

'Going Green' seminar draws 80-plus participants

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Sorting out the various "green building" models and standards was a primary theme on February 26th as some 80 builders, architects, Realtors, land-use professionals, assorted trades, officials and students gathered at Bryant University for a panel discussion on "Going Green: Residential Building in Rhode Island."

Three members of the Rhode Island Builders Association were on the four-member panel. Daniel J. Paquette, CGP, of Woodmeister Master Builders and chairman of RIBA's Green Building Committee was moderator. Joseph Samra, CGP, of MEJJ Development spoke about the new National Green Building Standard from the National Association of Home Builders. Kenneth Bouvier of South County Post & Beam Inc. discussed the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards produced by the United States Green Building Council.

Also on the panel was Jonathan Dember of the Conservation Services Group, who offered a presentation on the EPA's Energy

Star program.

Opening the program, Mr. Paquette explained the trend toward, and the need for, "green homes" in Rhode Island, paying special attention to the energy implications.

"There are 'green standards' for various products, including cars. Why not for houses?" he asked.

As each system was discussed, audience questions indicated that some builders found the choice of the three different sets of standards confusing.

"When they start putting this into codes, which one will they require?" one participant builder asked.

Mr. Samra stressed that the National Green Building Standard (NGBS) has already been approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and adopted as an appendix by the International Code Council as ICC 700.

The panel agreed that the sets of standards are not in opposition.

"Energy Star is a good guideline and will earn at least a 'bronze rating' for a house under the NGBS," Mr. Samra commented. He also pointed out that NGBS certification is less expensive to earn than LEED.

The panel also discussed the tax benefits of green building, and the relatively short time it takes homeowners to earn back the costs through energy savings.

For more information, visit www.NAHBGreen.com.

New I-9 form starts in April

The new federal I-9 form, which employers must use to verify employment eligibility status, has been delayed again. The new regulations will narrow the list of acceptable identity documents and specifically prohibit an employer from accepting expired documents as forms of identification.

The revised I-9 was originally to take effect on February 3rd, but the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced it was delaying implementation of these I-9 changes for an additional 60 days, until April 3rd, to allow more time for review and comment.

The current version of the I-9 Form should continue to be used until April 3rd.

In addition, the new E-Verify obligations for federal contractors have been delayed yet again. On January 30th, USCIS announced that federal contracts awarded after May 21st will include a clause requiring contractors to use E-Verify for all new hires and all existing employees performing work on the contract.

Please contact your attorney with questions about these or any other legal issues.



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Learning about NGBS, LEED and Energy Star!

Professionals from all sectors of the shelter industry gathered at Bryant University on February 26th for "Going Green: Residential Building in Rhode Island." (Story on previous page.) Panelists included, from left, Jonathan Dember of the Conservation Services Group, Kenneth Bouvier of South County Post & Beam Inc., and Joseph Samra, CGP, of MEJJ Development. The latter two belong to the Rhode Island Builders Association.

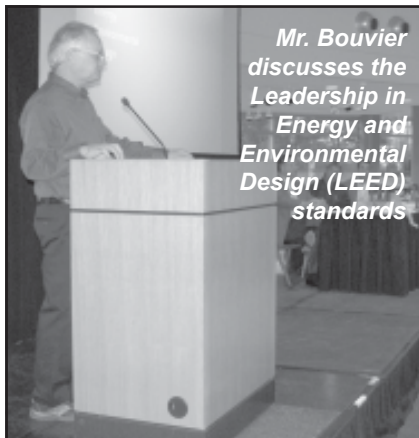


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Seminar moderator Daniel J. Paquette, CGP, of Woodmeister Master Builders and chairman of RIBA's Green Building Committee, introduces the panelists and the subject. He stressed the energy-saving impact of "green building."

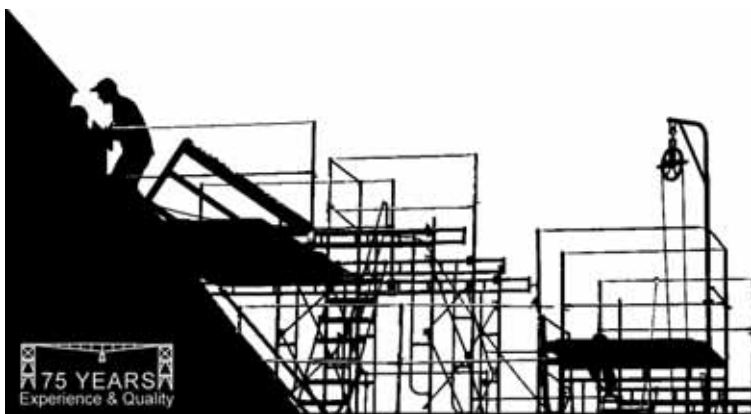
Mr. Samra explains the National Green Building Standard: ICC 700



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Eighty-plus attendees listen to Mr. Samra.



Mr. Bouvier discusses the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards



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