

THE PARLIMENT PAGES

July 2021

Housing News

“The state of America’s housing stock is dire, with a chronic shortage of affordable and available homes needed to support the nations population.” This according to a report released by The National Association of Realtors, (NAR) authored by The Rosen Consulting Group. The report continues to say a severe lack of new construction and prolonged under investments have led to this acute shortage. America’s housing inventory growth has slowed significantly across all parts of the country, since the turn of century, particular in the past ten years, leading to a shortfall “underbuilding gap” of 5.5 to 6.8 million housing units since 2001. Underinvestment in the category has led to high cost of living, limited household formation, and an aging housing stock that places an undue burden on lower-income households. The report says, “The scale of underbuilding and the existing demand-supply gap is enormous and will require a major national commitment to build more housing of all types.” While the solution offered in the report may be implemented at the local or national scale, the author warns that a permanent solution will require immediate action at all levels of government. This includes expanding access to construction resources, creating incentives, to new development, and recognizing the importance of housing as infrastructure. NAR president Charlie Oppler notes adequate increases in housing construction this decade would add an estimated 2.8 million American jobs and \$50 billion in tax revenue. “Additional public funding and policy incentives for construction will very clearly provide huge benefits to our nation’s economy, and our work to close this gap will be particularly impactful for lower-income household of color, and millennials.” As far as housing starts as reported by Wells Fargo, there were 1,292 million starts in 2019 compared to 1,396 million in 2020. Projections for 2021 are at 1.600 million and 1.625 million in 2022. As perspective, in 2008 there were 2,200 million, much more than we needed. Looks to me there is no housing bubble about to burst anytime soon. We still have a whole lot more demand than supply.

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Kindness a daily habit

I came across this article from Harvey Mackay. He is the author of two New York Times #1 best sellers. Below are some of his thoughts about kindness with some my thoughts thrown in on the topic.

Think kind thoughts. Kind words and kind actions start with kind thoughts. In a hyper-competitive world, we might be tempted to take a dramatically different approach. But that tactic doesn't produce any winners.

Mean people are not happier or necessarily more successful. Spend a little time on Twitter or Facebook. The comments are too frequently cruel or so extreme, and they breed even more ugliness. That's the definition of "anti-social media."

Pastor and author C. Neil Strait said: "Kindness is more than deeds. It is an attitude, an expression, a look, a touch. It is anything that lifts another person."

Be kind to yourself. You will find being nice to others easier if you build your self-respect with positive thoughts about your personality and achievements. When you are good to yourself, you are best to others.

Treat everyone with respect. Do not worry about who is on top. Treat everyone the way you want to be treated, regardless of their position or job title. No one is too big to be kind and courteous to others. Everyone has a skill set and we must respect them for theirs.

Say no when necessary. You cannot do everything. Say no but be polite and positive. It is kinder to say no to something when you cannot devote adequate time or attention than to do a half-hearted job.

Plant seeds of kindness. Do something nice every day. Kindness pays most when you don't do it for payback, as Dr. Kevin Elko has taught me, I am not looking to be blest. I am looking to give blessing to someone else.

Take the high road. Trust me, it is the road less traveled. It is a big wide highway with no traffic jams. And no road rage. The funny thing about kindness is the more it is used the more you have of it.

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Observations from Chuck

- 1) Meet with your employees regularly- That does not mean meet to meet, it means have regular meetings that are informative and useful to you and your employees. Be sure to speak to your trusted employees one on one to be sure you are getting your message across and them how they are doing as a leader.
- 2) Math Skills – I am not a “highly” educated person. I spent 12 years in Catholic School and then 1-1/2 years at St. Leo College in Dade city, FL. The best 1-1/2 years of my life. I played basketball and golf for St. Leo. I also had a great time drinking and having a good time. The one skill set I learned and still use daily, is simple math skills. Multiply, divide, add and subtract are all you need. I have never used Algebra, Geometry or Calculus in my adult life.
- 3) Hope is not a strategy. You must have written goals and review them regularly. Your goals should be a real stretch to accomplish, however they should also be attainable.
- 4) Team Effort – I think we have written this before, but it begs to be repeated. Tell your employees “you work with me, not for me”. It leaves the impression that you work together as a team. Remember no one person can do everything. It is always a team effort. There is no I in team, as one of my priest friends taught me years ago.

Final Comments

Well, It has been a great ride, 49 years in the Two-Step wholesale building material game. I started at Zambetti Steel Products on June 3rd,1972 in a warehouse position. That was before we had forklifts, everything was hand loaded and unloaded, including nails, rebar, and pipe. When the company moved in 1974 to a new location, I was promoted to an Inside Sales position. I really loved the job and talking to the customers, I did very well and was promoted again 4 years later to Vice-President of Sales and Operations. In 2001, Zambetti sold to a new owner, who I guess did not think my 29 years of building material knowledge was valuable to maintain my employment, he fired me without cause, just seven weeks into my one year non-compete contract. My wife Pat was a nurse at the time, and we had 4 kids in private school, and I did not have job. I honored that one year, non-compete occupying my time at an auto repair company I bought. I happened to have lunch with Jim Bleech the day I was fired, and he asked me what I was going

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to do. He had young daughter at the time, and he wanted to be home more. I knew one day I would like to get back in the building material game. We both had skill sets that complimented each other so we became business partners. On September 3rd, 2002, we started Parliment Building Products. We started with 6 employees, three of us are still here, Scott Shee, Sigrun Todd, and me of course. We worked many long days in the beginning, we grew into a great team and family. As many of you know, Jim Bleech retired about 10 years ago, and I took over sole ownership of Parliment. We have remained good friends throughout the years. Early last year, having a great time at a Ameristeel/Gerdau golf tournament with Jim Kerkvliet and Marcelo Canosa, they asked me about my future plans. Of course, I loved my job and what I was doing however, I had no succession plan. They said they were looking to move to Florida and would be interested in buying Parliment if I ever changed my mind. After having the recent loss of my brother Gary, mentor Bob Shircliff, best friend Dave Williams, and many other dear friends I realized I needed to rethink about not only my future but the future of the 30 plus loyal employees' that I employed. I met with Jim Kerkvliet and his wife Pam for lunch and talked about my future and continuing the legacy of Parliment Building Products. At the time Pat and I had our 4 kids and 8 grandkids. We now have 11 grandkids from 11 years old to 1 year old. I figured with my wife's help she could find me something to do. Going to games and school events for my grandkids was just what I wanted to do, I told you before, I am a dinosaur and so it became clear it was time for me to make up mind and secure my succession plan. As fate would have it a few months later Jim Bleech stops in to catch up. He had brought his sailboat in for safety concerns during the hurricane season. I tell him about working on a succession plan and about running into Jim and Marcelo. He said he would love to help me. Jim Bleech has many talents, and one being a merger\acquisition advisor. I must admit I would not have been able to get through it without Jim's sound advice and counsel. Parliment was sold to Jim Kerkvliet and Marcelo Canosa on 12/31/2020. I have been at Parliment for the last 7 months helping Jim and Marcelo and the employees through this transition. I wanted to tell each and everyone of you that gets this newsletter, thank you for your friendships and loyalty to Parliment Building Products. I have made many lifelong friends in the industry and for that I am eternally grateful. If you would like to stay in touch, please call me on my cell 904-545-1932 or email chuckparliment@gmail.com. As many of you know, I am not in favor of too much typing, so I would prefer a call. One of my many jokes is, "I like to hear your voice and I love the sound of mine." Look forward to hearing from you. Don't worry, I will still be calling you on your birthday and other significant dates. I LOVE YOU ALL!!!

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