



## Building Success 101

*Q: What's is the meaning of all of those letters after my contractor's name, and how important are those acronyms in selecting a builder for my project*

A: Increasingly, builders are earning and promoting various professional designations that signify their commitment to solid business practices and construction methods. Gaining such certification is arduous but worthwhile, and helps ensure that your builder is well versed in all aspects of the job. Even so, conduct some research on the letters that follow a contractor's name and ask questions about what they mean and how they are earned to gain a solid understanding

## Working Through the Red Tape

Most people will never venture to the local building department; much less submit themselves (and their blueprints) to the bureaucratic process of obtaining a building permit, scheduling periodic inspections, and complying with building codes and other regulatory red tape for construction.

That, of course, is the home builder's job ... and one that construction professionals take pride in making efficient and hassle-free for their clients. To be sure, working through the red tape takes experience, savvy, and patience. Those who know the drill are able to navigate the approvals and inspection process with confidence.

Consider the potential mine field of regulatory issues that most builders must map out and manage to make sure their projects are in full compliance and achieve an acceptable level of health and safety for their clients.

**Plan Check.** Before a set of blueprints or house plans can be used to build a house, the building department must review them to make sure the drawings comply with applicable building codes. The plan checker looks at structural design and loads, plumbing, heating, and electrical layouts and specifications, and other details in the plans; if everything is in order, the drawings are approved for construction.

Prior to plan check, an experienced and professional builder will review the drawings and make any adjustments to speed the plan check process. The builder may contact subcontractors or building materials suppliers for their input before submitting the plans. Such refinements and attention to detail help mitigate or avoid "red-lining," a return of the plans unapproved and marked by the plan checker (in red pen) for necessary changes ... thus delaying the building process.

**Permitting.** A building permit -- a required document in most municipalities for almost any construction project -- is the document that a building inspector will review and refer to when he or she visits the building site as the project progresses toward completion. The building department will only issue a permit for an approved set of blueprints or plans, and the inspector will rely on the permit and plans on the job site to compare what's drawn (and approved) to what's actually being built. It is imperative, then, to submit a complete and comprehensive set of plans for approval and permitting ... and then follow those plans to the letter to avoid confusion, questions, and potentially costly compliance issues that can stop the job cold until they are resolved.

of their value.

Richard Dickson has completed the coursework and approval process to obtain the designation of CGR, Certified Graduate Remodelor. Presently he is working toward his CGB, Certified Graduate Builder, designation. These are programs developed by the National Association of Home Builders for builders like Richard to continue their professional education so that they can better serve their clients.

**Inspections.** Inspections at key points of a project's construction are necessary to make sure the approved plans are being built as drawn. The professional builder has a talent for managing his own work crews as well as the many subcontractors and suppliers also hired to do the work and keep the project on schedule. A tight schedule, in turn, reliably and accurately pinpoints those key milestones. This allows a timely call to the inspector, with plenty of time to schedule his or her visit and, once on site, review the job progress and approve it to continue.

**Other red tape.** Increasingly, builders are required to submit reports regarding a project's environmental impact, energy use, zoning or land-use variances, and other regulatory compliance issues. Professional builders make it their business to stay current on these matters and shepherd their clients and their projects through the red tape to make sure their dream home becomes a reality.

Processing the municipal and state permits and approvals is just another area in which we at Dickson Development Corporation excel. Attention to details for house plans and site plan preparation and knowledge of the building codes and municipal ordinances so that our applications are correct and can be approved as soon as possible is required. The work of obtaining approvals and permits is another one of the services DDC offers our clients.

Warm regards,

*Richard*

Richard Dickson  
**Dickson Development Corporation**  
666 Plainsboro Road, Suite 1300  
Plainsboro, NJ 08536  
**(609) 799 0220 - phone**



[info@dicksondevelopment.com](mailto:info@dicksondevelopment.com)  
[www.dicksondevelopment.com](http://www.dicksondevelopment.com)

c. 2006 All rights reserved.

[Click here to subscribe](#) to this newsletter.  
[Click here to unsubscribe](#) from this newsletter.

