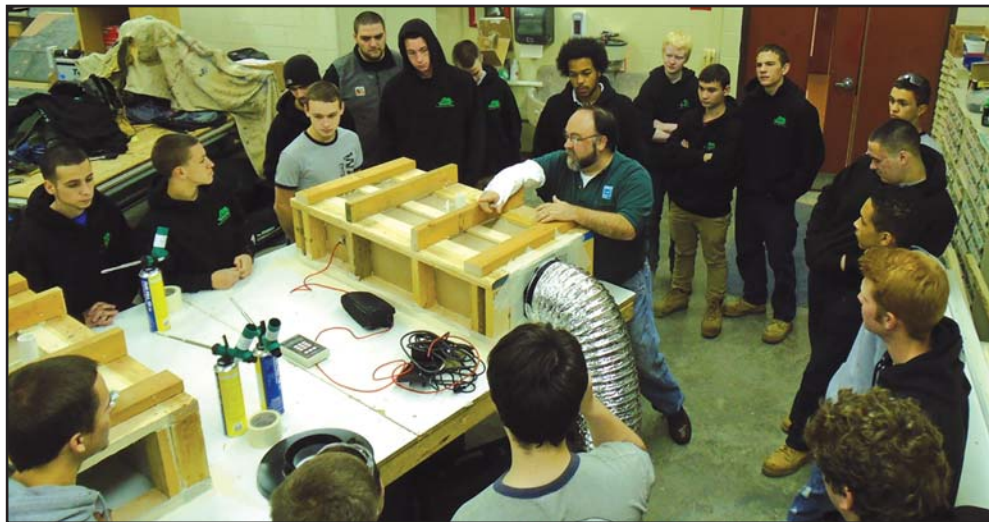


## CTE reform is on track



**Rob Sherwood of the Conservation Services Group, center, demonstrates blower door testing during an energy code seminar, sponsored by National Grid, for students at the Warwick Career and Technical Center. Related story on page 24.**

By Paul F. Eno Editor

Rhode Island may be on the threshold of a unified system of career and technical education (CTE) and a far more skilled workforce.

That's the word from two stakeholders working with the Rhode Island Business Coalition, the state Dept. of Education, CTE

program directors and others to bring about a consistent, statewide system with significant involvement by local, state and national businesses.

Legislation enacted in 2014 creates a 15-member Board of Trustees on Career and Technical Education (BTCTE), which

see CTE...page 24

### FEATURED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES FOR JANUARY

Centerspread

#### Students busy on Home Show work

As the 2015 Home Show draws near, students from the Providence Career and Technical Academy work to build the "Home Showcase."

Page 6

#### Open House at RIBA set for Feb.

A big combined event at RIBA headquarters takes place on Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>: An Open House for the Builders Insurance Group (BIG), a Networking Night, all preceded by the monthly Board of Directors meeting.

Pages 3 & 4

#### Providence revises zoning ordinance

Providence's zoning overhaul removes residential and commercial density limits in mixed-use areas.

Page 18

## RIBA presses for fair statewide standards

By Paul F. Eno Editor

Proposed reform for Rhode Island's wetland and septic-system regulations will be ready for the General Assembly in January, as the Rhode Island Builders Association continues to work for a reasonable set of statewide standards.

That's the news from Environmental Committee, chaired by Thomas E. D'Angelo and Timo-

thy A. Stasiunas. Both men have represented RIBA on the Legislative Task Force on Wetland and OWTS Setbacks, the panel charged with replacing municipal regulations with a statewide standard in those two environmental areas.

Primary points of concern remain, including:

- A proposed 300-foot area of state jurisdiction around certain designated critical water resources, which RIBA feels is unnecessary;

see TASK FORCE...page 25

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# State planners seek alternatives as Central Landfill fills up

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Higher fees for disposal of construction and demolition debris (C&D) are in the offing, but any increases should be gradual over the next 24 years, and recycling could help mitigate the costs to contractors.

That was the word from the State Planning Council at a public hearing on December 8<sup>th</sup> to consider adopting its draft plan: "Solid Waste 2038." That's the year the Central Landfill in Johnston is supposed to be full.

In a presentation at the hearing, held at the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corp. (RIRRC) headquarters in Johnston, RIRRC Executive Director Michael J. O'Connell outlined the three major hurdles to be cleared for solid-waste handling in the state over that period: Funding, what to do with solid waste after the landfill closes in roughly 24 years, and options to reduce solid waste overall.

While precise cost increases for C&D disposal are uncertain at this time, it seems clear that much of the material will have to be diverted from the landfill and sent out of state, Mr. O'Connell indicated. That is already happening with 30 to 50 percent of C&D waste.

In addition, there is at least one private C&D processing firm in the region, Mr. O'Connell pointed out.

"The fact is that we were taking C&D here at the landfill, but state statute now prevents us from grinding it up as we had been," Mr. O'Connell said.

The overall message: Contractors should start recycling as much material as they can. Much C&D can be recycled, including metal, cardboard, roofing shingles, siding and clean wallboard.

When *The Rhode Island Builder Report* suggested that some construction materials can only be recycled a limited number of times, RIRRC Director of Recycling Services Sarah Kite-Reeves pointed out



***R.I. Resource Recovery Corp. Executive Director Michael J. O'Connell, at right, presents the draft plan "Solid Waste 2038" at a public hearing on December 8<sup>th</sup>.***

that "it depends on the materials."

According to the EPA, Tufts University and other sources, metals and glass can be recycled indefinitely, but paper and cardboard can be recycled five to seven times, and plastics only once. Wood can't be recycled in the strictest sense of the word, but it can be reused, or ground up and used to make something else.


In any case, what can't be recycled must be buried at a landfill.

RIRRC began processing C&D just before 2000, when it received approval to grind the materials and use them as "alternate daily cover" at the landfill. But this, apparently, was one of the odor sources

that raised a local outcry in 2011 and 2012, resulting in legislative action to prohibit C&D reuse as cover.

As of this writing, there is only one C&D processing facility in Rhode Island with an active license, according to the Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) website: J.R. Vinagro Corp. in Johnston.

The December 8<sup>th</sup> hearing also dealt with future policies on residential waste and commercial waste in general. About 12 members of the public attended the hearing. Two environmental activists were the only ones to present comments officially.

Watch *The Rhode Island Builder Report* for more on this issue as it develops. 

## **DEADLINES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE**

**For the February issue, copy, ads  
and photos must be to us by**

**Friday, January 2**

Send material to The R.I. Builder Report, c/o RIBA,  
450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy., Suite 301, East Providence, RI 02914  
or e-mail to [builder@newriverpress.com](mailto:builder@newriverpress.com) Fax: (401) 356-0913



## BIG open house, RIBA Networking Night slated for February 3

The Rhode Island Builders Association plans a busy evening for members at RIBA headquarters on Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>. After a brief monthly meeting of the Board of Directors at 4:30 p.m., the Builders Insurance Group (BIG), RIBA's in-house insurance agency, will sponsor an Open House, beginning at 5.

A free Networking Night for members and non-members will take place at the same time.

Bring your construction industry colleagues to learn more about the many benefits of belonging to your trade association, and find out what BIG can do for you when it comes to the insurance you need for your business, your home and your vehicle.

Find out more by calling (401) 438-7400.



## *Holiday Dinner hits the spot*



*The Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors, along with other members and their spouses, gathered for a Holiday Dinner at the Sqaantum Association, East Providence, on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. One of the evening's events was the drawing for a free full-page advertisement in RIBA's 2015 Membership Directory and Buyer's Guide. Here, President Roland J. Fiore reads the name of the winner: Meridian Custom Homes Inc. In a happy coincidence, Meridian's owner, Alexander A. Mitchell, was present.*

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# LOOKING AHEAD!

♦ **January 8: Deck Construction: Sorting Out Codes and Solutions** - 5-6:30 p.m., RIBA headquarters, East Providence. FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$50 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge. To register, visit [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org) or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org) or (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 8.*

♦ **January 13: Air Leakage Testing and Preparing for the Test** - 5-6:30 p.m., RIBA headquarters, East Providence. Rhode Island's building code requires all new homes be blower-door tested. Learn what you need to know at this seminar. FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$50 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge. To register, visit [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org) or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org) or (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 11.*

♦ **January 14: Excel Basics Part 1** - 5-6:30 p.m., RIBA headquarters, East Providence. FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$50 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge. To register, visit [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org) or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org) or (401) 438-7400. There is a separate charge for each Excel class. *Details on page 11.*

♦ **January 20: Tech Talk: What Technology is Important in Your Business and How to Protect It** - Seminar 4-5 p.m., RIBA headquarters, East Providence. FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$25 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge. To register, visit [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org) or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org) or (401) 438-7400. Payment is due upon registration. *Details on page 11.*

♦ **January 21: Excel Basics Part 2** - 5-6:30 p.m., RIBA headquarters, East Providence. FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$50 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge. To register, visit [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org) or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org) or (401) 438-7400. There is a separate charge for each Excel class. *Details on page 11.*

♦ **January 22: Asbestos Awareness Seminar** - 5-7 p.m., RIBA headquarters, East Providence. FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$45 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge. To register, visit [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org) or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org) or (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 11.*

♦ **January 26-February 16: OSHA 30-Hour Course** - 7 a.m.-12:30 p.m., RIBA headquarters, East Providence. Class meets 7 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. The course trains safety directors, job foremen and field employees in OSHA construction standards. FREE for members, with a \$40 materials charge. \$400 for non-members, with a \$40 materials charge. To register, visit [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org) or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org) or (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 9.*

**January 20-22: International Builders Show** - Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev.  
Registration is online at [www.BuildersShow.com](http://www.BuildersShow.com).

♦ **February 3: Networking Night and BIG Open House** - 5 to 7 p.m., RIBA Headquarters, East Providence. Sponsored by the Builders Insurance Group. FREE for members and non-members. *Details on page 3.*

♦ **February 17: Insurance 101 for the Small Business Owner** - 4:30-6:30 p.m., RIBA Headquarters, East Providence. Join Charles Lowe of the Builders Insurance Group to learn about commercial insurance and how to avoid problems. FREE for members and non-members.

**February 27: 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Expo and Education Fair** - Registration begins 8:15 a.m., New England Institute of Technology, East Greenwich Campus, One New England Tech Blvd., East Greenwich. Sponsored by the Rhode Island Building Officials Association (RIBOA). *Details on page 8.*

♦ **March 5-8: 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Home Show** - Sponsored by RIBA at the Rhode Island Convention Center. *Details on page 6.*

♦ **June 11: Networking Barbecue** - Sponsored by Boston Cedar. Free for members and non-members.

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

♦ Indicates a RIBA-sponsored event.

# President's Message



## Rhode Island needs a realistic statewide plan

Over the past two months, there has been a great deal of controversy about statewide planning in Rhode Island. Just before we went to press, the State Planning Council unanimously approved the long-term planning project known as RhodeMap RI.

While I suspect that the public uproar about this plan might make it "dead on arrival," the fact remains that Rhode Island needs a realistic, workable strategy to improve the housing market and, with it, the state's economy. Such a plan must remove fundamental roadblocks to affordable, market-rate housing, ones the Rhode Island Builders Association is constantly working to rectify, with clarity and fortitude.

Specifically, we need higher densities, both in urban areas and outlying areas where utilities and municipal water and sewer are available. Low densities are the primary factor in high land prices, and a substantial contributor to high housing costs overall.

In fact, the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Construction (SOC) points out that single-family homes started in New England, where local zoning regulations often require very low densities, are built on some of the largest and most expensive lots in the nation.

Following from this, another key ingredient for a successful statewide growth plan would be realistic funding for infrastructure improvements and expansion, especially for public water and sewerage.

Couldn't this push for higher densities lead to overcrowding? Not with today's trends, which point toward one- or two-person households living in smaller spaces. Certainly modern construction technologies can make the old arguments about overcrowding meaningless. They can create small, affordable, high-quality liv-

*see PRESIDENT...page 23*



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# New 'Home Showcase' for 2015 Home Show taking shape at PCTA

WHEN: March 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>  
WHERE: Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence  
FOR INFORMATION AND TO OBTAIN EXHIBIT SPACE: Contact John Marcantonio or Elizabeth Carpenter at RIBA, (401) 438-7400.

Among the preparations for the Rhode Island Builders Association's 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Home Show is some hard work by students at the Providence Career and Technical Academy, who have been planning,

see *HOME SHOW...page 23*



Carpentry student Stephen Saing works on framing for the Home Show's Home Showcase at the Providence Career and Technical Academy. Special thanks to members of the Rhode Island Lumber and Building Materials Dealers Association (RILBMDA) for donating materials!

The Rhode Island

**builder** report

Official publication of the  
Rhode Island Builders Association  
since 1951

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The Rhode Island Builder Report

Publishing Director..... John Marcantonio  
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## Building businesses



Rhode Island Builders Association Vice President David A. Caldwell Jr., second from left, attends the first-ever graduation ceremonies for the Milenio Latino Institute's new Éxito Empresarial program, which introduces practicing entrepreneurs to the key elements necessary to continue to grow their businesses and be profitable. The event took place on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at Providence College's Smith Hill Annex in Providence. With Mr. Caldwell, from left, is Tomas Avila of the Milenio Real Estate Group LLC, with graduates Gerardo Cortez and Ana Vargas, both of Providence-based River City Drywall LLC.

Member Profile: Jose Marcano of JM Painting & Plastering

# From lawyer to contractor at a run

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Jose Marcano truly is a man of “firsts.”

As far as we know, he is the first member of the Rhode Island Builders Association to have been either a lawyer or a professional runner before he became a contractor. Also as far as we know, he is the first member to be a native of Venezuela and the first Latino member of the RIBA Board of Directors.

So how did this Renaissance man end up in Rhode Island?

“When I was a professional runner, I came to Rhode Island to train for the Boston Marathon,” Jose recalls.

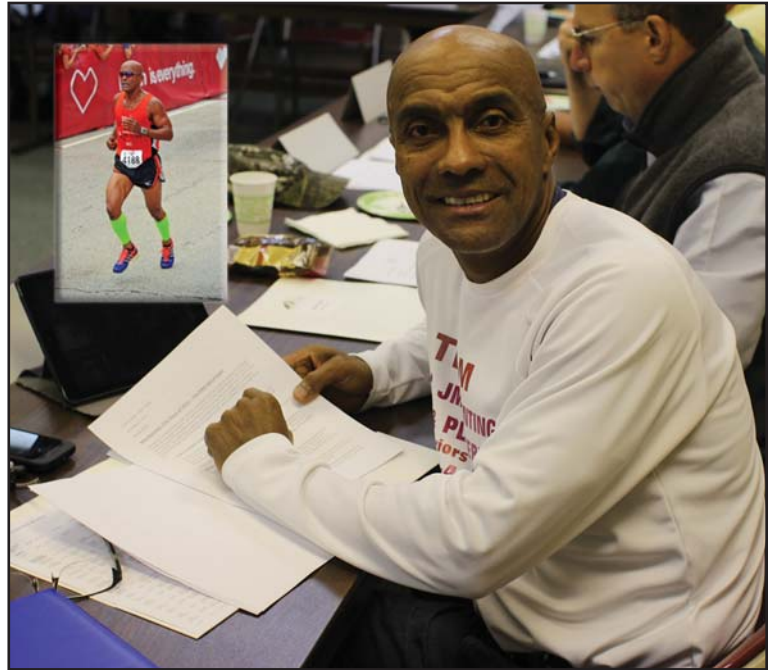
Then came the event that changed his life: He was injured and couldn’t run anymore, at least not professionally. Along came a friend who was a painting contractor, then working on Providence’s East Side, and said he would teach Jose the business. So Jose decided to stick around.

It was the beginning of a new life for him. Born far from Rhode Island, on the beautiful Isla Margarita, a tourist mecca off the north coast of Venezuela, Jose studied law and was a practicing attorney for nine years. An avid runner since the age of seven, it was in 1993 that he came to Rhode Island to train for, and prepare to run in, the Boston Marathon.

After the injury, Jose embraced his new life as a painting contractor, and he went into business for himself in 1996, when JM Painting & Plastering was born. Today, operating from his Cranston shop, Jose and his eight-person crew work all over Rhode Island.

The jobs include interior and exterior finish painting, drywall and plastering. JM Painting & Plastering is a big subcontractor for about five construction contractors, including Rhode Island Builders Association members Behan Brothers Inc. and Mill City Construction.

Clients have included Sandywoods Farm in Tiverton and Heritage Park in Fall River, Mass. He also painted the Olneyville Village Apartments in Providence for TRAC Builders, the Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts at Rhode Island College, the Fascitelli Fitness & Wellness Center at the University of Rhode



Jose Marcano attends his first RIBA board meeting in December.

INSET: Jose as a professional runner in the 1990s.

Island, and the Mount Hope Apartments in Providence for Pariseault Builders.

Currently, one of Jose’s biggest worksites is none other than the International Tennis Hall of Fame in Newport, as a subcontractor for Behan Brothers.

Jose is a great believer in trade associations because “they have helped my business grow. That’s why we are where we are today.” He belongs not only to RIBA, but to the Associated Builders and Contractors and the Painting and Decorating Contractors of America, and he’s active in all three.

“I first joined RIBA in 1999, but I was disappointed when the Workers’ Compensation Safety Program was no longer a benefit,” he remembers. But that changed in 2013, when he saw all the new RIBA member benefits available.

“I got active again, and I am really proud to be involved with RIBA!” Jose says. “RIBA provides the education I need to help my business grow, and I want to help RIBA grow by bringing in new members. These are people who care about our businesses. And I am very proud to be serving on the Board of Directors.”

So what lies ahead for JM Painting & Plastering?

“We’re taking on more residential and commercial work to expand the company in the next three to five years. Right now, about 80 percent of our work is commercial,” Jose explains.

Find out more about JM Painting & Plastering at their snazzy website: <http://www.jmpaintingplaster.com>.



## ***JM Painting & Plastering LLC***

***President: Jose Marcano***

***RIBA member since: 1999***

***Focus: Plastering, drywall and finish painting***

***Serves: Rhode Island***

***Founded: 1996***

***Based: Cranston, Rhode Island***



### RIBOA slates education expo

**WHEN:** Friday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, with registration at 8:15 a.m. and the Expo beginning at 9.  
**WHERE:** New England Institute of Technology, East Greenwich Campus, One New England Tech Blvd., East Greenwich, RI 02818  
**COST:** \$75 for RIBOA members, \$80 for non-members.  
**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** February 6<sup>th</sup>  
**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Visit [RIBOA.net](http://RIBOA.net)

It's the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Expo and Education Fair, sponsored by the Rhode Island Building Officials Association (RIBOA), and there's a great lineup of educational events.

Rhode Island Builders Association member Michael R. Guertin of Michael R. Guertin Inc. will offer "Residential Building Codes & Advanced Framing Techniques," while another member, Rob Sherwood, will discuss the Rhode Island Energy Code.

David Grandpre will offer a third program, on "Structural Roofing and Explanation of 23-27.3-106.0 Existing Structures, Substantial Improvements."

In addition, there will be vendor booths, code-book ordering and door prizes at the conclusion. Lunch is available.

### Deck Construction and Codes

January 8

**WHEN:** Thursday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 5-6:30 p.m.  
**WHERE:** RIBA headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy., East Providence  
**COST:** FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$50 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge.  
**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Logon to [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org), click on this event under the "Events Calendar," or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Mike Guertin of Michael R. Guertin Inc. to sort out codes changes that have taken place over the past two cycles. Building officials take decks more seriously than ever before!

Learn what you need to design and build code-compliant decks using prescriptive measures and alternatives, ledger fastening and fastener options, lateral load connection, guardrail post-to-frame connections, ledger flashing and more.

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# OSHA 30-Hour Course *January 26-February 16*

**WHEN:** January 26<sup>th</sup> - February 16<sup>th</sup>, 7 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
every Monday and Wednesday.

**WHERE:** RIBA headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial  
Pkwy., East Providence

**COST:** FREE for members, with a \$40 materials charge.  
\$400 for non-members, with a \$40 materials charge.

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Logon to  
www.RIBUILDERS.org, click on this event under the  
"Events Calendar," or contact Sheila McCarthy at  
smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Instructor Scott Asprey, construction safety consultant and train-  
er at Risk and Safety Mangement, will take participants through

this course, a comprehensive safety overview. The course will  
cover everything from the OSHA law itself through walking sur-  
faces and emergencies to electrical safety, ergonomics and haz-  
ardous materials.

It is specifically devised for safety directors, foremen and field  
supervisors to learn OSHA construction standards. The course  
provides complete information on OSHA compliance issues.

Payment is due at the time of registration. Credit cards are ac-  
cepted.

**For more information on  
scheduled RIBA classes,  
also see page 11 and the calendar on page 4.  
If there is a class you would like  
to see offered,  
contact Sheila McCarthy at (401) 438-7400  
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## Air Leakage Testing and Test Prep

January 13

**WHEN:** Thursday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 5-6:30 p.m.  
**WHERE:** RIBA headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy., East Providence  
**COST:** FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$50 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge.  
**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Logon to [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org), click on this event under the "Events Calendar," or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

Instructor Mike Guertin returns to discuss "Air Leakage Testing and Preparing for the Test."

Rhode Island's building code requires that all new homes be tested for air leakage with the blower-door test. Learn when the test can be done, how it's done, how to prepare for it and what the test results mean.

See where your time is best spent air-sealing a house during construction, and find out the best sealing approach for each location.



## Technology in your business

January 20

**WHEN:** Thursday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 4-5 p.m.  
**WHERE:** RIBA headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy., East Providence  
**COST:** FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$25 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge.  
**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Logon to [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org), click on this event under the "Events Calendar," or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

"Tech Talk: What Technology is Important in your Business and How to Protect It" is the topic with instructor Mickey Pazienza.

Find out what technology is important in your business process and how it can help you achieve your organization's goals. Find out if you're prepared for an unexpected data catastrophe.

More than ever, small businesses rely on technology to make more happen every day. This class will help you determine if you have the right technology in place and to know it is being used efficiently, and can be recovered quickly if compromised.



## Excel™ Basics

Part 1: January 14

Part 2: January 21

**WHEN:** Wednesdays, January 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, 5-6:30 p.m.  
**WHERE:** RIBA headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy., East Providence  
**COST:** FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$50 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge.  
**Separate charges for each class.**  
**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Logon to [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org), click on this event under the "Events Calendar," or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

Learn the basics of this fundamental Microsoft Office® spreadsheet software in these two separate classes with instructor Kristine Ricci. *Each class incurs separate charges.*

You can use Excel™ to create and format workbooks (a collection of spreadsheets) in order to analyze data and make more informed business decisions. Excel can be of great use to contractors for accounting, budgeting, planning, billing, tracking and more.



## Asbestos Awareness

January 22

**WHEN:** Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 5-7 p.m.  
**WHERE:** RIBA headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy., East Providence  
**COST:** FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$45 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge.  
**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Logon to [www.RIBUILDERS.org](http://www.RIBUILDERS.org), click on this event under the "Events Calendar," or contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400.

Join Instructor Lance Comeau of R.I. Analytical Labs Inc. for a history of asbestos, and its various uses and forms.

Also learn about the health effects associated with asbestos exposure and see examples of suspect asbestos-containing materials (ACM) and their possible location within buildings.

The class will also show you how to recognize damaged and deteriorated ACM materials, and what personal protective equipment to use when working around asbestos. Asbestos bulk/air sampling methodologies will be covered also.

This is a highly charged subject and a heavily regulated material, so it's important for every contractor to be up to speed!



# Busy times ahead for all of us...



**Steven Carlino**

It has been a busy month for legislative and regulatory issues, as you can see from the stories in this issue of *The Rhode Island Builder Report*.

Everything from the controversial RhodeMap RI planning program (see page 5) to the new Providence Zoning ordinance (see page 18) to a new solid waste disposal policy (see page 2) has been in the news and on the radar for your Legislative Committee.

In January the 2015 session of the General Assembly convenes, and you can bet that things will get even busier. It's important to realize, however, that the most important hearings and legislative action usually don't take place until at least the middle of the session. But it's throughout the session that we need the help of RIBA members.

First of all, we need you to keep up to date on the issues that af-

fect all of us in the residential construction industry. Keep tabs on these issues by reading this magazine and by staying in contact with our executive director, John Marcantonio, at (401) 438-7400.

Also, let John know about the legislative and regulatory concerns you have, and about what's going on in your own community and business regarding those concerns. We can't deal with new issues if we don't know about them.

Last but not least, we need you to contact and stay in contact with your own state senator and representative. By following the first two suggestions we make in this column, you will be in a position to fill your lawmakers in on what our industry needs to lead Rhode Island's economy back to prosperity.

Watch for details on RIBA's 2015 advocacy plans!



**Robert J. Baldwin**

## RIBA's Legislative Committee

**Steven Carlino, Co-Chairman**  
*Douglas Lumber, Kitchens & Home Center*

**Robert J. Baldwin, Co-Chairman**  
*R.B. Homes Inc.*

**President Roland J. Fiore, Ex Officio**  
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*Executive Director, Rhode Island Builders Association*

**John Anderson**  
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At Wakefield, meet designers Lisa St. George (lstgeorge@arnoldlumber.com) and Megan Roberts (mroberts@arnoldlumber.com). Reach them by phone at (401) 783-3311. The Design Center is open Monday - Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Design Center in Westerly is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., and after hours by appointment. Stop by and meet designer Lauren Burnap. Reach her at (401) 596-2806 or lburnap@arnoldlumber.com.

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# Program seeks 'more resilient' coastal buildings

Making Rhode Island's coast "more resilient to severe weather" was the theme at a November seminar for building officials organized by the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC), the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS), the University of Rhode Island's Coastal Resources Center (CRC) and other stakeholders.

"Rhode Island is moving forward and training all state building officials on the requirements of IBHS' voluntary FORTIFIED Home™ – Hurricane building standards," a statement from IBHS said. The training session took place at URI's Narragansett Bay Campus November 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> and was attended by about 60 people.

"While the new building codes based on the FEMA maps are giving us more resilient new structures in coastal areas, the FORTIFIED Home program provides a

way for owners of existing buildings to do the same for their properties," CRMC Executive Director Grover Fugate told *The Rhode Island Builder Report*.

He added that another training session for building officials is planned for January, then sessions for contractors will be announced.

"We wanted to get the building officials up to speed first," Mr. Fugate said.

Julie Rochman, IBHS CEO and president, explained more about the program.

"Rhode Island is taking proactive steps to protect businesses and homes along the coast by evaluating building performance and developing a plan to strengthen structures," Ms. Rochman said. "IBHS is pleased to work with key stakeholders in the state to make coastal communities like Newport stronger, safer and more resilient. It isn't a matter of if a major storm

will strike the Rhode Island coast, but when."

According to the IBHS statement, it, CRMC and the rest have formed a "Rapid Assessment Team" to increase resiliency among waterfront business and homes in Newport. The catalyst for the team's formation was concern about Rhode Island's rising sea level, which has risen 10 inches since 1938.

"The team will develop a comprehensive commercial building vulnerability survey, and create checklists of effective wind and water damage mitigation actions for both homes and commercial buildings.

"This risk reduction plan will be deployed first in Newport, and then in other areas along the coastline," the statement continued.

For more information, visit [www.DisasterSafety.org](http://www.DisasterSafety.org).



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# Providence zoning overhaul increases densities, but not in residential areas

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

In the first major overhaul to Providence's zoning ordinance since 1951, both residential and commercial densities have been increased in mixed-use zones, though not in residential areas. That's one major change in the zoning revision, a year and a half in the making and signed by Mayor Angel Tavares on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

"Density requirements have been removed for commercial and downtown zones," Robert Azar, the city's director of current planning, told *The Rhode Island Builder Report*.

"The old ordinance required a certain amount of land per unit. So now, in mixed-use areas, there can be any number of commercial or residential units in a building as long as you meet the other dimensional regulations, such as setback, height, parking, landscaping etc.," Mr. Azar said.

The new ordinance "slightly tweaks" residential zones, but there are no major changes in those areas, he said. Density is not increased, and height restrictions remain.

*The Rhode Island Builder Report* asked why densities weren't boosted in existing residential areas, per "smart growth" principles all Rhode Island communities have supposedly committed to through the "Land Use 2025" plan.

"I would argue that the existing residential density is already probably higher than just about any other residential zone in any community in the state," Mr. Azar responded.

"Secondly, we have a variety of residential zones, from single-family to multi-family. In the multi-family zones, the density allowance is already substantial."

He cited Providence's Comprehensive Plan as talking about "areas of growth and areas of stability."

"In our community-planning process, people were very clear that they liked their urban living. They liked their neighborhoods, and they more or less preferred to

maintain the residential density as it was."

As a result, it's in the commercial and downtown zones where city planners see the potential for the most growth, according to Mr. Azar.

"The ordinance recognizes that there's no reason you can't have any amount of mixed use, and it doesn't discourage the creation of small apartments in commercial zones."

He denied that the city is actually trying to reduce density in residential areas.

"If a three-decker burns down and it's in a zone where's that's permitted, another three-decker can be built," he said. "You can build three units on 5,000 square feet in a three-family zone. You can accommodate substantial density in those areas."

Scott Wolf is executive director of Grow Smart Rhode Island and also a member of the Providence Zoning Board of Review. He believes that increasing residential

density in mixed-use areas but not in residential areas is in line with smart-growth goals.

"We need to preserve the American dream of the white picket fence and the big lawn, but we also need to preserve the American dream of being allowed to live above your shop. And that's hard to attain in many Rhode Island communities," Mr. Wolf said.

"Higher densities in mixed-use zones is very much in line with that. In fact, we need to look at more mixed-use zoning around the state."

Asked what Providence's capacity for population growth is at this point, Mr. Wolf suggested that 20,000 to 30,000 more residents could be accommodated "with the right planning and more opportunity for mixed-use development and more multi-unit densities in some places."

see ZONING...next page

## The Environmental Committee

# RIBA feels Rule 17.3 exceeds the law

In addition to action to establish statewide standards for wetlands and septic systems (related story on page 1), the Rhode Island Builders Association's Environmental Committee has been active in opposing the Dept. of Environmental Management's (DEM's) Rule 17.3. We feel this rule gives too much power to municipalities in regulating the location and design of onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS).

Specifically, Rule 17.3 says that every OWTS application "must ensure that the OWTS applicant to (DEM) is in compliance with local ordinances regarding the location, design, construction and maintenance of an OWTS."

RIBA has requested that DEM eliminate this rule because it far exceeds the authority granted by the regulatory enabling legislation, the Rhode Island Septic System Maintenance Act of 1987.

DEM's legal opinion, however, is that the issue is with the municipalities and their local rules.

Active discussion continues on this matter, so watch for more updates.



Thomas E. D'Angelo  
Timothy A. Stasiunas  
Co-Chairs, RIBA  
Environmental Committee



## Clean Energy Future Award: Nominations open


The Office of Energy Resources (OER), in partnership with the Energy Efficiency and Resource Management Council and National Grid, is taking nominations for the 2015 Rhode Island Clean Energy Future Awards.

The awards recognize individuals, companies, and/or organizations that show exemplary achievement and leadership in promoting energy efficiency, renewable energy or alternative clean transportation in the state.

Up to four winners will be chosen based

on demonstrated excellence and accomplishment. To be considered, individuals must be Rhode Island residents and companies and organizations must be based in Rhode Island.

Applications must be submitted by January 16<sup>th</sup>. Winners will be notified in February, and awards presented at the 2015 Energy Expo at the Rhode Island Home Show. *See page 6.*

Please contact Barbara Cesaro at OER for an application: [Barbara.Cesaro@energy.ri.gov](mailto:Barbara.Cesaro@energy.ri.gov) or call (401) 574-9105. 


## DEM amends stormwater forms

All required application and notification forms associated with “Rules for the Discharge of Non-Sanitary Wastewater and Other Fluid to or Below the Ground Surface” have been amended by the Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM).

This includes the requirements for discharging stormwater to groundwater, the agency said.

Minor changes were made to Rule 11, Stormwater Discharge System Registration. Also, all forms associated with the amended rules, now simply called the “Groundwater Discharge Rules,” are dated 11/14 (in the lower left corner) and must be used for all submissions under these rules.

Find the amended 2014 Groundwater Discharge Rules, along with the correct application and notification forms, at [www.DEM.ri.gov/programs/benviron/water/permits/uic/index.htm](http://www.DEM.ri.gov/programs/benviron/water/permits/uic/index.htm).

For more information, contact Ernie Panciera at (401) 4700, ext. 7603, or e-mail [ernie.panciera@DEM.ri.gov](mailto:ernie.panciera@DEM.ri.gov). 

## ZONING...from previous page

“Many people don’t realize that Providence in 1940 had a population of 240,000,” he pointed out. “It declined steadily until 2000, then began to reverse. Currently it’s about 180,000. There is definitely room for growth and there’s an increasing demand for mixed-use, multi-unit living arrangements.”

Currently, the downtown residential rental vacancy rate is very low, according to Mr. Wolf.

“So there’s a real market there. There are baby boomers becoming empty nesters, and young folks who are single or childless and who want the urban living experience. The Providence Arcade has a huge waiting list for its micro-apartments.”

Presumably, this move toward the cities by this demographic would free up more existing housing for working families in non-urban areas, he indicated.

## Mixed reactions

Rhode Island Builders Association member John Bentz of the Property Advisory Group, welcomed the new ordinance’s density changes, as far as they go.

“The density increases, where they took place, will provide more opportunities for us to build affordable housing. More units on smaller lots is better for the economy and the industry, and especially for people who need housing,” Mr. Bentz said.

Robert J. Baldwin of R.B. Homes Inc. was more critical.

“If you’re not going to increase density in existing residential areas, which is exactly where smart growth calls for it, then what’s the point of changing the zoning ordinance at all?”

The old zoning ordinance carried forward the post-World War II policy of suburbanization. That derived from President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s contention that, unless larger numbers of people left the cities for the suburbs and the countryside, the population would be decimated by any Soviet nuclear attack on American cities. Planners have been trying to reverse that trend since the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the environmental movement.

As indicated, the key changes involved commercial and mixed-use areas. Along with downtown, these include North Main Street and Upper South Providence, which are considered major growth areas. Height restrictions are eased, and certain parking requirements for any new residential units are removed.

The ordinance also addresses the I-195 redevelopment area, preserves the “working waterfront” and strengthens historic preservation. City planners and Zoning Board members believe the new ordinance will help avoid confusion and assure predictability in the permitting process.

Read and download the new ordinance online at <http://rezoningprovidence.com>. 

## Statewide e-permitting could be late

The launch date for statewide e-permitting might be later than the projected March goal. That’s the word from the state’s Office of Regulatory Reform.

“It’s my understanding that we are in the process of trying to finalize a contract between the state and the vender. Once that has occurred, we will have a better idea when the program will roll out,” Small Business Ombudsman Nancy Scarduzio of the Dept. of Administration tells *The Rhode Island Builder Report*.

Watch for more information. 

# John V. Marcantonio

## Executive Director, R.I. Builders Association

*John Marcantonio became executive director of the Rhode Island Builders Association in July 2011. Previously, he spent 13 years in marketing and strategic planning as director of marketing at Fall River-based Yomega Corp. Mr. Marcantonio started his working life as a carpenter, construction site manager, estimator and code-compliance man for Marcantonio Design Builders, based in North Smithfield, a longtime RIBA member specializing in custom home building and remodeling. Earning both undergraduate (1990) and graduate degrees (1996) at Bryant University, Mr. Marcantonio built a political resume as well, serving as vice chairman of the North Smithfield Budget Committee from 1993-1995 and as a member of the Town Council, of which he was vice president from 1995-1999 and again from 2001-2004.*



John Marcantonio attends the 2014 RIBA Clambake, which drew over 425 members.

**THE BUILDER:** This might seem like a question with an obvious answer, but it isn't. Why does the Rhode Island Builders Association exist?

**MARCANTONIO:** RIBA's mission is to professionalize the industry, provide political advocacy, education and information to members, and provide the public with quality housing services and choices. I think RIBA is now doing a much better job in all those categories.

**THE BUILDER:** There's certainly a lot of activity at RIBA when it comes to advocacy, especially before and during the General Assembly session each year. What exactly is advocacy, and where does it stand among the services RIBA offers?

**MARCANTONIO:** Well, advocacy is probably the toughest thing to explain to someone. I sometimes hear, "Well, isn't that what my state representative does?" or "Wouldn't I get that anyway, even if I wasn't a member?"

But there really is only one organization in Rhode Island that actively "advocates" for, or presents the needs of, the residential construction industry to lawmakers and political leaders, and aggressively promotes solutions. And that's RIBA. We work tirelessly to see that both consumers are protected and contractors' abilities to do their jobs are protected. That means watching and acting on everything from a simple local zoning rule to state regulations to federal rules that affect residential contractors and their customers.

**THE BUILDER:** So if I'm a contractor or subcontractor in Rhode Island, I get the benefit of RIBA's advocacy anyway. Why should I join?

**MARCANTONIO:** You can't advocate for issues you're not aware of. Like any organization, we focus on the areas that members bring to our attention. The more diverse our membership, and the more active our membership, the more likely we are to represent a contractor's individual areas of concern.

If you have an association made up of just remodelers, or just electricians or just painting contractors, you have to focus just on their issues. On the other hand, a diversified association like RIBA can take in and understand the needs of the whole industry, then respond accordingly.

When someone asks what you just asked, I point out something that makes us very effective: We represent a huge percentage of the residential construction industry. People need to join because if you lose those numbers, you lose your voice. When it comes to advocacy effectiveness, that's the most important reason to join.

**THE BUILDER:** Okay, so I'm a developer or builder, and I'm getting grief from my local planning or zoning board, but I believe I'm in the right. What can RIBA do for me?

**MARCANTONIO:** RIBA provides free legal advice for members. While in most cases we can't get directly involved in members' specific applications or issues, we can take a look at the overall picture and provide the advice you need. And if your problem identifies a larger issue for all contractors, we can take that on.

**THE BUILDER:** RIBA makes much of its education program. But let's say I'm a third-generation builder. I learned what I need to know from my father and grandfather, and I get updates from family and friends as they come along. What do I need to join RIBA for?

**MARCANTONIO:** Because ignorance is no excuse, certainly not for someone who's supposed to be a professional. I'm talking about the constantly evolving laws and regulations you're not going to learn from your relatives or just pick up here and there.

The industry and things that you have to know are all so different than they were even a few years ago. The sheer number





of changes in regulations, products, standards, codes and laws makes it very hard for you to stay up to date if you don't belong to RIBA. This is one of the best reasons to join and enjoy the benefits of education and information that are hard to obtain anywhere else without a great deal of time, expense and effort on your part.

Using the association's resources, particularly this magazine, we constantly feed information to members, anything they need to know to be professional and effective in their businesses today.

And there's a big financial reward for membership: RIBA's many classes and workshops are free of tuition charge for members and their employees. That in itself can pay for your RIBA dues, maybe several times over. Some of the classes you are required to take as a contractor can cost hundreds of dollars otherwise.

**THE BUILDER: If I work for a member company and come to a RIBA class, how do you know I'm actually an employee?**

**MARCANTONIO:** If we don't know you, a pay stub or written payroll confirmation by the employer will do just fine. I should add that the free classes extend only to employees, not subcontractors unless they're members themselves.

**THE BUILDER: Among the member benefits RIBA promotes, the Home Show and other association events are prominent. What do they have to do with me as a contractor?**

**MARCANTONIO:** Industry networking and member-to-member networking are invaluable for any contractor! The annual Rhode Island Home Show is an amazing venue for a contractor of any size to generate work by direct contact with the public. After all, people don't come to the Home Show if they aren't interested in improving their homes or if they don't already have some project in mind.

The Home Show and RIBA social events like the Annual Clambake and other networking activities throughout the year also help you get to know other contractors, along with suppliers and others who serve the industry. You'll be surprised what you can learn at these events, and the profitable contacts you can make.

I hear all the time about how members come to a networking night or other activity and leave with valuable contacts and even new work. Any time you have a chance to meet your peers in the industry, talk shop and exchange business cards is an opportunity for work.

**THE BUILDER: We hear that RIBA has a new insurance agency. What's the story there?**

**MARCANTONIO:** Now we have the Builders Insurance Group (BIG), which is actually a RIBA subsidiary, though managed separately. It has many brokers who have decades of experience. As an actual agency, BIG has access to many insurance companies and can shop all your insurance needs to get the best rates.

It's a very personalized, one-on-one experience when it comes to buying insurance. Contractors can expect a much higher level of service than they can get at other agencies. I encourage members and non-members to contact BIG to help them understand

their insurance needs and solve any problems they might have with their coverage.

**THE BUILDER: It's often said that the most valuable commodity in the world, especially in business, is information. What can RIBA do for me as a member in that department?**

**MARCANTONIO:** That statement is true, and information is the key to professionalism today. You wouldn't be a doctor without belonging to the medical association, for similar reasons that construction and remodeling professionals should belong to RIBA. If it's a new product, a new regulation, a new way of doing things, a code issue, an estimating trend or anything else that affects business in residential construction, RIBA provides information and education.

We take that job very seriously, and we take member feedback very seriously. We constantly try to improve those services and to provide more of them.

Even when I was a young carpenter working for my father, he took the time to send us to RIBA classes to learn codes, estimating and other important matters. And that made us more professional and more productive. That certainly played well to our customers, and it helped make our company successful.

This magazine, which is highly respected in the industry and among state leaders, is our monthly spearhead for information. We also regularly feed information to members via mail, e-mail, social media, our website (RIBuilders.org) and at meetings. Of course, I and the whole staff at RIBA headquarters are available to members daily to answer any specific questions.

**THE BUILDER: Once in a while, we'll hear a contractor say, "Well, I operate under the radar, and I rely on that to keep me out of trouble. If I were in RIBA, I'd be better known, I'd be on RIBalist.com and in the annual Directory." How do you respond to someone like that?**

**MARCANTONIO:** Frankly, I don't understand an attitude like that. As a RIBA member, you have access to some of the best professional training in the industry. It can help sell and grow your business.

On the other hand, if you're a contractor who's trying to skirt the law, you don't belong in the association anyway. We help create laws and moderate regulations, and anyone who "operates under the radar" in that sense doesn't belong here.

**THE BUILDER: What are the requirements for membership in RIBA? Do I have to be a certain size?**

**MARCANTONIO:** All you have to be is duly registered with the Rhode Island Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board, have proof of insurance, and sign a code of ethics. You also have to provide some references and have a member sponsor you. But that's easy to do. So, for the most part, if you're a company in good standing, and you want to get involved in your trade association, want access to free education for yourself and your employees, just call and we'll guide you through the relatively simple process.

*See INTERVIEW...page 23*

# Census Bureau: Less than 60% of home starts in Northeast in '13 were 'spec'

## *National Association of Home Builders*

In the Northeast (New England and the Middle Atlantic States) and the East North Central U.S. Census Bureau divisions, less than 60 percent of all single-family starts in 2013 were homes "built for sale," according to the Census Bureau's 2013 Survey of Construction (SOC).

Rather, these divisions registered the highest shares of starts supervised by contractors or owners – close to 39 percent in the East North Central division, 37 percent in New England and 36 percent in the Middle Atlantic region.

Overall, the SOC reveals significant regional differences in the share of custom homes started in 2013. According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), analysis of the 2013 U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Construction (SOC) finds that the Northeast and East North Central parts of the nation have the highest market shares.

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, and Vermont are considered part of the New York Region.

The SOC differentiates between houses built for sale, houses built by contractors, owners and for rental. Built for sale, or "spec" houses, are constructed on a build-

er's land with the intention of selling the house and land in one transaction. Contractor-built or owner-built houses – that together make up the custom home market – are built for owner occupancy on owner's land with either the owner or a builder acting as the general contractor.

During the housing contraction, the share of spec starts has declined from 79 percent in 2005 to less than 65 percent in 2010, most likely as a result of the severe lack of acquisition, development, and construction (AD&C) credit. The trend finally reversed itself in 2011, and the share of spec starts reached 74 percent in 2013.

At the same time, the share of custom homes increased from less than 20 percent

in 2005 to 30 percent in 2009. It has been declining since then and went slightly below 22 percent in 2013.

Even though most homes started in 2013 have been built for sale, the share varies widely across the United States. The Western divisions – Mountain and Pacific – register two of the highest shares – close to 83 percent and 80 percent, respectively.

The East South Central division stands out for having the highest share of homes started for rent, close to 10 percent, more than double the national average of 4 percent. See the NAHB site at <http://eyeonhousing.org/2014/10/where-is-the-custom-home-market-share-highest-for-more-details>.



## Regulators move to loosen credit

### *National Association of Home Builders*

U.S. financial regulators recently announced separate actions that should boost the housing market and home sales by enabling more creditworthy borrowers to access home loans.

Six federal regulators finalized new rules under the Dodd-Frank Act that define the standards of a qualified residential mortgage (QRM). The final rule exempts securitizers from retaining 5 percent of the credit risk on qualifying home loans packaged and sold as securities.

"By aligning the definitions of a QRM and the qualified mortgage (QM), the standard lenders must follow to demonstrate that they have determined a borrower's ability to repay a mortgage loan, financial regulators have acted to alleviate confusion in the marketplace," a statement from the National Association of Home Builders said.

Since 2011, NAHB has worked independently and with a coalition of housing advocates to urge regulators to establish a QRM rule that removes down-payment requirements and other onerous underwriting criteria to keep homeownership affordable for working American families.

"The new QRM rule will encourage sound lending behaviors that support a housing recovery, attract private capital in the mortgage market, help ease tight credit conditions for borrowers, and reduce future defaults without punishing responsible borrowers and lenders," stated NAHB Chairman Kevin Kelly.

In another important development, Federal Housing Finance Agency Director Mel Watt said that FHFA will announce new details that will specify when financial institutions must repurchase loans from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac that were issued based on false or inaccurate information.

To further unlock tight credit, Mr. Watt also announced plans for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to lower their down-payment requirements from 5 percent to as low as 3 percent.



**Among other things, these results show the need for more policies in the Northeast that are friendly to making housing affordable, and better access to credit. The SOC results suggest that the majority of homes here are being built for the affluent, and that middle-class housing is being regulated out of existence.**

**-Executive Director  
John Marcantonio**



## HOME SHOW...from page 6

and building pre-fabricated wall panels and other components, to create a 32' by 48' Home Showcase.

"We submitted a list and National Lumber delivered all the materials in mid-October," PCTA Instructor Patrick Bowen reported.

"Attendees at the Home Show will be able to stroll through this showcase and see custom-designed, multiple-room settings featuring Cabot House furniture."

The Carpentry Department has reached out to other technical programs at PCTA including Graphic Arts, Mechanical Drafting and Electrical to contribute to the project, Mr. Bowen added.

"We look forward to continued progress in the months to come. We emphasize to our students that, just like any construction project, deadlines are crucial," he added.

RIBA members are reminded that the Home Show takes place a month earlier than the 2014 event.


There will be many other new features as the show continues to expand. These will

include a RIBA-sponsored contractor pavilion to help those who have never exhibited before "get their feet wet."

"First-time contractor exhibitors will have the option to rent space for a day rather than committing to the whole four-day show," explained RIBA Executive Director John Marcantonio.

There will also be a wider variety of exhibitors. The popular Energy Expo will return, as will landscape features by the Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape Association, demonstrations, seminars and special events.


"Now is the time to contact us about exhibiting, especially if you want to get in on the new RIBA Contractor Pavilion," Mr. Marcantonio said.

RIBA helps exhibitors with booth design and other guidance, and will assist new exhibitors through the entire process, he emphasized. Surveys say that Home Show visitors want to see more contractors and suppliers, so plan your exhibit now! 

## Muriel Caldwell-Niles, 97

Muriel G. Caldwell-Niles, mother of longtime Rhode Island Builders Association member David A. Caldwell and grandmother of RIBA Vice President David A. Caldwell Jr., passed away on Thursday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, at Scalabrini Villa in North Kingstown. She was 97.


Wife of Charles L. Niles Jr. and the late William H. Caldwell Sr., she was born in Cranston and lived in North Kingstown for most of her life. She was a teacher in Cranston and North Kingstown for many years, retiring in 1977.

In addition to her husband, son and grandson, Mrs. Caldwell-Niles is survived by three additional grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Donations in her memory may be made to Home & Hospice Care of Rhode Island, 1085 Main Street, Providence, RI 02904. Remembrances may be offered online at [www.Carpenter-Jenks.com](http://www.Carpenter-Jenks.com). 

## PRESIDENT...from page 5

ing spaces perfectly suited to this younger, environmentally aware demographic.

To accomplish this, we need creative, well thought-out zoning, to move the state forward economically, along with a clear plan to eliminate excessive and unnecessary regulations. As it is, slow and costly permitting is a major impediment to builders and a better, more affordable housing stock. As it is, Rhode Island's municipalities don't have enough money or staff for the permitting process we have now.

Unless a workable plan, such as we suggest, addresses the basic problems, high housing costs will continue to prevent working Rhode Islanders from buying homes in their own state, the housing situation in general will not improve, and the state economy will continue to lag. 

**Find out the benefits of  
RIBA membership! Visit  
[RIBuilders.org](http://RIBuilders.org) or call  
(401) 438-7400.**

## INTERVIEW...from page 23

**THE BUILDER:** We've talked about RIBA's major member services. What about benefits that might not be all that obvious?


**MARCANTONIO:** Beyond advocacy, free education, free information, free problem-solving and free legal advice, we offer free contracts and other forms, discount programs on products members use every day, buying initiatives and rebate programs. If you use your member benefits, membership can pay for itself in your first few weeks, and several times over.

At the same time, you only get out of your membership what you put into it. The most involved members get the most back, and they tend to have a big advantage over those who don't get involved. Another important point: "Every member of RIBA is automatically a member of the National Association of Home Builders, with all the additional resources and benefits that brings with it.

**THE BUILDER:** Okay, so I'm convinced and I join up! How can I get more involved in RIBA?

**MARCANTONIO:** There are lots of opportunities to get involved beyond just using your benefits, and you'll find a warm welcome. Just call me or any officer to get involved in any of our 10 committees, or just come by the office. Our committees deal with everything from land use and environmental regulations to planning the Home Show and organizing networking events.

**THE BUILDER:** What's your take on where the residential construction industry is right now, and where it's going?

**MARCANTONIO:** We realize that things still aren't where they're supposed to be for many contractors. The same is true for the industry and the economy. But our entire association is committed to the best possible present and future. That's what we do. We help our members and consumers 24/7, and we don't give up. The point is: We can accomplish so much more together than we ever could alone. 

*CTE...from page 1*

will be appointed by incoming Gov. Gina Raimondo in January. In the words of the law, this board will “be responsible for ensuring a comprehensive and coordinated career and technical system....” It will assume all duties of the current Advisory Council on Vocational Education by January 30<sup>th</sup> and is charged with converting the state’s nine current CTE programs to a single system by 2016.

“In January, the BTCTE will begin the planning and coordinating process for the move to a statewide CTE system. At the same time, the Rhode Island Career and Technical Trust (RICTC) will be put into place,” John C. Simmons, executive director of the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC), told *The Rhode Island Builder Report*.

RICTC is a permanent, not-for-profit corporation to help fund the unified program through partnerships with private and corporate sources. The trust also will also build partnerships with various employers to create internships, apprenticeship programs, voluntary work relationships and other arrangements to facilitate education.

Working with the Business Coalition, the Rhode Island Builders Association strongly supported passage of the law, Bill 8204 Sub A, titled simply “An Act Relating to Education,” during the 2014 session of the General Assembly, and it is participating in the CTE unification process.

“RIBA was the first organization to donate to the RICTC,” said Robert J. Baldwin, co-chairman of the association’s Legislative Committee and a key figure in the passage of CTE reform.

“That law came from the realization that we must have a skilled workforce as a linchpin for Rhode’s Island’s economic recovery. This is important not only for the state’s economy, but for the residential construction industry, which is having trouble finding skilled workers,” Mr. Baldwin said.

The legislation was inspired by the nationally-acclaimed success of Worcester Technical High School in Massachusetts, which is the model for Rhode Island’s statewide system.

“This is the first major CTE reform in

## National Grid program provides code instruction to tech students

Rhode Island’s career and technical (CTE) students are the beneficiaries as National Grid, the state Building Code Commission (BCC) and the Rhode Island Building Officials Association (RIBOA) have teamed up to bring them in-school seminars on codes and energy-efficient construction.

Over the past two years, this has included the International Code Council High School Technical Training Program, a mentorship program and several other themed workshops.

Conservation Services Group (CSG), a member of the Rhode Island Builders Association, manages the Rhode Island Energy Code Support Initiative, along with the Rhode Island Residential New Construction Program (RNC) for National Grid.

Under the Rhode Island Energy Code, blower-door testing and duct leakage testing are now required on every new residential unit and CTE students are learning how that works through one or more of the in-school programs.

Recently, Rob Sherwood, CSG’s senior project manager, has performed a number of trainings for various CTE schools, both in the field and in the classroom. These have incorporated the new performance testing required by the code, and they have included programs at the Woonsocket Career and Technical Center and the Warwick Career and Technical Center.

Also discussed was building science and its “real world” application, including questions like “Why could an air leak in an attic rot out a brand new roof in five years?” or “How can adding ductwork in an attic possibly lead to ice dams?”

Students discover that, if the house is built to code, or the ducts installed according to the code, these problems would not occur.

“Working with vocational students and teachers is always a joyous experience. The students learn more important lessons than just how to build a wall or a cabinet. They learn extremely valuable lessons that future employers like CSG are looking for,” Mr. Sherwood said.

For more information on the free programs, visit [www.NGRID.com/rienergycode](http://www.NGRID.com/rienergycode) or call (855) 343-0105.

Rhode Island in 40 years, and we feel it will have a major positive impact on our economic future,” added Mr. Baldwin. He and Executive Director John Marcantonio represent RIBA in the Business Coalition.

Asked if there has been resistance to the unification move from anyone in the current system, Mr. Simmons said “no.”

“We’re working closely with the CTE program directors, and we have a good relationship with them and the Dept. of Education. We will have more conversations with the Rhode Island School Superintendents Association and the Rhode Island Association of School Committees,” Mr.

Simmons stated.

“We’re all working together to start the process in earnest, and we want to make sure there is a common agenda.”

As of this writing, despite Mr. Simmons’ confidence, there was some doubt that all leaders of organized labor and the legislature were on board with the plan. More will be known in January as Gov.-Elect Gina Raimondo takes office and as members of the BTCTE are appointed.

Watch *The Rhode Island Builder Report* for more information as this issue develops, or call Mr. Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400.



## **TASK FORCE...from page 1**

- Lack of adequate protection of property rights based on existing lots and uses;
- Lack of adequate consideration for alternative technologies;
- A general concern that permit reviews will cumulatively increase rather than decrease under proposed reforms as they now stand.

There was also some discussion about whether municipalities should have some say in what "critical resources" should be subject to jurisdiction.

"To leave the local communities to establish 'critical resource areas' is far beyond their ability and would continue their existing practice of zoning by setback," Mr. Stasiunas commented.

In another matter, RIBA does not believe that the proposal's statement about existing-use considerations is good enough.

"Although there's a brief mention of 'taking into account existing land use,' we believe that statement doesn't go far enough to enforce the importance of how much the owners of existing structures and lots of record would be affected," said Mr. D'Angelo.

He suggested that the number of permit reviews would skyrocket, not only by the increase in jurisdictional area in general, but by the number of existing uses it would further capture. Many of these uses are now deemed "insignificant alterations" because they predate zoning, wetlands and onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) regulations.

"Other states exempt these existing uses for just that reason," he stated.

Mr. D'Angelo also noted that there is no consideration for properties where alternative OWTS technologies and/or current stormwater regulations are used.

"Rhode Island is one of the leaders in these environmentally friendly tools. But no credit seems to be considered for their use. We recognize that this is a framework document, but there are valid considerations that should be addressed so the legislature knows the full scope of its task."

As a result, RIBA continues to press for a reasonable outcome to the Task Force's conclusions and recommendations, he stated.

"DEM has had the resources and science to regulate existing buffers and setbacks initially. We support those findings, and existing setbacks and buffers, as do some professionals who have testified (before the Task Force). Some have said that regulatory increases could reach the point of diminishing return and that there is no 'magic number'" for buffers and setbacks, Mr. D'Angelo explained.

"We feel that an increase in jurisdiction without defined setbacks and/or buffers adds another stumbling block to the Rhode Island economy, with time delays and additional costs. It adds a further deficit when a consumer or a land-use professional can't predetermine the viability of a development property," he added.

### ***RIBA's solution***

Mr. D'Angelo outlined RIBA's suggestions as presented:

- Most buffers are adequate as they currently exist, though some changes should be considered. Certain wetlands under three acres, and defined and sized vernal pools, should receive a 25-foot buffer. Currently these have no buffers, though there are setbacks.

- There should be a credit/reduction in buffers when stormwater best management practices (BMPs) are employed and defined in the regulations.

- Current setbacks are adequate, except as follows: They should be increased by 25 feet in Category 1 (outwash, etc.) soil areas unless approved I/A pretreatment designs are employed.

- I/A pretreatment system setbacks could be reduced in all cases.

- Special critical resource area setbacks are adequate as already addressed. Additionally, DEM may include additional critical wetlands, once scientifically established, via regulatory public hearings. Several years ago, this was done with all public reservoirs.

- There should be a mechanism for further reducing or crediting in light of future advanced-treatment technologies.

- Regulations using advanced-treatment

OWTS and/or stormwater BMPs should be defined so as to avoid and/or minimize variances.

- Exemptions should be considered for existing lots of record, developed or vacant, to enhance streamlined permitting and avoid variances, which would otherwise be approved anyway. This will help eliminate property owners' financial and time burdens, and help the economy.

The Task Force has 15 members. Along with Director of the Division of Planning Kevin Flynn, DEM Director Janet Coit, Coastal Resources Management Council Policy Analyst James Boyd, Mr. Ezovski and Mr. D'Angelo, members include Russell J. Chateaufneuf CE, Burrillville Director of Planning and Economic Development Thomas Kravitz, Scott Moorehead CE of SFM Engineering, Eric Prive PE of DiPrete Engineering Associates, and Nancy Scarduzio of the Office of Regulatory Reform.


Other Task Force members are Joseph A. Casali CE, Lorraine Joubert of the University of Rhode Island, South Kingstown Planning Director Vincent Murray, Scott Rabideau of Natural Resources Inc., and biologist Thomas E. Kutcher of Save the Bay.

The General Assembly established the Task Force in 2013 because "dissimilar municipal standards have resulted in a land-use system wherein local governments manage watersheds and groundwater aquifers using a variety of methods resulting in diverse outcomes," and called for a uniform statewide regulatory process for OWTS and wetlands.

The Task Force was scheduled to submit its recommendations to the General Assembly by December 31<sup>st</sup> with the goal of replacing local wetlands and OWTS regulations with a statewide system.

As it stands at the time of this writing in December, it appears that the proposal may increase DEM's jurisdictional area from the current 50 to 100 feet, and the current 100 to 200 feet in specific circumstances."

RIBA will continue to work for fair and reasonable statewide regulations

Watch for more information as this issue develops, or call RIBA Executive Director John Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400. 

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