



## The Building and Realty Institute (BRI) Holds Its Annual Golf Outing

More than 80 members of the building, realty and construction industry participated in the Sep. 26 Golf Outing of The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI). The event, sponsored by Levitt-Fuirst Associates, Ltd. (insurance manager for the BI-BRI), was at the Willow Ridge Country Club in Harrison. Pictured on the left, at the outing, from left to right, are BRI members Jeff Stillman, John Bonito and Bob Lupica. Pictured on the right is BRI Member Eric Messer, moments after scoring a hole-in-one on the second hole. A full report on the outing is featured on page four.



# Impact

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016

Serving Westchester and the Mid-Hudson Region

News for the  
Building and Realty  
Industry

70

Years of  
Providing Knowledge  
to the Building Community



## FEATURES

2

From The Editor's Desk:

### Hanley's Highlights

A Review of a Memorable BRI Event – and Other Key Issues

By Jeff Hanley, *Impact* Editor



2

### Insurance Insights



### Do Not Wait for the First Snowstorm of Winter

By Ken Fuirst and Jason Schiciano, Levitt-Fuirst Associates, Insurance Managers for The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI)

2

### Co-op and Condo Corner



### Communication from You Is a Definite Key for the CCAC!

By Diana Virrill, Chair, Cooperative and Condominium Advisory Council (CCAC)

5

### Membership Education Is a Tremendous Benefit for Members of The Builders Institute



By Maggie Collins, Director of Membership, The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI)

6

### Counsels' Corner A Landlord-Tenant Update on Altman



By Kenneth J. Finger, Carl L. Finger, & Daniel S. Finger, Finger & Finger, Chief Counsel to The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI)

An IMPACT Staff Report & Commentary:

## Harrison's Affordable Housing Tale – A Story Very Slow Out of the Starting Gate

ARMONK

In 1991, Westchester County — under then County Executive Andrew O'Rourke — hired the Rutgers University Center of Urban Policy Research (CUPR) to prepare an affordable housing needs assessment for Westchester.

The assessment found that the county needed an additional 5,000 units of affordable housing by the year 2000. In 1993, the Westchester Housing Implementation Commission and the Westchester County Planning Department developed a Housing Allocation Plan formula which allocated the 5,000 needed affordable units among the county's 43 municipalities.

The goal for Harrison was 307 affordable units by 2000. None were approved.

In 2004, at the direction of then Westchester County Executive Andrew Spano, Rutgers CUPR prepared an updated needs assessment based on the 2000 Census that determined a need of 10,768 additional affordable units by the year 2015. Again, the Westchester County Planning Department and the Westchester Housing Opportunity Commission prepared an updated Housing Allocation Plan.

Since Harrison had not met the previous Year 2000 goal, the Town's new goal

was 756 affordable units by 2015. Again, Harrison approved no affordable units by that deadline.

### The Specifics

Based on U.S. Census and related demographic data, Harrison is one of the 31 municipalities in Westchester with a predominantly white population covered by the Westchester Housing Settlement, based on the county's violation of the conditions on the expenditure of federal funds.

The Housing Monitor appointed under the terms of the settlement reviewed the municipal zoning in each of the 31 municipalities as to whether they were exclusionary under the Berenson and Huntington tests.

The Berenson test, based on the landmark *Berenson v. Town of New Castle* (1977), required that each municipality in its zoning provide for a full array of housing to meet both its needs and its share of the regional need.

Under the Huntington test based on *NAACP v. Town of Huntington* (1988), a zoning ordinance violates the federal Fair Housing Act if it has a "disparate impact" on a potential class by having a disproportionately adverse impact on a minority group by perpetuating segregated housing patterns.

*Continued on p. 3*

## County Rent Guidelines Board Facing Two Vacancies

By Jeff Hanley, *IMPACT* Editor

WHITE PLAINS

The Westchester County Rent Guidelines Board is now operating two members shy of a full board.

The Oct. 25 resignation of Public Member Michael Rosenblatt, combined with the resignation of Tenant Representative Genevieve Harris Roche last May, leaves the board with seven members. A full board operates with two Owner Representatives, two Tenant Representatives and five Public Members.

Rosenblatt's resignation was first officially summarized on Oct. 27 on the Web Site of The Westchester County Board of Legislators. Rosenblatt's letter of resignation to the New York State Homes and Community Renewal Agency was contained in an Agenda Packet that was prepared for the Nov. 1 meeting of the Board of Legislators.

A memo included in the Agenda Packet explains how the Appointments Committee of the Board of Legislators must now address the vacancy caused by Rosenblatt's resignation. The memo was written by Westchester County Legislator Margaret Cunzio (R-3rd LD). Cunzio is Chair of the committee. The memo was addressed to Michael Kaplowitz (D-4th LD), chair of the Board of Legislators.

The committee's recommendation for Rosenblatt's successor must eventually be approved by the Board of Legislators and the New York State Homes and Community Renewal Agency. The same approval process applies for Roche's replacement.

The Westchester County Rent Guidelines Board annually rules on increases for Lease Renewals for apartment units that are affected

*Continued on p. 3*



## Vendor Showcase A Huge Success

The Building and Realty Institute (BRI) held its inaugural Vendor Showcase on Oct. 13 at The Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains. A total of 37 exhibitors presented their products and services to more than 175 BRI members and representatives of the building, realty and construction industry who attended the event. Many sectors of the industry were represented at the program, BRI officials said. Event officials termed the showcase as a highly successful event based on what they said is "a tremendously positive response" from both exhibitors and attendees. Pictured is a portion of the showcase floor during the program. A complete report on the showcase is featured in the center section of this issue. *Photo by Barbara Hansen*



# Insurance Insights

by Ken Furst and Jason Schiciano  
Levitt-Furst Associates



## Do Not Wait for the First Snowstorm of Winter – Prepare Now To Avoid Winter Insurance Claims

TARRYTOWN

We certainly couldn't blame you if thoughts of winter's bitter cold, snow, and ice were the furthest things from your mind. Heck, we recently broke records for mid-October, with temperatures in the 80's. It's hard to believe we'll experience any significant snowfall, given that metro-New York has been as "dry as a bone" since last year's mild winter. Cornell University's Northeast Regional Climate Center recently classified Westchester County and New York City in "Severe Drought," with less than 75 percent of "Normal Precipitation" since last March. (See: [www.nrcc.cornell.edu/regional/drought/drought.html](http://www.nrcc.cornell.edu/regional/drought/drought.html).)

But, in the insurance world, we have great respect for Murphy's Law, and, as such, we advise you to hope for the best, but prepare for the worst. What follows are some tips regarding winter preparation. Some are adapted from Greater New York Insurance Company's publication, "A Key to Protecting Your Business: Take Steps to Prepare for Winter Weather." The tips could help keep you safe and reduce insurance claims:

- ❖ Make sure thermostats are working and set above 55 degrees during winter months to mitigate pipe freezes, and avoid the use of portable space heaters (a leading cause of fires). Condos, co-ops, and apartments should consider policies addressing these items.
- ❖ Shut-off outside water supply lines, and insulate pipes, especially those in close proximity to exterior walls, or in unheated areas.
- ❖ Adequate, properly installed attic insulation can minimize ice dam potential. If significant snow does accumulate on roofs, consider having a licensed, insured contractor remove the snow, before the start of the ice damming cycle (snow, thawing, then freezing, then thawing, forcing water under roof shingles, and into building interiors, causing water damage).
- ❖ Have a licensed, insured contractor trim overhanging or dead tree limbs, to avoid property damage from high winds or heavy snow.
- ❖ Clean debris from gutters and drains to allow for proper drainage.
- ❖ Direct downspouts away from your foundation and toward a drain to minimize re-freezing. Point downspouts away from parking lots, walkways, and pedestrian areas to prevent the formation of icy patches, which can lead to auto accident and slip/fall exposures.
- ❖ Maintain and test winter equipment, such as a snow blower and/or generator.
- ❖ Stock-up on shovels and salt/ice melt.
- ❖ Identify safe areas to pile snow. Choose locations that don't block traffic, and drain properly, to avoid the possibility of ice patches in vehicle and/or pedestrian traffic.
- ❖ Review Your Snow Removal Contract, carefully. Make sure the contract: 1) requires that the contractor maintain at least \$1,000,000 of General Liability and Commercial Auto Liability Insurance (and preferably, an Umbrella Liability Policy); 2) names you and the property manager (if any) as "Additional Insureds"; and 3) provides you with indemnification for claims of bodily injury or property damage, arising out of the contractor's work or negligent acts.

**"Address these items now, and you can kick-up your feet and relax by the (preferably gas) fireplace as those first snowflakes fall. Or, procrastinate, and you'll be kicking yourself as you, and all of your associates, scramble to get winter preparations done, after winter has started."**

*Continued on p. 5*



From the Editor's Desk

## Hanley's Highlights

by Jeff Hanley

Associate Director, Building and Realty Institute (BRI), *Impact* Editor

## A Review of a Memorable BRI Event – and Other Key Issues

ARMONK

An event being close to perfect is, indeed, a rare occurrence. The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI), and its members, recently experienced that unusual scenario.

That near perfection came during, and after, the BI-BRI's Vendor Showcase of Oct. 13, an event that was as close to perfect as a program can get. Vendors, attendees, members of the BI-BRI – and non-members – have all expressed their continuous satisfaction to the staff of our organization regarding the showcase and its many, many positives.

More than 175 people attended the event at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains, packing the hotel's main ballrooms throughout most of the program. The showcase had representatives of virtually every membership sector of the BI-BRI, a building, realty and construction industry membership organization with more than 1,800 members in 14 counties of New York State.

BI-BRI officials said that the event was the first of its kind in the 70-year history of the association, since it featured many sectors of the organization's building, realty and construction industry membership base.

"The sentiments were definitely clear – all involved parties were very happy with the showcase and its results," said Albert Annunziata, executive director of the BI-BRI. "It was a productive experience for the vendors, and for those visiting the exhibitors."

The positive feedback on the showcase was still being received by the staff of the BI-BRI into early November. Those responses are very much appreciated by "Team BI-BRI" – Annunziata, myself, Jane Gill (controller), Margie Telesco (office manager) and Maggie Collins (event coordinator of the showcase and the BI-BRI's director of membership).

A full report on the success of the showcase is featured in the center section of this issue. Other reports in this edition include:

- ❖ Updates on current conditions affecting the building and remodeling markets. The reports are based on studies from The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).
- ❖ An analysis in Tech Talk on Google creating a new Mobile Search Index. The report highlights the effects of the action on the general business sector. Andrea Wagner of Wagner Web Designs authored the report.
- ❖ A study in Insurance Insights on how members of the building, realty and construction industry should act immediately on winter preparation processes in an effort to avoid winter insurance claims. The report was written by Jason Schiciano and Ken Furst, co-presidents of Levitt-Furst Associates, Ltd. Levitt-Furst Associates is the insurance manager of the BI-BRI.
- ❖ A commentary in Co-op and Condo Corner on the importance of communication processes. The analysis was written by Diana Virrill, chair of The Cooperative and Condominium Advisory Council (CCAC) of the BI-BRI.
- ❖ An update in Counsels' Corner on the "Altman Case." The article covers a topic of importance to the building and realty industry, as well as to members of The Apartment Owners Advisory Council (AOAC) of the BI-BRI. The report was written by Finger and Finger, A Professional Corporation. Finger and Finger serves as Chief Counsel to the BI-BRI.

*Continued on p. 3*

## Co-op and Condo Corner



By Diana Virrill, Chair

The Cooperative and Condominium Advisory Council (CCAC)

## Communication from You Is a Definite Key for the CCAC!

WHITE PLAINS

### We need your help!

For what, you ask? The answer is simple. Communication!

One of the biggest challenges that the staff of The Cooperative and Condominium Advisory Council (CCAC) faces is maintaining the association's mailing and contacts lists.

The CCAC wants to inform its membership of the many programs and services that it provides for the boards of its member co-ops and condos. And that goes double for the property managers, service firms and professionals who are members of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI), the parent organization of the CCAC.

So, accordingly, we need our co-op and condo boards to alert the CCAC/BRI staff of any changes affecting their respective buildings.

A new Board Member? Please let the CCAC know. A new Board President? Again, a note to the CCAC to inform us of the change would be great. You have changed your property management firm, you say? Please let our association know! And, of course, that request is also extended to members of the BRI that wish to participate and network with the CCAC membership.

The combined result is a win-win situation for all involved parties. That updated information will enable the CCAC/BRI to inform its members of all that the CCAC offers and works on:

- Meetings and Seminars on key issues affecting our region's co-ops and condos.
- Networking for board members of co-ops and condos. And, for service and supplier firms who want to reach the CCAC's membership.
- Insurance. Membership in the CCAC allows access to New York State Workers Compensation Group 530. The well-known firm of Levitt-Furst Associates of Tarrytown is the manager of the group.
- Referral Services. The CCAC draws upon the impressive resources of the BRI for referrals on a variety of services for board members of co-ops and condos. Your board can contact the CCAC/BRI staff for referrals on legal advice, real estate expertise, recommendations on service and supplier firms and investment counseling. Hundreds of firms are at your fingertips through the CCAC and BRI!
- Information. CCAC and BRI members receive this newspaper. The publication covers virtually every aspect of the building, realty and construction sector. Members also receive bulletins and notices on issues and events that are relevant to board members of co-ops and condos.

*Continued on p. 3*

News for the  
Building and Realty  
Industries

## Impact

PUBLISHER: Albert A. Annunziata  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Jeffrey R. Hanley  
DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING AND COMMUNICATIONS: Margaret A. Collins  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS: Margie Telesco, Jane Gill  
DESIGN AND PRODUCTION: Roher/Sprague Partners  
PHOTOGRAPHIC CONSULTANT: Barbara Hansen  
CONTRIBUTORS: Carl Finger, Dan Finger, Ken Finger, Ken Furst, Alex Roberts, Jason Schiciano, Andrea Wagner



The Builders Institute/Building and Realty Institute  
80 Business Park Drive, Suite 309  
Armonk, NY 10504

914.273.0730 [www.BuildersInstitute.org](http://www.BuildersInstitute.org)

©2016, by The Builders Institute/Building and Realty Institute. All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without the written permission from the publisher. Entered as periodical matter at Post Office, White Plains, NY 10610 USPS 259-900

**SUBSCRIPTION** is \$20 per year, included in membership dues.

**IMPACT** (USPS 259-900) is published bi-monthly by The Builders Institute/Building and Realty Institute. Periodicals Postage Pending at Armonk, NY.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to **IMPACT**, 80 Business Park Drive, Suite 309, Armonk, NY 10504.



**Harrison's Affordable Housing Tale – A Story Very Slow Out of the Starting Gate, Continued from p.1**

The Town of Harrison is one of only three of the 31 municipalities that failed both tests. The other two are Lewisboro (covered in a previous IMPACT article) and Pelham Manor. In addition, the Town of Harrison is one of the few municipalities that has refused to adopt the Model Ordinance developed by Westchester County under the Housing Settlement. This Model Ordinance requires a 10 percent set-

*Since Harrison had not met the previous Year 2000 goal, the Town's new goal was 756 affordable units by 2015. Again, Harrison approved no affordable units by that deadline.*

aside for affordable housing in all new developments over 10 units. However, it should be noted for the record, that the Town Board recently approved seven affordable apartments (5 percent affordable) in the 143-unit Avalon proposal at the train station, at the insistence of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) of N.Y. State, the owner of the property. In spite of letters and attempted contact from the Housing Monitor and his consultants to discuss the issue

with the staff and elected officials, the Town had refused to cooperate. In his Apr. 8, 2016 report, the Monitor encouraged the Department of Justice to give serious consideration to bringing legal action against Harrison. On Jun. 30, 2016, the Town received a letter from U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara stating: "in accordance with the Monitor's recommendation, we write to request information and analysis to determine whether enforcement action is appropriate."

**Results**

The Monitor's scrutiny and Federal action had results. On Sep. 1, 2016, the Harrison Town Board voted to approve a 421-unit apartment development proposed by Normandy Real Estate Partners to include 42 affordable units. At no time in the review process prior to the receipt of the letter from the US Attorney did the Town Board publicly indicate that it would approve a 10 percent affordable housing set-aside, even though housing advocates appeared at many public hearings. Even the builder, Toll Brothers, indicated that they have built many developments in the Hudson Valley with such set-asides. Whatever the reason, coincidence, enlightenment or persuasion, there will now be some affordable housing in Harrison.

*Editor's Note: Please see a related report on this issue to the right.*

*An IMPACT Staff Report & Commentary*

**The WestHelp Saga: Harrison and the Struggle for Affordable Units**

ARMONK

In 1992, Andrew Cuomo, then the Executive Director of WestHelp (a housing organization for the homeless with two shelters in Westchester County) proposed constructing permanent affordable housing on county-owned land in response to a county Request for Proposal (RFP). The proposal was for 26 two-family houses consistent with those in the local area. They would be sold as affordable to qualifying, moderate income-families. The rent from the apartment would support the new owners' ability to pay the mortgage and property taxes (subsequently, this model has been used many times in Westchester). At the time – and in the face of much opposition – the Harrison Town Board approved the proposed development. However, those who demonstrated such social and political courage would pay a price. Later that year, at the next election, all of the Town Board members, and the Supervisor who supported Cuomo's proposal, were voted out of office. At the first meeting of the new Town Board in January of the following year, the original approval was overturned. Since the property was county-owned, Westchester could have built a 52-unit garden apartment complex as affordable housing, with no need for Harrison's approval. The county did not pursue that opportunity and no affordable housing was built in Harrison for the next 25 years.

**REPORT: Optimism in the Remodeling Market Strengthens in the Third Quarter**

*By Jeff Hanley, IMPCT Editor*  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Remodeling Market Index (RMI) of The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) posted a reading of 57 in the third quarter, an increase of four points from the previous quarter, according to a recent NAHB study. The reading also marked a return to positive levels seen consistently throughout 2015, NAHB officials said. The study was released by NAHB on Oct. 20. An RMI above 50 indicates that more remodelers report market activity is higher (compared to the prior quarter) than report it is lower. The overall RMI averages the ratings of current remodeling activity with indicators of future remodeling activity, the report said. "Remodelers nationwide are seeing an increased demand for major and minor addition jobs and calls for bids, leading to an increase in both current and future market indicators," said NAHB Remodelers Chair Tim Shigley. "However, ongoing labor shortages continue to challenge their ability to meet the increased demand."

**Specifics**

The RMI's Current Market Conditions Index rose to 56, up two points from the previous quarter. Among its components, Major Additions and Alterations also gained two points, rising to 54. The component measuring the Demand for Smaller Remodeling Projects increased by three points to 56, and the Home Maintenance and Repair Component rose by three points to 59. Indicating what the report said is "optimism in market strength," the RMI's Future Market Indicators increased by five points from the previous quarter to 58. Among its four components, Calls for Bids and Appointments for Proposals both increased six points to 59 and 58, respectively. The Backlog of Remodeling Jobs increased five points to 58 and the Amount of Work Committed rose two points, to 55. "The Remodeling Market Index (RMI) is

**"The market looks like the 2001 and 2004 remodeling market, with remodelers experiencing larger backlogs of work, coupled with a labor shortage."**  
*- Eric Messer, Vice Chair, Remodelers Advisory Council (RAC) of The Builders Institute (BI)/ Building and Realty Institute (BRI)*

consistent with NAHB's forecast of gradual and steady improvements in residential remodeling activity," said NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz. "This segment of our industry is being supported by rising home values and steady consumer confidence."

**The Local Scenario**

Eric Messer, vice chair of the Remodelers Advisory Council (RAC) of The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI) of Westchester and the Mid-Hudson Region, said current market conditions in Westchester County are also solid. "The market looks like the 2001 and 2004 remodeling market, with remodelers experiencing larger backlogs of work, coupled with a labor shortage," said Messer. "Many of the larger local projects, like the Tappan Zee Bridge and West Point, are draining the market of skilled craftspeople." Messer added that, although the Wall Street sector may not like the uncertainty that has been produced by the presidential election, the long term outlook is positive. "We are seeing potential clients planning spring projects," he said. "We are looking forward to a busy spring!"

**County Rent Guidelines Board Facing Two Vacancies, Continued from p.1**

by The Emergency Tenant Protection Act (ETPA). The board reaches its decision after three Public Hearings and two Deliberation Sessions. Those meetings are usually held in June. The dates and times of the 2017 meetings and deliberations have not yet been announced, according to officials from The New York State Homes and Community Renewal Agency. "As always, the Apartment Owners Advisory Council (AOAC) will monitor all developments affecting our membership," said Albert Annunziata, executive director of the AOAC and its affiliate organization, The Building and Realty Institute (BRI). "Our membership will be kept fully informed." The AOAC represents more than 300 Owners and Managers of apartment buildings and complexes in the Westchester and Mid-Hudson Region. Those Owners and Managers are responsible for approximately 17,000 units, association officials said. The BRI is a building, realty and construction industry membership organization. The association has more than 1,800 members in 14 counties of New York State. Members of the organization are involved in virtually every sector of the building, realty and construction industry. The BRI has been marking the 70th anniversary of its formation throughout 2016, association officials said.

**Co-op and Condo Corner: Communication from You Is a Definite Key for the CCAC!, Continued from p.2**

- › Lobbying. Co-ops and condos can be assured that the CCAC/BRI acts as their lobbying representative. The association works closely with government officials to stay informed of any legislation or regulations that may affect the local co-op and condo sector.
- › Education. The CCAC is very proud of its continuing efforts to educate board members in every procedure regarding the governing and management of co-ops and condos. Representatives of every sector of the local building, realty and construction industry participate in the Membership Meetings of the CCAC and BRI. The associations have sponsored hundreds of meetings in recent years and will continue to do so!
- › Negotiations with Service Workers. Many of our area's co-ops and condos utilize the services of union workers. Board members of co-ops and condos are often called upon to deal with those workers. The goal is to provide efficient and well-run services for residents of co-ops and condos. Accordingly, the CCAC and BRI are equipped to negotiate with Local 32-BJ Service Employees International Union (SEIU). The associations retain experts in labor negotiations to help in that process. More than 400 buildings and complexes have designated the CCAC/BRI to act on their behalf. The buildings and complexes are part of a unified and experienced negotiating unit. The unit represents your building and complex in an experienced and cost-efficient manner.

All of those services – and more – are there for members of the CCAC and BRI. Please help us send you updated information on all of these programs and benefits. A simple call to the CCAC/BRI at (914) 273-0730 – or an e-mail to Jeff Hanley, associate executive director of the CCAC/BRI at jeff@buildersinstitute.org – on any changes to the contact information of your building or complex will help the CCAC/BRI staff keep you informed!  
**Again, we need your help! Here is a thank you, in advance!**

**A Review of a Memorable BRI Event – and Other Key Issues, Continued from p. 2**

- ❖ An analysis on our Membership Page of the important educational benefits of membership in the BI-BRI. Maggie Collins, director of membership for the BI-BRI, authored the piece.
- ❖ A report on the Sep. 26 Golf Tournament of the BI-BRI. The tourney/outing is one of the more popular events of our association.
- ❖ A Page One Report/Commentary entitled "Harrison's Affordable Housing Tale – A Story Very Slow Out of the Starting Gate." The commentary – and its sidebar report on page three – were written by IMPACT's staff.
- ❖ An update on page one regarding the two vacancies now facing the Westchester County Rent Guidelines Board. The report analyzes the situation and its effects on the building and realty sector, as well as on the AOAC/BRI.

Here's wishing all of our readers a happy fall, as well as a Happy Holiday Season. Enjoy the issue!

**"It was a productive experience for the vendors, and for those visiting the exhibitors."**  
*– Albert Annunziata, Executive Director of the BI-BRI*





Levitt-Fuirst Associates, Ltd., insurance manager for The Building and Realty Institute (BRI), served as the Event Sponsor of the Annual Golf Outing of the BRI on Sep. 26 at Willow Ridge Country Club in Harrison. Pictured, left, is Ken Fuirst, a principal of Levitt-Fuirst Associates. Albert Annunziata, Executive Director of the BRI, is seen in the upper right.



Pictured during the reception are, from left to right, Vincent Mutarelli, a member of the Board of Trustees of the BRI; and Jane Gill, controller, BRI. Gill was a co-coordinator of the outing, along with Margie Telesco, officer manager of the BRI

# BI-BRI Holds Its Annual Golf Outing

By Jeff Hanley, IMPACT Editor

## HARRISON

More than 80 representatives of the building, realty and construction industry participated in the Sep. 26 Golf Outing of The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI).

The event, sponsored by Levitt-Fuirst Associates, Ltd. (insurance manager for the BI-BRI), was at the Willow Ridge Country Club in Harrison.

A foursome representing The Riddell Group, the lobbying consultant for the BI-BRI, was the outing's low-net winner. Glenn Riddell is the principal of The Riddell Group. Jeff Aubry, John Alvarelli and Bill Twomey rounded out the foursome.

Eric Messer, vice chair of the BI-BRI's Remodelers Advisory Council (RAC), recorded a hole-in-one on the second hole. Messer is the first golfer in recent memory to accomplish that feat during the BI-BRI tournament, event officials said.

"The reaction from those participating in the tournament was very, very positive," said Albert Annunziata, executive director of the BI-BRI. "Everyone termed the outing as a huge success."

Jane Gill, controller, BI-BRI, and Margie Telesco, office manager, BI-BRI, were co-coordinators of the event.

Joining Event Sponsor Levitt-Fuirst Associates in supporting the tournament (as Tee Sponsors) were:

Barhite and Holzinger  
Beldotti Management  
Certa Pro Painters  
Comstock Residential Contracting, LLC  
Garthchester Realty  
Insite Engineering, Surveying and Landscaping  
J&J Management Services  
JP McHale Pest Management  
Lashins Development Corp.  
Parish & Weiner

Petro Commercial Services  
PLI Management  
Robison Oil/Original Energy  
Stillman Management  
Sunrise Solar Solutions  
The Great American Title Agency, Inc.  
The New Crystal Restoration Enterprises, Ltd.  
The Riddell Group  
Trion Real Estate Management  
Welby Brady and Greenblatt

The BI-BRI has more than 1,800 members in 14 counties of New York State. Those members are involved in virtually every sector of the building, realty and construction industry.



Pictured during the dinner portion of the annual Golf Outing of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI) on Sep. 26 are, from left to right, Eric Abraham, chairman, BRI; and Michael Beldotti, board member and past president, BRI. The outing was at Willow Ridge Country Club in Harrison.



Participants in the Sep. 26 Golf Outing of the Building and Realty Institute (BRI) at Willow Ridge Country Club in Harrison enjoyed a full buffet dinner after the tourney. Pictured after dinner and during the awards portion of the event are, from left to right, BRI President Carmelo Milio; and Joe Marotta, BRI member.

Photos by Jeff Hanley

## Development Case Study:

# Wilder Balter Partners to Convert Former Reader's Digest Building into Apartments

## The Project Will Mix Market-Rate Housing with Workforce and Affordable Housing, Officials Say

### CHAPPAQUA

Wilder Balter Partners of Elmsford, a well-known developer of market rate and affordable housing, has been tapped to turn the iconic cupola building of the former Reader's Digest headquarters into a unique and innovative mix of market rate, workforce and affordable apartment homes, officials recently announced.

The complex will be known as The Apartments at Chappaqua Crossing.

Wilder Balter Partners has signed a long-term lease for the classic building with Summit/Greenfield Partners, owners and developers of Chappaqua Crossing. The 1939 centerpiece of the sprawling 690,000-square-foot Reader's Digest office building will be converted into 64 apartments - 25 market rate, 10 workforce, 28 affordable and one superintendent's apartment, officials said.

Spokesmen added that the affordable apartments will qualify under the housing settlement agreement between Westchester County and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which requires that the county facilitate the construction of 750 "Fair and Affordable Housing Units."

William Balter, president of Wilder Balter Partners, is taking a personal interest in overseeing the construction in the four-story, cupola-topped Georgian-style brick building that is a familiar site to passengers and drivers passing on the nearby MetroNorth Harlem Line and Saw Mill River Parkway, company officials said.

"I absolutely love this building," he said. "It is really spectacular in so many ways, and is one of the most recognized buildings in all of Westchester."

Felix Charney, president of Summit Development and a partner in Summit/Greenfield, said the idea to use the signature Cupola building

for housing emerged late in the now 12-year process of seeking approvals from the Town of New Castle to develop new uses for the 116-acre corporate campus.

"We were finding it difficult to find tenants for the office space in this portion of the building," he said. "As a result, a lot of different ideas were discussed, including moving the town offices there. But nothing seemed to be the right fit. Then we hit on the idea of affordable housing apartments and everything clicked."

Charney said that conversations with town officials and planners and Balter expanded from the idea of using the two floors for 28 affordable units, to taking all four floors of the tower-topped structure for a full residential building.

"The town liked the idea of having market-rate and town workforce units in the same building. We agreed and are pleased to be working with Wilder Balter to bring this vision to life," he said.

### A Strong Fit

Charney noted that the housing complements the 91 townhouses, 120,000-square-foot retail area featuring a Whole Foods Market and Life Time Fitness, and the extensive office uses that will all be on the site.

"Chappaqua Crossing provides opportunities for employment, access to services and schools, and will have shuttle service to the Chappaqua MetroNorth station and the downtown business district," he said. "It's taken a very long time to get here, but the end result is a creative blending of reimagined existing space and new space that will be a truly unique property in Westchester, with the Cupola building as the beacon for the entire site."

Balter said that the Georgian style chosen by Reader's Digest founders Dewitt and Lila Acheson Wallace created an architecturally beautiful building.

"The quality of the building we have to work with will result in a truly unique adaptive re-

use," he said.

Balter added that "the investment in high-quality materials and the attention to detail that was given by the Wallaces in building the Readers Digest executive offices are "something we just don't see anymore."

"Frankly, even 75 years ago this level of quality was unusual, and, fortunately, it has been extremely well-maintained," Balter said. "It's a special building that deserves a special approach. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to be working with it."

Balter - who, for more than 25 years with his business partner, Robert Wilder, has constructed some 2,500 units of housing in Westchester, the Hudson Valley and Long Island - said that his company has undertaken a number of renovations and adaptive re-use developments over the years.

"For example, we created housing in the historically significant former Orange County Infirmary in Goshen that turned out beautifully," he said. "But this project is in a league of its own because of the way that the scale and grace of the building provides such a terrific canvas to create beautiful living spaces and common elements for our residents to enjoy."

Balter said he is intrigued at the prospect of being able to preserve the classic original architectural details, including the tall-patinated Cupola that is familiar to literally millions of people who have driven by it on the Saw Mill River Parkway over the years.

### Specifics

The original Reader's Digest rotunda entry at the center of the building will be retained and furnished with photographs and the history of the Readers Digest property. The original wood-paneled, octagon-shaped library - with its ceiling-high built-in bookcases - will also be retained and available to the residents of the apartments, officials said.



William Balter, president of Wilder Balter Partners, is pictured above. Balter's firm, a well-known developer of market rate and affordable housing, has been tapped to turn the iconic Cupola Building of the former Reader's Digest headquarters in Chappaqua into a unique and innovative mix of market rate, workforce and affordable apartment homes, officials recently announced.

"We'll reuse it as a library with books and magazines," Balter said. "Comfortable new couches and seating areas will be added. In the light-filled library, a set of French doors and two large windows will continue to open to a large terrace."

As part of the reconstruction, a pair of large interior courtyards will be kept as quiet, contemplative spaces, officials said. The Parisian balconies overlooking the courtyards will also be restored and retained, along with interior columns, fountains and bluestone flooring.

Whenever possible, original architectural details will become part of the new apartments. The four oversized circular windows in each of the fourth-floor gabled corners of the building will become living room focal points in four of the apartments, spokesmen said.

The former Reader's Digest president's office will become a generously proportioned corner apartment. Wilder Balter is also saving all of the exterior features of the building, including the Cupola and the handsome ornamental chimneys on the roof, as well as the original wooden windows, spokesmen added.

On the west side of the first floor, officials said, 16-foot ceilings with 11-foot tall windows will provide an opportunity to create stunning loft apartments overlooking the Saw Mill River Valley. The master bedrooms will look down on open, two-story living rooms.

Continued on p. 7



# The Builders Institute (BI)/ Building and Realty Institute (BRI) *Welcomes* its Newest Members

Burkhart Williams Contracting LLC

Charles Hinds, Charles Rutenberg Realty, Inc.

City Carting & Recycling

Alex Grantcharov, Edward Jones

George Echevarria, Esq.

Hen Hawk NY, LLC

James G. Dibbini & Associates PC

Kings Capital Construction Group

King C Iron Works

Law Office of Denise J. D’Ambrosio

Law Offices of Stephen P. Dewey, Esquire

Mid-Westchester Sewer & Drain Service

Raining Threes LLC

Rory Sweeney Contracting Corporation

Spark Energy

Suffolk Construction Company, Inc.

Superior Excavating LLC

The Stockton-Petronella Agency – Allstate



## **Disaster Preparedness – What Property Managers and Owners Should Know**

was the topic of the Sep. 21 Membership Meeting of The Advisory Council of Managing Agents (ACMA). More than 25 ACMA and Building and Realty Institute (BRI) members attended the program at The Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains. Stuart Bethel (pictured standing, during his presentation) of Fleet West Management Corp. was the keynote speaker at the program. ACMA, an affiliate organization of the BRI, is composed of the leading property management companies in the Westchester and Mid-Hudson Region.

*Photo by Jeff Hanley*



## **More than 40 members**

of The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI) attended the association’s Sep. 15 seminar that covered the recent revisions to New York State’s Building Codes. John Drobysh, code compliance specialist I, Division of Building Standards and Codes (DBSC) of the Department of State (DOS), issued the update. Drobysh is pictured, standing, during his presentation. The BI-BRI is a building, realty and construction industry membership organization. The association has more than 1,800 members in 14 counties of New York State.

*Photo by Jeff Hanley*

## **Insurance Insights: Do Not Wait for the First Snowstorm of Winter, Continued from p. 2**

Address these items now, and you can kick-up your feet and relax by the (preferably gas) fire-place as those first snowflakes fall. Or, procrastinate, and you’ll be kicking yourself as you, and all of your associates, scramble to get winter preparations done, after winter has started.

For more information on how to avoid winter-related insurance claims, contact your insurance broker, or Levitt-Fuirst Associates at (914)457-4200.

*Editor’s Note: Levitt-Fuirst Associates is the Insurance Manager for The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI) of Westchester and the Mid-Hudson Region. The firm can be reached at (914) 457-4200.*

## **Benefits of Membership, Part 2:**

By Maggie Collins, Director of Membership

Building and Realty Institute (BRI)



## **Education Is a Tremendous Benefit for Members of The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI)**

ARMONK

Continuing my emphasis on the benefits of membership in The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI), I’d like to shine a bright light on yet another area: education, with “a capital E.”

A non-profit association such as ours occupies a unique space in the building, realty and construction industry. Under one umbrella, we bring together builders, developers, remodelers, contractors, realty management and the many, many supplier, service and professional firms that serve the industry for which our organization was founded in 1946.

Alongside advocacy, I rank our function of “educating” our members as a top priority. The continuity of informing, updating and keeping members current as to trends, rules, regulations, legislation (plus various emergencies as they arise) ties in closely to advocacy.

An informed, educated and aware membership creates a strong and effective membership association. It leads to action, with a consequent result and outcome. In looking at the panels and speakers at our General Membership Meetings and the Membership Meetings of the BRI’s Component Associations, there are good examples to cite. Since Jan. of 2016, our speakers and panels have included:

- ◆ Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino. He addressed the General Membership Meeting of the BI-BRI on May 12. He reviewed the State of the County as related to the building, realty and construction industry;
- ◆ A Joint Membership Meeting between the BRI and the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Fairfield County (Conn.) on Apr. 14. The conference addressed the challenges and obstacles facing builders and developers in our respective counties;
- ◆ A General Membership Meeting of the BI-BRI on Sep. 15 that provided a review of Homeland Security Issues for the building, realty and construction industry. The panel included representatives of the FBI;
- ◆ An Economic Outlook at the Mar. 10 General Membership Meeting of the BI-BRI. Economist Robert Goodman issued the update;
- ◆ A General Membership Meeting of the BI-BRI on Jun. 9 that reviewed the state of our region’s Rental Housing Market;
- ◆ A Sep. 15 seminar of the BI-BRI on the recent changes to New York State’s Building Codes;
- ◆ A May 18 Membership Meeting of the BRI’s Advisory Council of Managing Agents (ACMA) on requirements associated with Carbon Monoxide Issues.

This, by no means, is the whole list of our Membership Meetings and Seminars. It is meant to illustrate the breadth and depth of the topics presented for the purpose of educating the many sectors of the BI-BRI’s membership.

## **A Key Source**

We ask that BI-BRI members – as well as members of the building, realty and construction industry – consider this publication as a source of information. It is unsurpassed as a vehicle of solid news and information that keeps you apprised of what is happening in the industry, both locally and nationally.

When it comes to being educated, reading is still the essential and indisputable teaching vehicle. IMPACT is a treasure trove of good information. Our consultants regularly contribute to the newspaper, bringing their expertise on insurance, planning and legalities, as well as the many other issues affecting the building, realty and construction industry. This knowledge is brought to you by our consultants, who possess the deep expertise you can reliably depend on.

In our ranks, we have the good fortune to have valuable consultants, including: Levitt-Fuirst Associates (insurance manager for the BI-BRI); Finger and Finger, A Professional Corporation (chief counsel to the BI-BRI); Elefante and Persanis (labor counsel to the BI-BRI); Parish and Weiner (planning consultants to the BI-BRI); and The Riddell Group (the BI-BRI’s lobbying consultants).

The expertise in our ranks runs deep. As a member, you are privy to a class of experts whom you hear from at Membership Meetings of the BI-BRI, as well as in IMPACT articles.

As a community of members who are deeply informed on issues and trends, we are of common purpose. We hear a great deal about the information overload that we are all subjected to, not only in our work environments, but in life, in general. This has been true for over 35 years now.

Discerning and culling what is vital and what is “needed to know” in our industry is an important skill to have. This is where the BI-BRI can help. Information is only as good as the knowledge that it creates. It leads us to action, which leads to camaraderie and our sense of common purpose. This is how we grow, from strength to strength.

## **Join The Builders Institute (BI)/ Building and Realty Institute (BRI)!**

**Your building, realty or construction industry business will reap  
the many benefits of membership in the BI/BRI by joining. For further details  
and on-line payment options, visit [buildersinstitute.org](http://buildersinstitute.org).**

**You can also call (914) 273-0730 for information.**

***Become a part of one of New York State’s largest business organizations.***

***Celebrating our 70th anniversary throughout 2016!***



# Westchester County, Village Officials Join with GDC to Celebrate the Grand Opening of “The Lofts on Saw Mill River” in Hastings

## Second GDC Rentals Development to Open in Less than 4 Months

HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON

As part of what officials termed as Ginsburg Development Companies (GDC) continuing to expand its GDC Rentals brand in Westchester County, GDC recently marked the grand opening of The Lofts on Saw Mill River, a \$34.9-million luxury rental development in the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson.

Westchester County and Village officials joined with GDC executives on Sep. 26 for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new development at 419 Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A). The Lofts on Saw Mill River features 66 loft-style rental apartments in three buildings. Two 3-story buildings each include 27 market-rate units and one 2-story building includes 12 affordable workforce-housing units. The 12 affordable units count toward the affordable units mandated by Westchester County’s affordable housing settlement with the federal government, spokesmen said.

Monthly rentals for the market rate apartments range from \$3,245 for a large one-bedroom unit (950 square feet) to \$4,995 for a large 3-bedroom unit (1,656 square feet). The affordable units range from \$874 for a studio to \$1,484 for a three-bedroom unit. The application process for the affordable units closed in June when the Westchester-based Housing Action Council conducted a lottery to select qualified tenants, officials said.

“Today’s grand opening of The Lofts on Saw Mill River completes a journey that began more than a decade ago when we first acquired this site. What was once a former industrial parking lot has now been transformed into a one-of-a-kind community of contemporary loft-style rental apartments, as well as much-needed affordable workforce housing,” said Martin Ginsburg, principal of GDC. “We are particularly pleased to dedicate to the Village 1.8 acres of open space to become a beautiful park that includes a pedestrian bridge to the South County Trailway, which runs by our property.”

“In addition to creating 100 construction jobs, The Lofts at Saw Mill River is adding to the vitality of Westchester’s economy with high-quality rental apartments, including affordable units,” said Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino. “Westchester County and its Industrial Development Agency (IDA) are proud to be partnering with Ginsburg Development Companies on this important project.”

GDC received financial incentives for the development from the Westchester County IDA. The project also received financial support from the County for land acquisition and infrastructure, officials said.

“Ginsburg’s high-quality developments are always an asset to a community – and Hastings will benefit both from the addition of these new high-end rentals, as well as the provision of a dozen units at affordable rates,” said Hastings-on-Hudson Village Mayor Peter Swiderski.

The Lofts on Saw Mill River is GDC’s second new luxury rental development to open in less than four months. In June, GDC opened Harbor Square, a 188-unit luxury rental development on the Ossining waterfront. Harbor Square is already more than 50 percent leased, officials said.

GDC is nearing completion of River Tides at Greystone, a 330-unit luxury rental complex overlooking the Hudson River in Yonkers. River Tides at Greystone is scheduled to begin leasing in the spring of 2017. In early September, GDC broke ground on 1177@Greystone, a new 55-unit luxury rental apartment building on Warburton Avenue in Yonkers, one block north of River Tides at Greystone, spokesmen said.

“The demand for luxury rentals in the Westchester market continues to grow with millennials, as well as empty-nesters looking to live in a community with resort-style amenities and services, as well as easy access to mass transit. The level of high-quality finishes and design featured in our apartments is unlike anything being offered in the region’s rental market,” Ginsburg said.

Founded in 1964 by Ginsburg, GDC is a premier residential developer in the northern suburbs of New York City. With 50 years of experience and market leadership, GDC has built many of the region’s most successful and prestigious luxury developments, company officials said. Many of those developments have a Hudson River and/or transit-friendly focus, including Harbors at Haverstraw, Livingston Ridge in Dobbs Ferry, Ichabod’s Landing in Sleepy Hollow, Mystic Pointe in Ossining, Marbury Corners in Pelham and Christie Place in Scarsdale.

GDC’s developments, company officials added, have won numerous design and community planning awards. GDC also owns and manages a portfolio of commercial properties, primarily in Westchester County.



Hastings-on-Hudson Village Mayor Peter Swiderski; Martin Ginsburg, principal of Ginsburg Development Companies (GDC); and Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino are pictured (left to right) while celebrating the grand opening of The Lofts on Saw Mill River on Sep. 26.

## Counsels’ Corner

### A Landlord-Tenant Update on Altman

By Kenneth J. Finger, Esq., Carl L. Finger, Esq. and Daniel S. Finger, Esq., Finger and Finger, A Professional Corporation, Chief Counsel, Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI)

WHITE PLAINS

In the case of Altman v. 285 West Fourth LLC, the Appellate Division in New York City stung the real estate industry with a case that seemed to turn the law of “Vacancy Decontrol” on its head.

In that case, the Court held, in substance, that a vacancy no longer resulted in the decontrol of an apartment even if the rent was legitimately raised to a level over the deregulation threshold.

The essence of the decision was that the first tenant after the vacancy, even paying a rent higher than the Emergency Tenant Protection Act (ETPA) threshold, was still subject to the ETPA (or, in New York City, to the Rent Stabilization Law).

Shocking as this may seem, what is even more startling is a decision that came out in October of 2016 that upheld a treble damage finding of a rent overcharge against the Landlord finding that there was a presumption of “willfulness arising from the fact of the overcharge.”

This sentence seems to imply that in the event of an overcharge, there is presumed willfulness, which will then result in a treble damage finding. Perhaps this case can be fact specific and limited to its factual situation since (1) there was an unreliable rental history; (2) the defendant did not file Annual Rent Registrations and (3) it failed to submit an affidavit by a person with knowledge justifying the rent increase.

Therefore, at a minimum, we can strongly suggest that Landlords make certain that their registrations are timely filed and that they have complete and proper rental records.

#### Additional Points

Additionally, there is another basis for a hopeful result, presuming that the Court of Appeals does not overturn Altman. That basis is the fact that a later court virtually ignored Altman, although that later court, surprisingly, was a lower appellate court, the Appellate Term.

In that later case, Aimco 322 East 61st Street, LLC v. Brosius, the Appellate Term, in New York (the same Judicial District as the Altman Court and presumably bound by it), and while citing Altman, seemed to ignore Altman in finding that:

“Therefore, at a minimum, we can strongly suggest that Landlords make certain that their registrations are timely filed and that they have complete and proper rental records.”

“The record raises, but does not resolve several material triable issues, including whether the apartment at issue was exempt from Rent Stabilization because of a high rent vacancy that occurred in 2001, and whether landlord’s expenditures for apartment improvements in the year prior to the high rent vacancy justified the increase in the rent over the \$2,000 threshold then in effect. In this regard, we note that Rent Stabilization Law (RSL) (Administrative Code of City of N.Y.) § 26-504.2(a) contains two statutory bases for high rent deregulation, the second of which is if the housing accommodation “is or becomes vacant ... with a legal regulated rent of two thousand dollars or more per month” (emphasis added).

#### Further Specifics

In addition, increases in rent for post-vacancy improvements count “to bring the legal rent above the luxury decontrol threshold” (Jemrock Realty Co., LLC v. Krugman, 13 N.Y.3d 924, 926, 895 N.Y.S.2d 284, 922 N.E.2d 870 [2010]; see Roberts v. Tishman Speyer Props., L.P., 62 A.D.3d 71, 78, 874 N.Y.S.2d 97 [2009] high rent deregulation when “the tenant vacates the apartment and the legal rent, plus vacancy increase allowances and increases permitted for landlord improvements, is \$2,000 or more”), affd. 13 N.Y.3d 270, 281, 890 N.Y.S.2d 388, 918 N.E.2d 900 [2009] [“post vacancy improvements”] count toward the \$2,000 per month rent threshold [L. 97, ch. 116] for high rent deregulation]; cf. Altman v. 285 W.Fourth, LLC, 127 A.D.3d 654, 8 N.Y.S.3d 295 [2015] [relying solely on RSL § 26-504.2[a]’s first statutory \*12 basis for high rent deregulation, that is, “at the time the tenant vacated ... the legal regulated rent was two thousand dollars or more a month”] ).

Therefore, the quagmire continues, although it would appear that the Appellate Division, in upholding the treble damage claim, is not about to change its mind, as one might have hoped Aimco 322 would presage. Hopefully, more to come.

*Editor’s Note: The authors are with Finger and Finger, A Professional Corporation. Finger and Finger is Chief Counsel to The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI) of Westchester and The Mid-Hudson Region. The firm is based in White Plains.*

### Grimaldi, Reagan Join Coldwell Banker Signature Properties

VALHALLA

Jonathan Gumowitz, principal broker of Coldwell Banker Signature Properties of Valhalla, recently announced that Phil Grimaldi, former principal broker of Elite Properties in Pleasantville and Bill Reagan, the former Yonkers deputy mayor, have joined the real estate firm.

Grimaldi is a long time broker and planner with expertise in certioraris, short sales and project development, officials said. Grimaldi was instrumental in obtaining more than \$1 million in federal and corporate grants for the Town of Mount Pleasant in Community Development and Beautification Projects, officials added.

Reagan, who is also a licensed real estate salesperson, will act as Signature Properties’ municipal liaison, working on projects through Westchester County, spokesmen said.



Ken Finger



Carl Finger



Dan Finger





## BUILDING MAINTENANCE SUPPLIES

JANITORIAL • LIGHTING • HARDWARE  
APPLIANCES • ELECTRICAL • PLUMBING  
PAINT • GROUND IMPROVEMENT  
TOOLS • SEASONAL PRODUCTS

(914) 923-2500 • [www.tegradirect.com](http://www.tegradirect.com)



## Attention Builders & Developers!!!

**Are you a builder or developer having extraordinary problems getting your project approved? Has the municipality changed the rules and conditions in the middle of the approval process?**

If your project is “as of right” and your application conforms to all the rules, regulations, terms and conditions when you originally submitted it, and you’re getting the “Run-Around” by the municipality, we’d like to HEAR from you!

All too often, Local Governments thwart, delay and/or obstruct when they don’t want to face the NIMBY (not in my backyard) pressures that invariably ensue when there is a new development proposal, even in cases that require no variances, rezoning or special permits. For example, has the municipality that you’re dealing with:

- Changed the zoning, reducing the development you are allowed?
- Added or changed steep slope rules?
- Added or changed wetlands rules?
- Made you study extraneous subjects as part of the Environmental Impact Statement?
- Keeps saying that your application and related documents/reports are incomplete?

If the answer is YES to any or all of the above, The Builders Institute would like to hear from you. You have rights and we might be in a position to help. We are well-versed in the development process and the tactics that local governments and groups use to thwart even “as-of-right” development projects.

**Please contact us at:**

**The Builders Institute of Westchester & the Mid-Hudson Region**

80 Business Park Drive, Suite 309, Armonk, NY 10504

914-273-0730 phone 914-273-7051 fax

## Wilder Balter Partners to Convert Former Reader's Digest Building into Apartments, Continued from p.4

The 64 apartments will include a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom units. The affordable, workforce and market rate units will be blended throughout the building and all residents will have access to the common elements that will include a gym, a kitchen, “a great room” looking out to the two courtyards, a library and an outdoor play area, officials said. Residents will also enjoy the other Chappaqua elements, including Whole Foods, Lifetime Fitness, other neighborhood retail facilities, walking trails and a shuttle bus to and from the village of Chappaqua.

Construction of the \$21 million redevelopment has commenced with interior demolition work. Completion is expected to take 16 to 18 months, with an anticipated opening in the spring of 2018, officials said.

Westchester County, the New York State Housing Finance Agency, Citibank Community Capital and First Sterling all provided financing for the Chappaqua Crossing Apartments, officials added.

### A Definitive Example

Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino said Chappaqua Crossing was a prime example of the county's commitment to working collaboratively to develop affordable housing.

“Chappaqua Crossing illustrates how communities, developers and government can work together to produce creative answers for addressing the need of affordable housing,” said Astorino. “Not only does this development provide homes for families across the economic spectrum, it does so in a way that offers modern amenities and still retains the irreplaceable historic features of the property.”

Town Supervisor Rob Greenstein, who played a key role in moving the overall project – including the housing – forward, said: “I was very proud when late last year, the Town Board adopted the Local Law that is allowing Summit Greenfield to relocate its affordable housing units to the Cupola Building. We will now have 28 units of affordable housing in the iconic Cu-

pola Building, and they will be integrated with additional workforce and market rate units. This project exemplifies how new and affordable housing options can be woven into the fabric of a community. When completed, the Cupola Building will offer a mix of housing options in a beautiful, vibrant location.”

### About Chappaqua Crossing

The Apartments at Chappaqua will be part of the Chappaqua Crossing campus, a 116-acre residential, retail and office complex bordered by Bedford Road (Route 117) and Roaring Brook Roads in the Chappaqua section of the Town of New Castle.

The site includes 500,000 square feet of office space, 120,000 square feet of retail facilities scheduled to open in 2017, including a Whole Foods Market; Life Time Fitness; a bank; shops and restaurants; 93 townhomes to be built in the future; the former Wallace Auditorium that will become a town-owned community space; and more than 50 acres of permanent green-space. Among the tenants of the office space are Mount Kisco Medical Group and Northern Westchester Hospital, officials said.

Wilder-Balter Partners is a leading developer of award-winning, new construction homes in the New York metropolitan area. Since 1975, the company has built affordable residential communities and luxury homes in Westchester, the Hudson Valley, and Suffolk and Fairfield (Conn.) counties. A multi-service real estate company, the firm specializes in development, construction and property management, officials said.

Summit Development, LLC is a privately held, diversified real estate investment, development and management company, with properties in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York. Summit specializes in the redevelopment and repositioning of existing undervalued assets. The company is based in Southport (Conn.). It often partners with Norwalk-based Greenfield Partners, a successful real estate investment firm, officials said.

## New Home Sales Climb to Highest Level Since Oct. of 2007, Industry Report Says

WASHINGTON, D.C.

**S**ales of newly built, single-family homes rose 12.4 percent in July, from a downwardly revised June reading, to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 654,000 units.

The figures are from newly released data by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Census Bureau. The report is featured on the Web Site ([www.nahb.org](http://www.nahb.org)) of The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

NAHB officials said that the data produces the highest reading in almost nine years.

“This rise in new home sales is consistent with our builders’ reports that market conditions have been improving,” said NAHB Chairman Ed Brady, a home builder and developer from Bloomington (Ill). “As existing home inventory remains flat, we should see more consumers turning to new construction.”

“July’s positive report shows there is a need for new single-family homes, buoyed by increased household formation, job gains and attractive mortgage rates,” said NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz. “This uptick in demand should translate into increased housing production throughout 2016, and into next year.”

The inventory of new homes for sale was 233,000 in July, which is a 4.3-month supply at the current sales pace. The median sales price of new houses sold was \$294,600, the report said.

Regionally, new home sales rose by 40 percent in the Northeast, 18.1 percent in the South, and 1.2 percent in the Midwest. Sales remained unchanged in the West, the report added.

## Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group Reports Milestone Local Transaction

MOUNT VERNON

**G**arry Klein of Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group has closed on a high-profile deal at 20 South West Street in Mount Vernon for \$3 million, the company recently announced.

Klein represented both the seller and buyer of the mixed-use property. The buyer is planning to use the site to develop a residential tower, with retail at the base, officials said.

“This is an exciting deal for both Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group and the surrounding community,” said Klein. “Mount Vernon is undergoing a revitalization boom and we are happy to be involved with its progression.”

According to Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group, the half-acre development site has direct platform access to the Mount Vernon West Metro-North station, along the Harlem line.

Klein and Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group are members of The Building and Realty Institute of Westchester and The Mid-Hudson Region (BRI).

## Advertise in Impact!

**Call 914.273.0730  
for details.**



# The Builders Institute / Building & Realty Institute of Westchester's First Vendor Showcase

## Participants: The BRI's Vendor Showcase Was Sensational!

By Jeff Hanley, Impact Editor  
WHITE PLAINS

**An overwhelming success!**  
That phrase, most definitely, summarized the majority of opinions regarding the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of The Builders Institute (BI)/ Building and Realty Institute (BRI).  
Vendors, members of the building, realty and construction industry and the general public were adamant in praising the event to BI-BRI staff members. More than 175 people attended the showcase at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains, packing the hotel's main ballrooms throughout most of the event.  
The showcase had representatives of virtually every membership sector of the BI-BRI, a building, realty and construction industry membership organization with more than 1,800 members in 14 counties of New York State.  
BI-BRI officials said that the event was the first of its kind in the 70-year history of the association, since it featured many sectors of the

organization's building, realty and construction industry membership base.  
"The sentiments were definitely clear - all involved parties were very happy with the showcase," said Albert Annunziata, executive director of the BI-BRI. "It was a productive experience for the vendors, and for those visiting the exhibitors."  
Maggie Collins, director of membership for the BI-BRI and the event coordinator of the showcase, said the upbeat responses regarding the program were passed to BI-BRI staff members throughout most of the night.  
"The positive feedback started about 20 minutes into the showcase - you could feel the excitement and the upbeat emotions from that point on, all the way to when the exhibitors were striking down their spaces," she said. "All of us at the BI-BRI are simply thrilled with the upbeat reactions from all involved in the event."



Based in Armonk, the BI-BRI has been marking the 70th anniversary of its formation throughout 2016. The organization is regarded as one of the leading business membership associations in New York State, BI-BRI officials said.  
A photo montage of the showcase is featured below. Photography is by Barbara Hansen.



Pictured during the beginning stages of the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI) are, from left to right, Bill Demersky and John Santacroce, BRI members; and Eric Abraham, chairman of the BRI. Demersky and Santacroce are with Power Performance Industries (PPI). The company was an exhibitor at the event.



Levitt-Fuirst Associates Ltd., insurance manager for The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI), served as an Event Sponsor for the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of the BRI. Pictured at the company's exhibition space are, from left to right, Levitt-Fuirst Co-Presidents Ken Fuirst and Jason Schiciano.



Representatives of some of the leading business membership groups in the Westchester and Mid-Hudson Region attended the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI). Officials from the Westchester Mid-Hudson Chapter of The American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the BRI were among those officials. Representatives of those groups, pictured at the event, are, from left to right, Peter Gaito Sr., AIA; John Fry, AIA; Albert Annunziata, executive director, BRI; Peter Gaito Jr., AIA; Gregg DeAngelis, AIA; and Eric Abraham, chairman, BRI.



Pictured at the midway point of the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of the Building and Realty Institute (BRI) are, from left to right, Monica Picarelli and David Amster, members of The Advisory Council of Managing Agents (ACMA) of the BRI. ACMA is a component association of the BRI that represents some of the leading property management firms in the Westchester and Mid-Hudson Region. Amster is the chairman of ACMA. He is also a principal of Prime Locations. The company was an exhibitor at the event.

**“Great evening, fab food and lots of networking. I heard nothing but “raves” from those attending.”**

— DIANA VIRRILL, CO-OP BOARD PRESIDENT, HASTINGS HOUSE, CO-OP & CONDO ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON.





The Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI) featured participants from many areas of the building, realty and construction industry, as well as the general business sector. Pictured during the event are, from left to right, John Bonito, vice chair of The Advisory Council of Managing Agents (ACMA) of the BRI; Maggie Collins, event coordinator and director of membership for the BRI; and Lou Giordano, BRI member.



Some of the region's leading property management companies were exhibitors at the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI). Pictured at his firm's exhibition space during the event is Giovanni Puerta of Trion Real Estate Management. Trion Real Estate Management is a member of The Apartment Owners Advisory Council (AOAC) of the BRI. Carmelo Milio, president of the BRI, is president of Trion Real Estate Management.

*“I wanted to take the opportunity to commend the BRI team on a wonderful event last evening. I could not imagine it having been more organized, informative or user (member) friendly. I appreciate how much work and coordination goes into planning an event of that magnitude and I simply wanted to thank BRI for putting it together. It was a great success.”*

— SALLY FARRUGGIO, PROPERTY MANAGER,  
MONTROSE MANAGEMENT

*“The BRI did an incredible job getting this concept off the ground. Huge success for the first year!”*

— KEN FUIRST, PRESIDENT, LEVITT-FUIRST ASSOCIATES, LTD

Vincent Mutarelli, a member of The Board of Trustees of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI), is pictured at his company's (Capital One Bank) exhibition space during the BRI's Vendor Showcase on Oct. 13. Mutarelli is pictured (behind the desk) while reviewing the programs that Capital One Bank offers to members of the building, realty and construction industry.



The Advisory Council of Managing Agents (ACMA) of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI) – a component association of the BRI that represents some of the leading property management firms in the Westchester and Mid-Hudson Region – had several of its members exhibit at the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of the BRI. Stillman Property Management was one of those companies. Pictured during the event, from left to right, are Stillman Property Management Staff Members Floyd Brigman, Philip Schonberg, Jeff Stillman (vice president) and Robert Conca. Jeff Stillman also serves as vice chair of ACMA.



Henry Tisor of Cruises Inc., a member of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI), is pictured at his firm's exhibition space during the BRI's Vendor Showcase on Oct. 13. Tisor is pictured while reviewing his company's many vacation options.

*“The night was a success on many levels and we look forward to next year”*

— CARMELO MILIO, PRESIDENT, BRI



# The Builders Institute / Building & Realty Institute of Westchester's First Vendor Showcase

Continued from p. 9



The staff of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI) fully covered all procedures associated with the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of the BRI. Pictured during the event, from left to right, are Jeff Hanley, associate executive director, BRI; Jane Gill, controller, BRI; Margie Telesco, office manager, BRI; Maggie Collins, director of membership, BRI, and the event coordinator of the showcase; and Albert Annunziata, executive director, BRI.



Many areas of the local building and realty industry were represented at the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI). Pictured at the showcase, from left to right, are Eric Messer, vice chairman of The Remodelers Advisory Council (RAC) of the BRI; and Georg Ivanoff, a BRI member. Messer and Ivanoff are with Sunrise Building and Remodeling, Inc. The company, which exhibited at the showcase, has been a member of the BRI since 1987. Messer is the principal of the company. Ivanoff is a sales consultant.

***“This was a great event. Met three companies that I can network with and two individuals interested in gutters and heat cables. Hope you will continue this next year. The traffic was a surprise. I was busy all night. Almost didn’t make dinner. Keep up the good work”***

**— DON LINDARS,  
THE BROTHERS THAT JUST DO GUTTERS**



Members of The Cooperative and Condominium Advisory Council (CCAC) of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI) participated in The Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of the BRI. Pictured during the event are, from left to right, Diana Virrill, chair, CCAC and a member of the Board of Trustees of the BRI; and Pat Kinsey, a member of the Board of Directors of the CCAC.



Pictured during the opening portion of the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI) are, from left to right, Monica Picarelli, a member of The Advisory Council of Managing Agents (ACMA) of the BRI; Lisa Cordasco, vice chair of The Remodelers Advisory Council (RAC) of the BRI; and Francine Camardella, a member of the Board of Directors of RAC.



Service companies to the building, realty and construction industry were well-represented at the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of The Building and Realty Institute (BRI). Pictured during the program are, from left to right, Hillary Sheperd and Traci Burrows of ServPro of Scarsdale and Mount Vernon. The service company was an exhibitor at the event. Sheperd is a member of the Board of Directors of The Remodelers Advisory Council (RAC) of the BRI.



Pictured at the Oct. 13 Vendor Showcase of the Building and Realty Institute (BRI) are, from left to right, BRI Member Darren Johnson, Petro Commercial Services; and Maggie Collins, director of membership, BRI, and the event coordinator of the showcase. Petro Commercial Services was an exhibitor at the event.





The Building & Realty Institute is pleased to announce

# A Brand New Member to Member Incentive Program

The BRI is delighted to unveil an Incentive Program we have been working on for many months. The member to member part of the program is comprised of discounts and services that sixteen companies, professional firms and BRI consultants have come forward to offer fellow members.

## Your Member to Member Incentives

**Blair Interiors Group. Ltd.**

Apartment Building Owners & Realty Management: Meet with owner/manager for a complimentary assessment for renovations with a focus on lobbies, halls and corridors, lighting, walls, mailrooms or mail walls, elevators, reception and storage areas.

Residential Homeowners: Meet with homeowner for a complimentary evaluation of interiors for a new kitchen, bath and/or furnishings.

**The Brothers that Just Do Gutters**

Exclusive pricing for fellow Builder Institute members.

**Capital One Bank\***

Vince Mutarelli at Capital One offers a complimentary consultation for full spectrum business financial needs: banking, credit, merchant processing, treasury management for property managers, building owners, condo associations, home owner associations and general business. \$2MM - \$30MM in annual revenue size companies. Credit from \$500K - \$5MM.

*\*certain conditions apply*

**CertaPro Painters**

Karen Haas at CertaPro Painters offers a "Painter for a Day," to BRI members, a \$400 Value. *(Materials not included.)*

**Croton Auto Park Advantage**

Lifetime of free car washes, guaranteed service transportation, priority service appointments, discounts on parts and accessories, complimentary bodyshop estimates, \$50 credit towards your first ding repair, \$200 credit towards your next purchase or lease!

**Elefante and Persanis, LLP**

Offering BRI members up to two (2) phone consultations, to answer a question related to the collective bargaining agreement (if Jeff Hanley is unable to answer the query). Elefante and Persanis, LLP, will offer a discount on their hourly rate if the issue requires time beyond this.

**Finger and Finger  
A Professional Corporation**

One free consultation for Coop and Condo landlord- tenant or commercial disputes or issues. Available for Managing Agents, Property Managers, Landlords and/or Board Members.

**Levitt-Fuirst Associates, LTD**

Complimentary, no obligation assessment of your insurance needs, \$50 off membership in the Builders Institute of Westchester, and complimentary gifts just for asking for more information.

**Mackoul**

A complimentary consultation/assessment of existing insurance coverage and/or free educational seminar.

**NYCtravelBiz**

Exclusive Promos for members, such as upgrades, shore excursion discounts, onboard credits, money-back guarantees, and price-match guarantees.

**Petro Commercial Services**

Custom assessment of fuel and service needs tailored to customer's individual situation.

**Roher/Sprague Partners  
Communications Design**

Offers BRI members a free consultation on their website, brand identity, advertising, or marketing communications.

**Sir Speedy of Pleasantville**

50% off the initial order of full color business cards on a 500 or 1,000 quantity order.

**Sunrise Building & Remodeling**

Free in-home design consultation and free detailed estimate to BRI members.

**Sunrise Solar Solutions**

Free service to BRI members to help property owners and managers understand the true Solar Asset Value of buildings and open land in portfolios, including Portfolio Analysis and Site Ranking. Individual Property Proposals for qualified properties are available to all commercial, religious, not-for-profit, and multi-family properties.

**Trion Real Estate Management**

Free Property Analysis as well as the first month of management free to any member of the BRI seeking property management services.

## and A Broad Spectrum of Medical, Dental, Vision & Wellness Programs

We are now able to offer members new medical, dental, vision and wellness programs through an affiliation with our member, Ryan Pettus, of Professional Group Marketing. To inquire about the plan please contact Ryan Pettus at [rpettus@pgmgroup.com](mailto:rpettus@pgmgroup.com), or you may reach him at 914.801.3501. You will need your BRI account number to enroll which you will find on your most recent dues statement or you may obtain it by calling our offices at 914.273.0730.

**Some plan highlights being offered through the BRI include:**

- National CIGNA network of doctors and hospitals
- No referrals to see a specialist
- PPO plans – In and out of network
- ACA compliant plans
- Paper or Online Enrollment
- Recurring billing is done via Electronic (EFT) Billing.
- Rates discounted 8-10%

Plans and information can be found at: <http://vebaenroll.com/pgmveba>  
Members please use access code: JDNY4071

Members can enroll online, or, to have a licensed representative assist you, or find out more about the products and services available to you, contact:

**Ryan Pettus**  
*Account Executive*



PROFESSIONAL GROUP MARKETING, INC.  
GA SOLUTIONS, LLC

50 Broadway | Hawthorne, NY 10532  
Phone: 914-801-3501 | Fax: 914-741-0857 [rpettus@pgmgroup.com](mailto:rpettus@pgmgroup.com)





Report:

# Builder Confidence Surges in September

By Jeff Hanley, Impact Editor  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Builder confidence in the market for newly-built, single-family homes in September experienced a noteworthy increase, according to a recent building and realty industry report. The confidence level of builders jumped six points, to 65, from a downwardly revised August reading of 59 on the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI). The figure marks the highest HMI level since Oct. of 2015, the report said.

The study was released by NAHB on Sep. 19.

“As household incomes rise, builders in many markets across the nation are reporting that they are seeing more serious buyers, a positive sign that the housing market continues to move forward,” said NAHB Chairman Ed Brady, a home builder and developer from Bloomington, Ill. “The single-family market continues to make gradual gains and we expect this upward momentum will build throughout the remainder of the year, and into 2017.”

“With the inventory of new and existing homes remaining tight, builders are confident that if they can build more homes they can sell them,” said NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz. “Though solid job creation and low interest rates are also fueling demand, builders continue to be hampered by supply-side constraints that include shortages of labor and lots.”

## The Specifics

Derived from a monthly survey that NAHB has been conducting for 30 years, the HMI gauges builder perceptions of current single-family home sales and sales expectations for the next six months as “good,” “fair,” or “poor,” NAHB officials said.

The survey also asks builders to rate the traffic of prospective buyers as “high to very high,” “average,” or “low to very low.” Scores for each component are then used to calculate a seasonally adjusted index where any number over 50 indicates that more builders view conditions as good than poor, officials added.

All three HMI components moved higher in September. The component measuring current sales expectations rose six points to 71. The gauge charting sales expectations in the next six months increased five points to also stand at 71. The index measuring the traffic of prospective buyers posted a four-point gain to 48, the report said.

The three-month moving averages for HMI scores posted gains in three out of the four national regions. The Northeast and South each registered a one-point gain to 42 and 64, respectively, while the West rose four points to 73. The Midwest was unchanged at 55, the study said.

NAHB said that the HMI is strictly the product of NAHB Economics. Officials added that the report is not seen, or influenced, by any outside party prior to being released to the public. HMI tables can be found at [nabh.org/hmi](http://nabh.org/hmi). More information on housing statistics is also available at [housingeco](http://housingeco).



# The BRI’s Holiday Cocktail Party Set for Dec. 16

By Jeff Hanley, IMPACT Editor

ARMONK

The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI) of Westchester and the Mid-Hudson Region recently announced that official reservations are now being accepted for its Holiday Cocktail Party.

BRI officials said that the event has been set for Friday, Dec. 16, 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., at The Moderne Barn in Armonk (430 Bedford Road). The cost per person is \$50. Payments and reservations can now be made on-line at [buildingandrealtyinstitute.org](http://buildingandrealtyinstitute.org), officials added.

**“We are really happy to offer this program to our members,” said Albert Annunziata, executive director of the BI-BRI. “We are planning for the party to be the final piece of our year-long commemoration of the 70th anniversary of our association’s formation. We are also excited about the location of the event. I am sure our members will find The Moderne Barn to be a really special venue. We are anticipating that this will be a memorable celebration.”**

Event officials said that reminders on the party will soon be sent to BI-BRI members, as well as many additional members of the building, realty and construction industry. BI-BRI members — or members of the general business sector — can receive further information on the party by calling (914) 273-0730.

The BI-BRI is a building, realty and construction industry membership organization. The association has more than 1,800 members in 14 counties of New York State. Those members are involved in virtually every area of the building, realty and construction industry.

Based in Armonk, the BI-BRI is recognized as one of the leading business membership groups in New York State. The organization has been marking the 70th anniversary of its formation throughout 2016 with a variety of events and programs, spokesmen said.



# Housing Starts Decline 9 Percent in September on Multifamily Weakness, Industry Report Says

By Jeff Hanley, IMPACT Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C.

A sharp decline in multifamily production brought overall nationwide housing starts down 9 percent in September, a recently-released study said.

The data in the study was compiled by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Commerce Department. The statistics were highlighted in an overall analysis from The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). That study was released on Oct. 19.

The NAHB analysis added, however, that both single-family production and overall permit issuance posted solid gains.

“Single-family starts posted their highest level since February and are consistent with builder sentiment, which has remained firm in recent months,” said Ed Brady, chair of NAHB. “Low mortgage rates, along with solid permit and job growth, should keep the demand for single-family housing moving forward in the months ahead.”

“After strong readings during the summer, multifamily production pulled back in September,” said NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz. “Still, we expect the multifamily sector to post

a good year in 2016, though down a bit from last year, which was likely the peak year for this cycle.”

The report said that single-family starts rose 8.1 percent in September to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 783,000 units. Multifamily production declined 38 percent to 264,000 units, the study added.

Combined single- and multifamily starts fell in three of the four U.S. regions in August, according to the report. The Northeast, Midwest and South posted losses of 36 percent, 14.1 percent and 5.3 percent, respectively. Starts remained unchanged in the West, the study said.

Overall Permit Issuance, which, the study said, is a harbinger of future building activity, rose 6.3 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.23 million.

The report cited that single-family permits edged up 0.4 percent in September to a rate of 739,000, while multifamily permits rose 16.8 percent to 486,000.

Permit issuance increased 23.6 percent in the Northeast, 15.8 percent in the West and 2.6 percent in the South. The Midwest posted a loss of 5.2 percent, the study said.

# Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group Reports a NYC Transaction

NEW YORK

Michael Rackenberg of Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group recently closed on what officials termed as “a milestone deal” in a Chelsea mixed-use building at 137 West 19th Street in Manhattan. Company officials announced the transaction in late September.

Listed by Douglas Elliman and Rand, Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group brought the buyer who won the property for \$10.5 million, officials added.

With six stories – first-floor retail; second, third, and fourth floors, office space; and fifth and sixth floors, residential duplex – the possibilities for the building are endless, spokesmen said. The buyer plans to keep the building as-is, officials added.

“While Houlihan Lawrence is well-rooted in the areas north of New York City, our services and reach span well-beyond,” Rackenberg said. “We are proud to be part of such an exciting deal in lower Manhattan, and look forward to conducting more business in the area.”

Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group, based in White Plains, is a full-service division of Houlihan Lawrence. The company specializes in investment opportunities, office condominiums and leasing, industrial and retail sales and leasing, land acquisition and development, as well as municipal approval consultation, company officials said.

Company spokesmen added that the firm has 20 highly experienced agents across New York City, Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess and Fairfield (Conn.) counties.

Spokesmen said that Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group has “unparalleled insight, expertise and service.” Officials added that the company, complete with a database of international buyers and sellers, effectively markets commercial properties and investment opportunities on a global scale.

Houlihan Lawrence Commercial Group is a member of The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI) of Westchester and The Mid-Hudson Region. The BI-BRI publishes this newspaper.

# GHP Office Realty Sells Dobbs Ferry Building

WHITE PLAINS

GHP Office Realty LLC recently announced that it has sold 81 Main Street in Dobbs Ferry, a 3,000 square foot former bank building, for \$595,000 to Ward Capital Management, LLC of Rye.

Andrew M. Greenspan, principal of GHP said: “81 Main Street is a beautiful art deco building located in the heart of Dobbs Ferry’s central business district and was built in 1927 by Greenpoint Savings Bank. GHP acquired the building through a foreclosure in 2013. Ward Capital Management subsequently leased the building from GHP and has performed extensive renovations to convert it into a mixed-use building containing a residential unit on the newly constructed second floor and a retail unit on the ground floor.”

The owner was represented by Greenspan and Brendan Hickey, an associate at GHP. GHP’s

legal representation was provided by Jamie Schwartz, Esq. of James E. Schwartz, P.C. Ward Capital Management was represented by its Principal, D’Wayne Prieto. Ward’s attorney in the transaction was Christian Daglieri, Esq. of Montgomery McCracken Walker and Rhodes LLP, officials said.

GHP Office Realty was formed in 1999. The company is headed by its principal owners, Greenspan, James J. Houlihan, James G. Houlihan and Howard Parnes. The company is a leader in the commercial real estate market in the New York metropolitan area. It specializes in the acquisition, leasing and management of office, flex, retail and industrial properties in the suburban markets of the tri-state area. The company currently owns and manages more than 5 million square feet in 70 buildings, spokesmen said.



# A Review of the Construction of the New Tappan Zee Bridge to be Featured at the Nov. 17 General Membership Meeting of the BI-BRI

By Jeff Hanley, IMPACT Editor

## WHITE PLAINS

“An Update on the Construction of The New Tappan Zee Bridge” will be the topic of the Nov. 17 General Membership Meeting of The Builders Institute (BI)/Building and Realty Institute (BRI).

The meeting is scheduled to start at 5:30 p.m. It will be at The Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains. BI-BRI officials announced the program in mid-October.

Andrew P. O'Rourke, a representative from The Educational Outreach Division of The New N.Y. Bridge Project of The N.Y. State Thruway Authority, will be the event's keynote speaker.

“We are very happy that Andrew O'Rourke will be delivering an update to our membership on this important project,” said Albert Annunziata, executive director of the BI-BRI. “We look forward to his presentation on what is such an important issue to our region.”

The meeting is open to all BI-BRI members. Non-members are also welcome to attend the program. Reservations are being accepted at [jeff@buildersinstitute.org](mailto:jeff@buildersinstitute.org).

The BI-BRI is a building, realty and construction industry membership organization. The association has more than 1,800 members in 14 counties of New York State. Members of the organization are involved in virtually every sector of the building, realty and construction industry.

Based in Armonk, the BI-BRI has been marking the 70th anniversary of its formation throughout 2016.

# Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors (HGAR) Announces Its Merger with the Manhattan Association of Realtors (MANAR)

By Jeff Hanley, Impact Editor

## TARRYTOWN

The Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors (HGAR) recently announced a merger with the Manhattan Association of Realtors (MANAR), a move HGAR officials termed as “exciting.”

The merger was approved at HGAR's Annual Meeting on Oct. 17 at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in Tarrytown. It was also announced by MANAR at its Annual Meeting on Oct. 31.

Officials said that, beginning Jan. 1, 2017, there will be a Manhattan Chapter of HGAR.

Richard Haggerty, chief executive officer of HGAR, said the association was both pleased and excited to have a presence in New York City.

“This will represent an extraordinary referral opportunity for both Manhattan and Hudson Valley Realtors, and will make our organization even stronger when it comes to legislative advocacy for both Realtors and home owners,” he said. Both HGAR and MANAR have subsidiary Multiple Listing Services (MLS's). The merger also calls for an eventual merger of the two MLS's, officials said. Haggerty said the eventual merger between the two organizations began earlier this year when chief officials of MANAR approached HGAR about a possible merger. He added that, after discussions with MANAR

Continued on p. 14

# NARI Launches Its New Branding and Promotes Its “Remodeling Done Right” Industry Communication

## CHICAGO

The National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) recently announced a big change with the launches of its new branding and industry-wide tagline of “Remodeling Done Right,” association officials said.

NARI officials said that the launches have provided much more than a logo update, with the rebranding creating a system of expression that “galvanizes NARI's 6,000 member companies.”

The launches, officials added, have also cemented the value of NARI's programs and services. The initiatives also telegraph, externally, to consumers a brand promise that emboldens the value of remodelers to homeowners and communities.

NARI Board Chairman Judy Mozen said that rebranding NARI represents an opportunity to address three strategic outcomes:

- ◆ The activation and growth of NARI's membership;
- ◆ Market development and prosperity for the association's members;
- ◆ An increased member value and participation in NARI's programs.

“Demonstrating NARI's new brand externally to consumers is where this initiative gets really exciting,” Mozen said. “Our rebranding elevates the remodeling industry and our members to the market place. We are proud of the fact that we now have a clear position, and messaging statement, to the industry and consumers that's second to none.”

Fred Ulreich, chief executive officer of NARI, added: “NARI hasn't rebranded in 33 years - 2016 represented an extraordinary opportunity to revitalize the industry brand and communicate a promise to consumers of what they can expect from NARI members. NARI took nearly one year to plan this important leap forward. We elicited feedback from our members, chapter leaders, board of directors and staff to chart a new course for the remodeling industry.”

Ulreich added that the process revealed that NARI not only owned the word “remodeling,” but needed to capitalize on what its members do. He cited that the “Remodeling Done Right” message communicates both who the

association is as an industry and the professionalism, leadership and skills NARI members bring to every project.

“It also sends a clear message to consumers to build trust and why they should work with a certified NARI remodeler,” he said.

Association officials said that NARI enlisted the assistance of the Chicago-based agency, McKenna Design Group, to partner on the rebranding. Warren McKenna, principal of the agency, cites the meaning of the new NARI branding as important.

“The new identity is a fresh view on the past logo mark with a bold vision for NARI's future,” he said. “The new brand identity and tagline have ‘B.U.M.P.’ – they are believable, unique, memorable and proprietary.”

McKenna said that the agency updated the blue colors of NARI to be more dynamic and engaging. He said that the typography is more current and timeless.

“The gabled roofline represents communities across the U.S. that NARI members serve,” he said. “There's a slightly bolder point above the A and R demonstrating NARI's upward strength of the association, and its residential and commercial remodelers.”

McKenna added that the NARI acronym signifies the walls, new building products, remodeling process and member craft in remodeled spaces.

“Remodeling Done Right captures the essence of what NARI members do,” he said. “It's a messaging system that underscores this position to communicate directly to consumers and a deciding factor in why they should work with a NARI member. Professionalism, leadership and trust are what define NARI members. The new industry brand identity and tagline reinforce this bold vision.”

NARI represents more than 6,000 member companies and 97 percent of the top remodeling markets in the U.S., association officials said. The organization, association officials added, is the medium for business development, a platform for advocacy and the principal source for industry intelligence for the remodeling industry.



# Trion Holdings Acquires a Connecticut Apartment Complex

## NORWICH, CONN.

Trion Holdings has acquired a 71-unit apartment community for \$6.8 million in Norwich, company officials recently announced.

The acquisition followed Trion's last two major purchases in New York City for total acquisitions in the past 15 months of just under \$60 million, company officials said.

The Principal Investor and Managing Member of the company is Carmelo Milio. Louis Pfaff of Trion Holdings served as the Acquisition Manager. The sellers were Hamilton Point Investors. Rick Chozick of Chozick Realty represented both sides of the transaction, officials said.

The purchased property, Stonington Apartments on 102 Stonington Road, consists of 71, two-bedroom, Class A apartments totaling 75,000 square feet. The property was constructed in 2005 on a 4.88-acre site, spokesmen said.

Stonington stands out among its competitors by offering air-conditioned common areas, an elevator, a fitness facility, a tennis court, a laundry on each floor, and private balconies or patios, officials said.



Carmelo Milio

Spokesmen for Trion Holdings said that, given the market appeal and ideal location close to downtown, the Mohegan and Foxwood Resort Casinos, and the U.S. Military installations to the south, multiple parties were interested and actively competing for the purchase.

“By not ignoring tertiary markets and smaller properties, we are able to find value where others may not be looking and

Norwich is certainly one of those markets,” Milio said. “Our reputation and ability to act quickly and honestly were vital to this acquisition.”

The key factors that made the purchase compelling, Milio said, were the excellent location, the strong tenant base, and the above-average upside in rents.

Milio serves as both the Chief Investment Officer of Trion Holdings and the President of The Building and Realty Institute of Westchester and the Mid-Hudson Region (BRI).

Trion Holdings is a Manhattan and Yonkers-based real estate investment and management firm.

## Tech Talk

# Google Creating a New Mobile Search Index

By Andrea Wagner, President, Wagner Web Designs, Inc.

## DANBURY, CONN.

Google has confirmed that it will create a separate search index specifically for mobile within the next couple of months. This new search index will become its primary index - and although Google says it will maintain a separate index for traditional desktop searches, this will no longer be the dominant resource and the mobile version will be the most up-to-date.

While no specific date has been given, the change was recently confirmed by Search Analyst Gary Illyes at the Pubcon Digital Marketing Conference in Las Vegas. After



“The news has potentially huge ramifications for businesses that depend on Google rankings, especially those who have been slow to adopt a ‘mobile first mindset.’ It means that anyone with a site which isn’t fully optimized for mobile devices will likely suffer in the search results.”

taking to the stage to deliver his keynote address, Illyes noted that more than 85 percent of Google's search results are now mobile-friendly. This has led the search engine to drop the “mobile-friendly” tag, since it is now the majority.

Historically, the desktop was the main reference point but, given the 85 percent stat and the fact that more than half of all internet searches now come from a mobile device, Google is prioritizing, accordingly. The source for that statement is Wordtracker, Rebecca Appleton.

## What Does This Mean To You - and Your Business?

The news has potentially huge ramifications for businesses that depend on Google rankings, especially those who have been slow to adopt “a mobile-first mindset.” It means that anyone with a site which isn't fully optimized for mobile devices will likely suffer in the search results.

The good news is that the switch appears to be at least a few months off, so there is time yet to get your mobile presence in order!

*Editor's Note: Andrea Wagner is president of Wagner Web Designs, Inc. The company specializes in optimized small business websites. Questions can be directed to Wagner at (914) 245-2626.*

Advertise in  
**Impact!**  
Call 914.273.0730  
for details.



# Simone Hosts Meeting of ULI Westchester/Fairfield Chapter at New Boyce Thompson Center in Yonkers

YONKERS

Simone Development Companies, developer of the Boyce Thompson Center, recently hosted a breakfast meeting of the Westchester/Fairfield (Conn.) Chapter of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) at the new mixed-use center in Yonkers.

A total of 100 people attended the Sep. 23 program, officials said. The event included tours of the 85,000-square-foot center, which is nearing completion.

The program included presentations by Guy Leibler, president, Simone Healthcare Development; Chip Marrano, president, MCG Construction Company; Ron Hoina, partner, Design Development; Wilson Kimball, commissioner of planning and development, Yonkers; and Cynthia Williams, project director, Simone Development Companies.

Simone recently announced that WESTMED Medical Group will occupy two floors at the Boyce Thompson Center in a new 20,000 square foot building constructed on the south side of the original Boyce Thompson building.

With the new lease, the Boyce Thompson Center is now over 70 percent pre-leased to 11 tenants. About 25,000 square feet of medical office, retail amenity and restaurant space remains available for lease, officials said.

In addition to WESTMED, healthcare tenants at the new Boyce Thompson Center include Gastroenterology of Westchester LLC; Juvanni Med Spa; Fresenius Medical Care; and St. John's Riverside Hospital.

Retail and restaurant tenants include Fortina Restaurant; The Taco Project; Family Wellness Pharmacy; Tompkins Mahopac Bank; PLUSHBLOW Blow-dry Bar; and Ultimate Spectacle, officials said.

Off Executive Boulevard in northwest Yonkers, the Boyce Thompson Center is an innovative, mixed-use development, spokesmen said. The facility features new office space for businesses and medical practices, retail stores, banking and restaurants. The historic Boyce Thompson building, which was built in the 1920's, is being restored to its original character. The center will also include outdoor site amenities, such as areas for seating, eating and learning, officials added.

## Solar Power, Solar Profits... Innovation, Rewards and Savings Now!

Sunrise Solar Solutions has helped businesses slash power bills for nearly a decade by tapping into clean, renewable solar energy.

### We offer you:

- The highest quality and longest-lasting American-made materials and installations
- Complete financing options
- Local management and operation of your system



A Premier Hudson Valley Solar Installer  
(914)762-7622  
www.sunrisesolarllc.com

## Services Profile:

# Jill Singer Graphics Helps Local Businesses to “Market Like They Mean It” with Compelling Graphics and Marketing Materials

By Jeff Hanley, *IMPACT* Editor

WHITE PLAINS

Grabbing the attention of desired audiences and delivering an effective message has become increasingly difficult for businesses in recent years.

The frantic pace that those audiences work, and live by, presents a series of challenges to businesses that are seeking new clients, or working to retain current business relationships. The eventual result, as most in the marketing and public relations sectors would agree with, is the need for attractive and thorough marketing pieces.

Jill Singer Graphics (JSG) of White Plains is one local graphic design and marketing firm that definitely agrees with those assessments. JSG, through what it terms as “eye-catching and effective design,” has been producing solid results for local businesses for three decades.

“I’m proud that, for over 30 years, I have helped raise awareness, solidified branding, and increased business opportunities for my corporate clients, many of whom are in the real estate, construction and development sector,” said Jill Singer, the principal of JSG. “And, I’ve produced measureable fundraising results for my non-profit clients.”

Singer has worked with more than 400 clients in Westchester County, as well as Fairfield County (Conn.), New York City and New Jersey. She said that while it’s important to understand and demonstrate each organization’s unique value proposition, certain standards must guide every project if you’re to truly “market like you mean it.”

“It’s my job to help my clients achieve their business goals through marketing,” she said. “Whether I’m creating a brochure or portfolio for a corporate client, or helping a non-profit capture greater success in its fundraising campaigns, the material must be attractive in the literal sense. That is, it must draw in potential clients, sponsors, volunteers, etc.”

*I’m proud that, for over 30 years, I have helped raise awareness, solidified branding, and increased business opportunities for my clients...*

## Key Points

Singer stresses that, when seeking a graphic designer to enhance the look and identity of a company or non-profit, four criteria count:

- ◆ Direct Access to the graphic artist.
- ◆ A “highly refined” understanding of the needs of clients.
- ◆ Large doses of creativity “to call positive attention to your brand logo, event, sales collateral and signage.”
- ◆ The benefit of trusted partnerships with specialists that only a seasoned professional can offer.

“Every client works directly with me,” Singer said. “The impact of the company brochures, trade show displays, invitations and other materials I’ve created for them has primed the pipeline for additional revenues, double-digit increases, and sold-out events.”

## A Wide List

JSG has also had a specific focus for more than 30 years on the construction, development and real estate industry. The firm, Singer said, has provided marketing materials for lenders, contractors, engineers, plumbers, developers, commercial brokers and real estate managers. A wide range of additional industries that JSG serves includes the non-profit sector, the financial and legal arenas, the camps and recreation areas, and the healthcare and hospitality markets.

JSG, Singer added, emphasizes that discipline and excellence come from a practiced hand.

“Combined with huge doses of creativity, that is what you get when you hire my firm,” Singer said.

JSG is proud of being sharp in every aspect of marketing, which, it stresses, amplifies the impact of creative design, Singer said. Singer cites that she knows and works extensively with photographers, illustrators, writers, editors, web programmers and printers.

“My connections allow our clients entrée to strategic partners,” Singer said. “Moreover, I seek opportunities to help them leverage those relationships.”



Jill Singer

## Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors (HGAR) Announces Its Merger with the Manhattan Association of Realtors (MANAR), Continued from p. 13

and with HGAR’s Board of Directors, negotiations were initiated, leading to the merger.

“We hope, in time, to grow the membership of our new Manhattan Chapter, providing a mutually beneficial relationship for both our urban and suburban Realtors,” he said.

HGAR currently has more than 10,300 Realtors, association officials said. Officials said the organization’s membership has been growing at a rate of about 100 new members each month.

Earlier this year, HGAR held its official Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting at its new headquarters at One Maple Avenue, The Source at White Plains, at the corner of Bloomingdale Road and Maple Avenue. The 250,000 square-foot complex is also home to The Cheesecake Factory, Whole Foods Market, Morton’s Steakhouse, Destination Maternity, Dick’s Sporting Goods and Raymour and Flanigan, association officials said. HGAR is a not-for-profit trade association covering approximately 10,300 real estate pro-

fessionals doing business in the lower Hudson Valley, spokesmen said. Officials said the organization is the second largest Realtor association in New York State and one of the largest in the U.S.

The Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service (HGMLS), owned and operated by HGAR, offers approximately 24,000 properties in the Bronx, Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Rockland, Orange, Sullivan and Ulster counties. It is among the top 50 largest MLS’s in the U.S., association officials said.



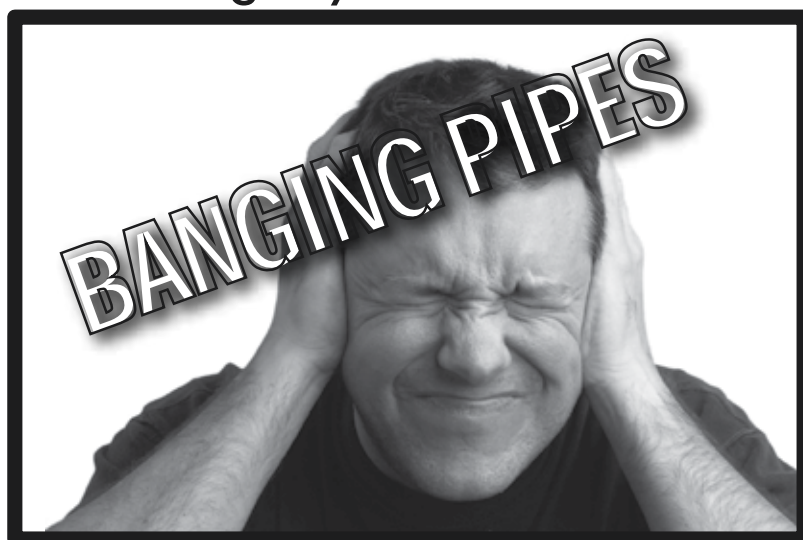
# PROBLEM SOLVED



Mike Gregoretti 40 Years Heating Experience



Banging Pipes/Water Leaks/All Heating Mysteries Solved



Mike Gregoretti brings his 40 Years' experience solving heating problems for property owners in the Metropolitan NY Area. Specializing in Energy Efficiency and resolving Quality of Life issues that others give up on.

We take a scientific approach to resolving Heating problems that begins with a thorough Knowledge of Heating systems and builds upon that with an arsenal of the latest Diagnostic Instruments for locating and correcting Your Heating Problems.

Call today and ask us about your specific problems. We will return your call Promptly and visit your property Free of Charge to help analyze your specific situation. Results Guaranteed!

Results Guaranteed or Your Money Back  
FREE Walk Through Analysis – Call NOW

**LESSOIL.COM**  
GET MORE HEAT WITH LESSOIL

WWW.LESSOIL.COM (877) 453-7764  
Call Right Now – Phones Answered 24/7

"You Get More Heat with LESSOIL"



# SAVE UP TO 35%

## ON WORKERS' COMPENSATION COSTS

Builders Institute Safety Group 458 has an unmatched record of service since 1951.

In addition to a hefty up-front **discount** on your premiums, your coverage is backed by one of the the **best plans** in the business!

- ◆ OVER 900 NY CONTRACTORS BENEFITTING
- ◆ 65 CONSECUTIVE YEARS OF DIVIDENDS
- ◆ DEDICATED TEAMS FOR CLAIMS, BILLING, AND UNDERWRITING



### CONTACT:

## Levitt-Fuirst Associates, LTD

Marc Spar, Director    [mspar@levittfuirst.com](mailto:mspar@levittfuirst.com)    914-457-4224  
[www.levittfuirst.com/group-458-construction](http://www.levittfuirst.com/group-458-construction)

# Being A Member Of The Builders Institute Has Its Advantage!

## The Croton Auto Park Advantage!

When you are a member of the Builders Institute and you buy or lease from us..You get our  
**Exclusive Advantage Bonus**

1. Priority Service Appointments
2. Lifetime Free Car Washes
3. Guaranteed Service Transportation
4. Discounts on Parts and Accessories
5. Complimentary Bodyshop Estimates
6. \$50 Credit Towards Your First Ding Repair
7. \$200 Credit Towards Your Next Purchase/Lease

RAM DODGE CHRYSLER Jeep

# CrotonAuto Park

RT. 9A & 129 • CROTON ON HUDSON  
Hours: Mon-Thurs 8:30-8 Fri & Sat 8:30-6 Sun 11-4

914-271-5100

[crotonautopark.com](http://crotonautopark.com)