

# THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

Greater Houston Edition

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## Imperial Builders, LLC: Exemplary Workmanship, Finish Details and Collaboration

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As If They Were His Own

Dialogue with a Designer  
Stephanie Alonzo with SJS Group

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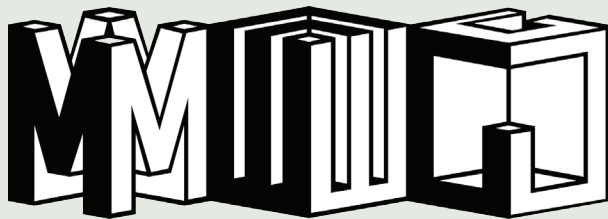


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# THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

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# NAHB Identifies Top Features and Design Trends Across Generations for 2022

Home buyer preferences have continued to reverse trends in home building as builders work to respond to new interests in the wake of COVID-19. Increased desire for bigger homes, suburban locations and more outdoor amenities are driving new home design, resulting in a rise in the average size of a new home to 2,524 square feet, and the percentage of new homes with 4+ bedrooms and 3+ full bathrooms to 46% and 34%, respectively.

These interests vary across generations and are primarily driven by millennials and Gen Xers—36% and 34%, respectively, of whom noted their housing preferences have changed because of the pandemic. In addition to a desire for more space and more bedrooms, millennials and Gen Xers are also looking for homes with modern or contemporary exteriors that are designed for multiple generations. Other changes include an interest in exercise rooms and home offices, as well as designated bike lanes in their communities.

“With this data, you immediately see that younger buyers have been impacted by the pandemic more than older generations,” said National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Assistant Vice President of Survey Research Rose Quint at a press conference held during the NAHB International Builders’ Show in Orlando.

Only 18% of baby boomers, on the other hand, noted a change in their preferences. Baby boomers are interested in smaller homes on smaller lots, preferably in the suburbs. They also have an eye toward energy efficiency; top features unique to this generation include energy-efficient lighting, and ENERGY STAR appliances and whole home certification.

Quint attributed the greater interest in energy-efficient features to prior homeownership. “Boomers have likely owned a home before and understand the costs of heating

and cooling a home,” she noted.

Certain home features do resonate with all generations, however. The top five are:

- Laundry rooms
- Exterior lighting
- Ceiling fans
- Patios
- Walk-in pantries

The percentage of single-family homes with patios has risen to 63% as more emphasis has been placed in outdoor

living in recent years. Home buyers across generations have also noted interest in exterior living, with millennials indicating a specific interest in front porches as well.

“I love the fact that styles are cyclical, and that front porches are becoming popular again,” shared Allison Paul, principal at Lessard Design. “People want to be outdoors.”

Paul highlighted numerous examples of popular

features and the variety of ways builders can integrate these features into their homes. Whether it’s an open kitchen with a kitchen island as a central focus, an elaborate home office that doubles as a hobby space, or simply a corner niche for basic exercise equipment to create a makeshift home gym, there are lots of creative ways to enhance homes to meet buyers’ growing preferences.

“I think we can create communities that have a really good mix of larger single-family homes, smaller single-family homes and detached living at a variety of price points,” Paul suggested to meet these varying interests. “It creates a mixed density with the community amenities they’re looking for, like walking trails.”

Additional information on home buyer trends can be found in NAHB’s *What Home Buyers Really Want*.





# Imperial Builders, LLC: Exemplary Workmanship, Finish Details and Collaboration

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Each Imperial Builders, LLC, custom home is a unique collaboration to represent the homeowner’s vision for a desired home, according to founder Roger Stienke.

Roger’s planning process includes the homeowner, the trades, the suppliers, the architect and designers, and, of course, the builder -- each contributing to the creation of a custom home that includes exceptional workmanship and finish details.

Roger Stienke stated, “The construction business is a demanding industry. It is important to build a trusting

relationship with the homeowner, one that the homeowner knows that you are doing your best.” He prides himself on his passion for a “hands-on” approach with his projects

and on his ability to have worked with exceptional clients throughout his career.

Together, Roger and his clients work to create the design that

*Our home is a serene place where we are able to spend time with one another and relax. We are grateful to Roger for helping us bring our vision to life.*

– Heather & Wade Clark



reflects the homeowner’s vision for their home. Because most of the projects for Imperial Homes, LLC, are word-of-mouth referrals, making certain all customers are fully satisfied with their homes is essential to his reputation and



to his company's success, he added.

All houses that are built by Imperial Builders, LLC, are original designs by architects or based on house plans that the client wishes to replicate. If the client does not currently have an architect or plans, Roger contacts well-qualified architects. He noted that engineering is a key component of the building process, and that a benefit to working with a familiar architect is that he as the builder understands the architect's style and how the architect engineers his/her houses.

Roger stated, "Two different individuals can look at the same set of plans and have two different opinions on how the house will look. It is important to discuss the builder's interpretation and to review the interpretation and expectations of the client to have a clear understanding of what the client desires in the finished product."

Roger limits his projects to two or three at a time so that he can be involved in every building detail. By utilizing his 30+ years of experience, his creativity and his dedication to building an honest rapport with each homeowner, Roger said his clients know that they will receive a prompt response to their questions and concerns. He pays attention to the customer's "wish lists" to make sure that their wants and needs are included in the home's design, he emphasized. Being present on the job site every day



enables him to have first-hand knowledge of the progress of the project.

The superb level of finish work in each Imperial Builders' home truly sets the company apart from the competition. Roger has assembled a solid team that shares his passion for building a new home that reflects his customer's dream and is crafted to stand the test of time. He commented, "Finding trades who do outstanding work is 90 percent of the major component for exceptional project results. I put great value in the work of my talented and dedicated trades."

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Roger utilizes subcontractors and trades who understand his high standards, and he has developed strong relationships of loyalty and respect with them because of the many projects that they have worked on together throughout the years.

Although primarily a custom home builder, Roger's

remodeling projects focus on large, high-end remodeling jobs. He has also been involved in investment building projects on a speculative basis and commercial building projects, although his preference is to build a new construction home for a family.

His typical custom home is 4,500 to 7,000 sq. ft., ranging from \$1 to 4 million in price. He primarily focuses his work in the City of Spring Valley and the other Memorial Villages. During his career, he has been involved in the building of 45 to 50 homes for families in the Spring Valley/Memorial area. Most homes are Traditional, Contemporary, Light Contemporary and Country French styles.







Currently, a popular feature for Imperial Builders, LLC, homes' is an open floor plan, with the kitchen as the social center of the home. Although many of his clients prefer large glass windows to view the outdoors and sunshine, the houses are built to be more energy efficient to compensate for the large, glassed areas.

As for current concerns in the building industry, he mentioned the supply and demand issues for materials during the recent pandemic time. For example, wait times and price increases for doors, window, siding,

roofing, lumber, paint and appliances have increased. He commented that hopefully by the end of this year, the supply concerns will be less of an issue during the construction process.

Roger Stienke is a graduate of Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State in San Marcos) with a business degree in management. He began his career as a home builder in the late 1970s, initially working for production builders and evolving into the high-end custom market during the 1980s. Utilizing his past years of building experience, he launched his own custom home building company, Imperial Builders, LLC, in the late 1990s.

When asked, "What is your advice to your younger self?" Roger said, "I would explain that I always believe that there will be a need for the "hands-on" builder who is honest, works for a fair fee and personalizes each home to the customer." He would also say, "Never lose your passion for building, to strive to always help your customers achieve the home of their dreams and to always enjoy seeing a set of plans become a reality."

*For more information about  
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# McHugh Constructs Homes As If They Were His Own

**By Kathy Bowen Stolz**

According to luxury homebuilder Paul McHugh, “Building a custom home is an exciting journey for most homebuyers because it’s a chance to put their personal stamp on the home of their dreams.

“At McHugh Homes we take pride in building beautiful, luxurious and well-appointed homes in the Memorial and Spring Branch areas of Houston,” he continued. “Every home we build is constructed as carefully as if it were our own. After all, you may live there, but our name is on it!”

For this self-described “super busy” builder, site locations are very important because they must be close (20 minutes or less) to other jobs to maximize his efficiency. Paul McHugh likes to be involved with all of his clients and handles the day-to-day communication that they expect, he said.

Since launching his company in 2011, Paul has focused

on making his custom homes as affordable as possible. He offers design services, with about 80 percent of every home done in-house, which allows a home to be built at a lower price and more quickly. He contracts for any services, such as engineering, that he needs.

McHugh closes on about five new construction projects a year, with four to six in the pipeline at any given time. McHugh Homes are typically in the \$1.4- to \$2.3-million range with 4,200 to 5,600 sq. ft. of living space. However, some of his projects are larger; he mentioned one home that he built with an eight-car garage (with lifts) for a “car guy.” Physicians, attorneys and business owners and executives are often the clients

This graduate of Sam Houston State University also builds speculative houses. “I love specs! I love the process where I can be fully creative!” He prefers to have three or four spec houses available at any given time because many



homebuyers don't have the time to go through the custom home process. He uses spec houses to fill in the gaps in his construction calendar because

McHugh said, "Schools are a driver for many homebuyers." Consequently, he lists on his company website, [www.mchughhomes.com](http://www.mchughhomes.com), the elementary, middle school and high schools that each of his homes will feed into. He noted that Katy attracts families with younger parents, while Spring Valley attracts a little older parent who also has young

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# New Builder Products Emerge From The Kitchen And Bath Industry Show

By Linda Jennings

This year's KBIS 2022 show was proof that the building and remodeling industry has never been more exciting! There were so many brands exhibiting new products showcasing the latest technology, finishes, colors, materials and personalization options that today's

consumers want to incorporate in their homes. We're sure these will top the list of builder amenities in the year ahead! Here are just a few of the standouts that caught our attention.



Acquabella Opal Quiz

## GEOMETRIC STYLE

The Opal Quiz bathtub by Acquabella is immediately eye-catching with its distinctive geometric textured finish. The award-winning Quiz transforms the freestanding bath into a chic statement piece that infuses the whole bathroom with a heightened sense of luxury and drama. Acquabella has made Quiz available for the first time on their line of Akron tubs, which are crafted from a signature compound of polyurethane and mineral fillers to achieve a solid finish that is impressively durable. Offered in a choice of five colors, the Opal Quiz tub is generously sized for a restorative soaking experience, measuring 71" x 31 ½" x 21 ½". Its curved silhouette blends classic lines and a modern vibe to create a truly remarkable design.



Ruvati Workstation Sink

## GO FOR THE GOLD

Ruvati blends two of today's hottest design trends with the new Monaco series of their workstation sinks. The chic apron-front design is a staple of modern farmhouse style, while the new Brass Tone Matte Gold finish is created with an innovative nano-PVD technology that creates an extremely durable surface that will never wear out or peel off. The matte texture enhances the beauty of the finish and effectively resists fingerprints and stains. The workstation sink continues its popularity with impressive functionality and built-in ledges that accommodate the included solid-wood cutting board and matching color roll up drying rack. Ruvati uses premium T-304 grade stainless steel to construct each sink and adds heavy-duty soundproof coating and rubber padding to minimize noise and condensation. Ruvati sinks are built to last a lifetime with enduring good looks and hassle-free performance.



## CUSTOM CABINETS MADE IN AMERICA

We spotted these frameless cabinets at Lenova's KBIS exhibit and immediately fell in love. The quality and detailing are evident at first glance. All are made to order in the USA using the highest quality materials. Standard drawer boxes are crafted from dovetailed natural maple hardwood and

### Lenova Cabinetry

paired with soft-close hinges. With 32 years of cabinetry experience, Lenova proudly offers custom and semi-custom products. Customers can choose from hundreds of options in materials, colors, designs, finishes and sizes. Lenova backs their residential cabinetry with a Limited Lifetime Warranty for years of worry-free enjoyment.



### Forza Italian 48" Range

#### RADICAL ITALIAN DESIGN

Forza generated a buzz at KBIS with the unveiling of this impossible-to-miss gas range. Shown here in a cheerful yellow, this Forza model is the world's first 48-inch single cavity oven. Compared to traditional 30-inch ovens, this professional-quality range has the capacity and performance to more than meet the demands of today's busiest home chefs. The range is outfitted with eight high-powered burners and equipped with the brand's proprietary MassimoBlu™ Hyper Double Broiler, their MaxRotisserie accessory and the Infinito™ Grate System. In addition to improving the cooking experience, the Forza 48" Professional Gas Range brings style to the kitchen with seven beautiful color options, including shades of blue, red and orange as well as white, black and stainless steel.

For more information visit:

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# Dialogue with a Designer

## Stephanie Alonzo with SJS Group

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*This month BATHS OF AMERICA speaks Stephanie Alonzo; Interior Designer with the SJS Group. Stephanie was born in Venezuela and raised in Florida. She was surrounded by art and inspired by her family ever since childhood. Her grandfather was a wonderful painter/artist and her aunt was a profound architect. In 2019 Stephanie started a staging company and pretty much enjoyed every aspect of it, from decorating to seeing beautiful homes get sold in a timely manner. In 2020, She started working with the SJS Group, as their interior designer, and considers it to be quite an honor. The SJS Group is currently working on several projects in the River Oaks and West University areas and Stephanie is looking forward to making these*

*homes extraordinary.*

***BATHS OF AMERICA: What motivated you to go into the interior design field?***

***Stephanie Alonzo:*** Ever since I was a little kid, I always had an eye for art and design. Coming from an artistic background, I was always aware of what looked good or not so good. Your surroundings are part of you. They affect how you feel. Having a place where the design coordinates with you, has a positive impact on your daily life. It was important to me that my environment made sense. I knew that interiors were a big part of me and that was something I wanted to pursue as my career.

***BATHS OF AMERICA: How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?***

***Stephanie Alonzo:*** Design is always changing but it also comes back around. I don't believe in right or wrong. I believe in mixing and creating a unique form of expression/design.

***BATHS OF AMERICA: How can an experienced interior designer help a custom home builder or a remodeling contractor with their building or remodeling projects?***



**Stephanie Alonzo:** Having an interior designer will guide builders or contractors through the process, designers will coordinate the right selections for each project, and will allow builders to focus on creating more possibilities for their business. Finally, organization is the key. It's important that everyone have their own duty in the field in which will reduce mistakes during the process.

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *What sets you apart from other designers?*

**Stephanie Alonzo:** Every designer is unique. We all have different ideas and inspirations. My designs relate to emotions, with how I/you feel in the space and how the environment makes you feel. My goal is to always create a beautiful space in which my clients can feel comfortable, relax, and connected.



**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *What has been your most challenging project and why?*

**Stephanie Alonzo:** Every project has its challenges. So far, I do not have one where I felt overwhelmed. But overall challenges come in waves. Missing this, adding that it is part of the exciting journey.

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**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *What is your favorite design style?*

**Stephanie Alonzo:** Transitional/Contemporary Style.

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *What makes SJS Group different from other builders?*

**Stephanie Alonzo:** What makes the SJS Group unique is the mindset to bring astonishing, modernistic designs and finishes to each home that they build. We often see builders highlight only the most common areas in homes such as kitchen, living and master. The SJS Group values every detail while incorporating the latest home innovations. The floor plans are designed with functionality and maximization of space. The finishes are selected with personalization for each room. It creates spaces and comfort in homes that our clients want. Simply put, SJS is passionate about making exceptional homes and developments.

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**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *How do you begin the materials selection process when working with builders' and remodelers' clients?*

**Stephanie Alonzo:** I usually start by brainstorming the house style (contemporary, traditional, modern, etc.) then I asked myself what I can do to make this home one of a kind. After that, the decision making starts with cabinet selections, color schemes, bathrooms designs, plumbing selections, tiles, stones, hardware, bath accessories and finally light fixtures.

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *Speaking about staying current, how do you keep yourself up to date with all the design trends happening in the industry today?*

**Stephanie Alonzo:** I find it important to attend trade shows, follow designers all over the world as well as doing

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**Website: [sjsgroup1.com](http://sjsgroup1.com)**







Like all builders in the Memorial and Spring Valley areas, he stated that finding lots has become more difficult. He prefers to buy lots off-market.



*To contact McHugh Homes,  
call 713-319-7164  
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children, all based on who “can afford the price of entry.”

Because he spent years working in marketing for three large production homebuilding companies and for an annuity company, Paul said “all things are marketing,” including selling himself and selling the end product of a house. He said it’s important to have a clear, consistent message with the same colors and same logo for branding over time. He is active on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, and he uses sponsorship of school events and sports teams to reach potential clients in areas where he is building. He also tries to go beyond the warranties to provide outstanding customer service after closing the sale because referrals “are still the strongest path to future business in the custom home market.” But “the best way to market is to build houses. The more you build, the more calls you get.”

He will build on a client’s lot or will procure a lot if possible, using his real estate license when appropriate.

# DIRECTORY OF SUPPLIERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

As a service to area building professionals, The Metropolitan Builder presents this listing of local suppliers and service providers in which are working with some of the most outstanding builders in the Greater Houston area. They have all been referred and/or vetted. Shouldn't they be working for you?

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