

BUILD / BUILDER PROFILE

ZEROENERGY DESIGN

» BEN IKENSON

Boston-based ZeroEnergy Design is a professional services firm that provides custom home and energy design services to residential construction. The firm's designs consistently yield healthy, Green, and zero-energy homes. Although the firm builds across the country, many projects, according to Stephanie Horowitz, are "within a two-hour radius, from beach-front vacation homes on Cape Cod to full-time residences and affordable housing in the suburbs of Boston."

As managing director of ZeroEnergy Design, Horowitz oversees the company's home design process, helping usher Green ideas into Green realities. It's a meticulous process thanks to the firm's multidisciplinary approach.


"Most residential design firms only employ architects," she says. "Our integration of architectural design, engineering and finance yields the strongest combined skill set for a firm in the residential design market to date. These talents allow us to holistically design attractive and energy-efficient homes."

Technology certainly helps too. A common digital platform between the design and

engineering professionals allows the company to test its designs for energy performance throughout the design process.

"The energy model allows us to test the energy implications of alternative construction methods such as sealed crawlspaces and unvented attics."

Throughout the process, the client gets to make informed financial decisions on building systems and components such as windows, insulation, heating/cooling equipment and even renewable technologies. "There is a plethora of companies that purport energy-saving and Green products for a cost premium," says Horowitz. "Our financial analysts examine costs vs. benefits to empower our clients' decisions."

Horowitz is hoping to set a precedence for a marketplace that she believes has plenty of room for improvement... and help the planet. "I'm motivated by the challenge of housing, as well as a concern for the current and future state of the world," she says. "It's an underserved market in much need of design and engineering professionals. There are approximately 1.5 million houses built each year in the United States yet only 1 percent of these are designed by architects—and even fewer involve an engineer in the design process. Not surprisingly, approximately 20 percent of total U.S. energy use is consumed by the residential sector." 



"THE ENERGY MODEL ALLOWS US TO TEST THE ENERGY IMPLICATIONS OF ALTERNATIVE CONSTRUCTION METHODS SUCH AS SEALED CRAWLSPACES AND UNVENTED ATTICS." Stephanie Horowitz Managing Director



This home was designed and built by Horowitz and other ZeroEnergy Design partners while students on the Cornell campus, then built on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., where it placed second in the Solar Decathlon.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ZEROENERGY DESIGN

PREPARE FOR FUTURE SUCCESS



The real estate industry is facing a challenging time, particularly in comparison to the record-breaking pace of recent years. Fortunately, this industry is cyclical and inevitably the market will improve. Many are facing a difficult test, but those who understand and plan for these downturns in the market are prepared to take action once the upswing begins.

Since 1970, Weyerhaeuser Realty Investors (WRI) has been a reliable, experienced capital provider to hundreds of builders. They understand the turbulent nature of this industry because they have lived through it time and time again. WRI has built a legacy of providing builders not only with equity capital, but with the knowledgeable advice that can only come with decades of successful deals.

Builders who choose WRI find an ally with whom they can make informed decisions that will pay off in both the short and long term. And when the time is right, they have a source of equity capital from a provider that has a 37-year legacy of trust, integrity and the understanding of what it takes to be a builder in today's changing climate.

WRI is extremely real estate savvy and knowledgeable. They are not just money people. They understand the real estate business.

John Terando, President Southern California Division, Griffin Industries, Inc.

WRI prides itself on its reputation and the relationships it cultivates with builders. Its business success relies on developing and maintaining these strong, long-term relationships with our builder clients.

When the time is right to pursue a source for capital, look beyond the money. Look for a steadfast company that understands real estate and will provide a knowledgeable perspective, proven advice and tested industry experience, in addition to reliable capital. Look to WRI.

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