drinking water, wastewater treatment and things of that nature, we ultimately have to deal with it. I’m hoping Congress addresses that because the whole country needs it.

**THE BUILDER:** You’ve already mentioned the construction process. At this point, even with e-permitting, permitting and inspection services in Rhode Island are stressed because of a shortage of building officials, and the Rhode Island Builders

see *INTERVIEW...next page*

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

**Association is working with the state to help recruit and train personnel. What more can be done to make that part of the construction process work better?**

**RUGGERIO:** We have passed legislation to streamline the duties of building inspectors, and to get them to answer questions they deal with within 48 hours.

As of late, I know it's been difficult to get building officials. Some towns share building and other inspectors. I think we have to start earlier when it comes to interesting young people in these careers. I know that often begins with training in carpentry and other trades, and some move on to become inspectors as they gain experience later in their careers. RIBA already has that ball rolling through its trade-training programs all over the state.

Those in the trades now tend to be an aging group, though, so we're looking at a dearth of tradespeople in the very near future, especially in the licensed trades. Plumbing, HVAC, electrical, plumbing...these are great opportunities for some people. Not everyone is going to be a computer expert, and not everyone's going to go to college.

I think there has to be more emphasis, and maybe more marketing done, along with more apprenticeship programs available, to attract young people to the construction trades. As I said, this will lead to some becoming inspectors once they have a certain level of expertise.

**THE BUILDER:** We're seeing good benefits from the Real Jobs Rhode Island program, and RIBA is interested in how that successful model of state/private cooperation can be expanded. Would you be open to that?

**RUGGERIO:** Right now, we're talking about how we can best invest these federal COVID dollars. We want to invest in proven products, and workforce development is one of these. And the needs are ever-changing. Maybe someone wants to move up to a better career and is attracted by the trades.

It's a crazy economy right now, and we don't know how it's going to shake out. But when it comes to workforce development, there's opportunity, and there's money available for training. I think the Dept. of Labor and Training does an absolutely outstanding job helping people in that effort, but it really has to be driven from the top.

**THE BUILDER:** Many towns won't admit it, but there is some feeling that, when it comes to residential growth, they don't want any more families with children. What can be done to counter that?

**RUGGERIO:** That's a complex situation because it's a double-edged sword. When you're trying to give children the best education, some of these towns don't want additional housing because of the school costs. Some of them don't want affordable housing because they just don't want to change the fabric of their community.

But something really has to give. If you want workers, and if you want to educate your children, you certainly need housing.

**THE BUILDER:** The school cost issue is ironic, considering

the number of schools that are closing.

**RUGGERIO:** Well, everything is cyclical. You get schools closing now, and you might have fewer births, but there might be more later, along with a need for more schools. It's tough to make that determination.

**THE BUILDER:** As far as actual housing production, can you go a little deeper into the theme of cooperation between the state and the communities? How do we overcome "turf" issues, and what incentives can the state use?

**RUGGERIO:** That has been a dilemma for years with some of these communities. They just don't want residential growth. Maybe we have to use a carrot-and-stick approach, as far as funding is concerned. It continues to be a dilemma.

**THE BUILDER:** What are the overall priorities for the Senate in the next session?

**RUGGERIO:** Obviously, housing is an issue. We plan to address affordable child care, because that's one way we get people back to work. And there's no sense going back to work if you're making the same amount of money you would be by staying home.

We're looking at all-day pre-K to help working parents. Ultimately, I think we have to go that route. That's what we call a "legacy cost." It's not something you can start, do it for one year and then stop. It has to continue on down the line because there's a substantial learning loss as a result of the coronavirus.

I think it would be a great move on the state's part to provide this because it gives children a certain educational advantage. It also helps parents get back to work. They don't have to leave work at one o'clock and go pick up their children, thanks to the all-day program.

And we're going to try to rebuild our economy. It was going along very well, with 3.4 percent unemployment. A lot of people were working, and everyone seemed happy. Then the coronavirus hit and pulled the rug out from under. Still, the economy is doing pretty well, considering.

**THE BUILDER:** What's your overall message to the residential construction community?

**RUGGERIO:** I know the cost of construction right now can be prohibitive, because building materials went up. But we need more housing. I think we should allocate housing to certain communities and require them to provide a certain amount of affordable housing. This would provide not only more places for people to live, but jobs for contractors, vendors and workers in general.

**THE BUILDER:** So that might mean revising the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, which doesn't seem to have had much traction over the last 30 years.

**RUGGERIO:** We'll look at that, if necessary. But I think we have to do what's necessary to address the issue of affordable housing one way or the other.

In fact, the Rhode Island Builders Association is a great organization with some outstanding companies. I want to see them all do well. I want to see them all prosper and expand. And I hope we can get more residential construction going in this state.



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## DEM proposes rule changes to OWTS licensing

Changes to licensing requirements for those working with onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) have been proposed by the Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM).

The Public Notice and Proposed Rule Amendments are posted at [Rules.sos.ri.gov/promulgations/part/250-150-10-6](http://Rules.sos.ri.gov/promulgations/part/250-150-10-6). A direct link to the public notice is available here: [s3.amazonaws.com/DEM/11476/PBN\\_11476\\_20211004095358.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/DEM/11476/PBN_11476_20211004095358.pdf)

**The public comment period ends November 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

According to DEM, the purpose of these amendments is to incorporate revisions made to R.I. Gen. Laws § 556.1-4 (Designers of Individual Sewage Disposal Systems Conditions for obtaining a designer's license) by the R.I. General Assembly in the 2019 session.

The change in statute states that professional engineers, registered and authorized to practice engineering in Rhode Island, meet the minimum qualifications, experience, and education requirements for an OWTS designer's license. This has the effect of exempting professional engineers from the testing and continuing education requirements to obtain and maintain a Class III Designer's License. Another proposed revision to these rules will allow active Class I, II, and IV Licensed Designers to be exempt from continuing education requirements after holding a license for 12 consecutive years.

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## DEM okays stormwater treatment device

The Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) has approved the Filterra® — a proprietary stormwater treatment device that uses regionally acceptable trees or shrubs typically housed in a concrete box to filter and treat stormwater runoff — for use as a water quality best management practice (BMP).

The certification issued by the DEM's Office of Water Resources is effective until June 1, 2026.

The product incorporates an engineered soil media designed with a very high infiltration rate, making it appropriate for urban sites with limited amounts of space for stormwater BMPs.

Precipitation in an urban or suburban area that does not evaporate or soak into the ground but instead runs across the land and into the nearest waterway is stormwater runoff. It consists of harmful pollutants like fertilizer, pet waste, chemical contaminants like pesticides, leaking fuel, and motor oil, litter, and sediment such as dirt and sand. This mix of nutrients and contaminants can fuel the growth of harmful algae blooms that reduce oxygen levels and cloud the water, blocking sunlight from reaching underwater

see *DEVICE...page 32*

# State-private partnership aims to boost community development

Massachusetts announces \$9.7 million in tax credits to support "critical community partners."

Community Investment Tax Credits will enable 53 community organizations to increase private investments and enhance their capacity to serve residents and small businesses.

That was the news in September from the Baker-Polito Ad-

ministration, which announced 2021 Community Investment Tax Credit (CITC) program allocations to 53 community development corporations (CDCs) and Community Service Organizations (CSOs) from across Massachusetts.

Nearly \$9.7 million in tax credits will help organizations enhance their fundraising and organizational capacity, in support of their efforts to increase economic opportunity for low- and moderate-income residents.

Lt. Governor Karyn Polito and Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy were joined by a wide range of community development corporations and community service organizations in Revere for the September 5<sup>th</sup> announcement.

"Massachusetts is fortunate to have a large network of CDCs, keenly aware of community needs, providing a diverse array of services," said Gov. Charlie Baker.

"We are proud to continue supporting the Community Investment Tax Credit program, which has enabled CDCs to raise and invest more than \$75 million since it started," he added.

"Community development is a critical part of the Dept. of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD's) mission, and our CDCs continue to be powerhouses of innovation and leadership in their regions. DHCD has long worked with CDCs to pilot new programs, fund financial literacy and first-time homebuyer programs, and develop affordable housing," said Housing and Community Development Undersecretary Jennifer Maddox. "We are proud to continue supporting this high-impact program to help CDCs expand their reach."

The CITC program allocates tax credits to CDCs that have adopted Community Investment Plans outlining their development strategies and goals. The credits are then offered by recipient CDCs in exchange for qualified donations, incentivizing the investments required to sustain the work of these organizations.

Since the inception of the program in 2014, DHCD has allocated more than \$42 million of these tax credits, yielding nearly \$75 million in new investment for CDCs throughout Massachusetts, benefiting affordable housing development.

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## 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](https://www.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](https://www.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](https://www.MassHousing.com).



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# RCWP UPDATE

## VESL graduates more workers!

The second class of skilled apprentice carpenters for 2021 graduated from the 15-week Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) program on September 14<sup>th</sup>.

Ceremonies for the eight graduates took place at the Rhode Island Builders Association's/Residential Construction Workforce Partnership Central Falls Vocational Training Facility.

City officials, including Mayor Maria Rivera, joined the ceremonies, which included dedicating a shed constructed by the class. RCWP team member and Diversity Outreach and Education Coordinator Betty Bernal emceed the graduation and dedication ceremony, which also included mayoral Chief of Staff Zuleyma Gomez and state Sen. Ana B. Quezada (deputy Senate majority whip), Deputy Secretary/Chief of Staff Jason Martiesian, and RIBA Past President David A. Caldwell Jr., along with VESL students and families.



*see RCWP...next page* **VESL students build a shed at the Central Falls Training Facility.**



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## **PERMITS...from page 1**

units reached their highest levels for 14 years in December 2020.

Housing demand continues to build in the Ocean State.

One example is Charlestown, where the building office is knee-deep in applications. The increase in the workload is “tenfold,” according to Charlestown Building and Zoning Official Joseph Warner Jr.

“It’s...not just because of us being busier, but just all the additional regulations and things that have come into effect,” *ecoRI News* quoted Mr. Warner as saying.

The Charlestown Planning Commission’s workload has reached a 20-year high, according to Chairwoman Ruth Platner.

## **RCWP...from previous page**

“By the time you read this, the next cohort of VESL will be in full swing and enrolling for the next class,” said RIBA Director of Workforce Programs Cheryl Boyd.

To learn more about the VESL program or apply and train for a rewarding career in residential construction, visit [RCWPri.org/courses/vesl/](http://RCWPri.org/courses/vesl/).

“We continue to work with employers looking to hire and students looking for jobs!” Ms. Boyd stated.

### **New Training Facility**

As we went to press in mid-October, RCWP was preparing to open a new training facility at the Centre of New England on Arnold Road in Coventry.

“The facility will host our Carpentry, Weatherization, Electrical and

Plumbing/HVACR Pre-Apprentice Training Programs,” Ms. Boyd reported.

“We are in the process of outfitting the facility and will be starting the training programs late October to early November.”

Watch for more information in our next issue.



## **DEVICE...from page 29**

vegetation. It can cause beach closures, shellfish closures, and other problems.

“Increased development across the Narragansett Bay watershed has made stormwater runoff the biggest source of pollution to our coastal waters,” said DEM Acting Director Terry Gray.

“Cleaner beaches and shellfish beds start with better stormwater control. Filterra is a type of green infrastructure that is now approved by RIDEM as a proprietary water quality technology to provide high levels of pollutant removal for stormwater runoff. Small-footprint stormwater treatment systems, like Filterra, are ideal for retrofit applications and meeting water quality goals in urban areas with limited site space or on sites with other constraints such as high water table.”

For additional information on the RIDEM stormwater technology review program, contact Christopher Dill, EIT, at (401) 222-4700 ext. 2777404 or [christopher.dill@dem.ri.gov](mailto:christopher.dill@dem.ri.gov).



“We may reach a level of residential applications that will be impossible for the Planning Department and Planning Commission to review. Impossible or not, state law requires that we review and make decisions within a set number of days,” Ms. Platner said in a recent blog post.

Charlestown is one of the few Rhode Island municipalities that still does not participate in the state’s e-permitting program.

Watch *The Rhode Island Builder* for more news on this important issue.



## **HOUSING...from page 3**

- Seventy-four percent of renter households with incomes under \$14,764 are cost-burdened. Of these, more than 17,000, pay more than 50 percent of their income for housing costs, making them severely cost-burdened.

- In 2020, for the first time since HWRI started to measure affordability against the state’s median household income, there are no municipalities where the median household income of \$67,167 could affordably buy.

- Rhode Island households earning \$50,000 or less could affordably rent in only two municipalities—Burrillville and Woonsocket—and households earning the median renter income of \$36,078 could affordably rent the average two-bedroom apartment in only one Rhode Island municipality—Burrillville.

- The homeownership rate for White households in Rhode Island is 68 percent, which is double the rate of Black households and more than double the rate of Latino households. The state’s homeownership rate for Blacks, Latinos, and Asians, are 10, 19, and 12 percentage points lower than the national rates of 44, 49, and 60 percent.

- While cost burdens for renters are relatively consistent across race and ethnicity, the rate of Black and Latino homeowners’ cost burden is 14 percentage points higher than that of White homeowners.

- Housing instability and homelessness remain a top concern in Rhode Island, with the number of unsheltered adults increasing 68 percent from 2020 to 2021. Other populations experiencing homelessness also saw increases year over year in Rhode Island according to the Point-in-Time Count: single adults (10 percent), persons in families (24 percent), and households with children under 18 (26 percent).

- Disparities by race and ethnicity continue to be seen in those Rhode Islanders experiencing homelessness. Blacks, including those of Hispanic ethnicity, are experiencing homelessness at a rate nearly four times higher than their share of the general population, currently representing more than 25 percent of those experiencing homelessness.

HousingWorks RI released the *2021 Housing Fact Book* virtually during a morning event. Community partners, industry leaders, and elected officials gathered to listen to a presentation of the Housing Fact Book’s key findings by Annette Bourne, HousingWorks RI’s Research and Policy Director, and to hear from Adrienne Todman, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, as the event’s keynote speaker. The *2021 Housing Fact Book* can be found at [Housingworksri.org](http://Housingworksri.org).





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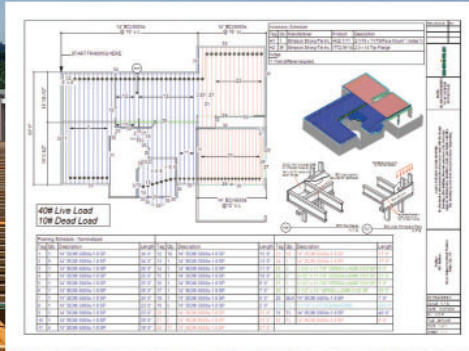
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