



Folino Homes: Green Savings

by Tess Wittler

Marco Folino spent his youth watching his father's construction company, and when he was old enough, he spent eight years working side-by-side with his dad – learning the intricacies of the industry. Two years ago he decided to form his Berks County building business, Folino Homes.

What makes Folino's vision so interesting is his approach. In the last year, he has moved into the green building niche by earning his National Association of Home Builders Certified Green Building Professional designation and now builds Energy Star and NAHB Green Building certified homes. But that alone isn't what makes his vision noteworthy. It is the affordable price range in which he's able to accomplish this.

"Most Energy Star and NAHB Green Building certified homes in the area are priced at \$300,000 or more," said Folino. "I recently finished a home that is certified gold and priced at \$266,900."

What makes it even more exciting is the savings the buyers of his homes should see. "Homebuyers should save around \$100 per month in operational costs with these homes."

Another interesting facet of Folino's business is his "quick delivery homes." He builds the shell of a spec home and keeps the interior bare, allowing the future homeowner to make personalized selections. "Oftentimes, customers only have a month or two to move out of their existing home. By choosing one of our quick delivery homes, they can still build the home the way they want it, yet benefit from the quick turn-around we can provide."

Folino currently has two developments under construction with a third, Greenwich Village, in the planning phase.

"If approved as planned, this development will be a village concept with over 130 units where townhomes and single-family homes are intertwined." Folino's vision also



Folino Homes constructs NAHB Green Building certified homes in the affordable price range. A recently finished gold-certified home was priced at \$266,900.

includes a town square that is surrounded by first-floor commercial properties with residences above.

The green niche is just one of two plans Folino has underway for 2009. The other includes one of his team members, Andrea Mortimer, who will complete her certificate in interior design this summer.

Not only will Mortimer assist customers through the selection process – picking flooring, cabinets and fixtures – to make their home their own, but she will also consult with customers to help them with their other interior design needs – like furniture placement, window treatments and wall coverings.

"It's about offering customers what they want. And when the new home market picks up again, we'll be positioned to provide the personalized touches to make their house a home," explained Folino. ▲

Business quick facts: Folino Homes

- **Years in Business:** 2 years
- **Counties of operation:** Berks, Schuylkill, Lehigh counties
- **Local association:** HBA of Berks County
- **Association involvement:** Education committee
- **Awards won:** 2008 Parade of Homes Division I – Best of Show Runner-Up; Division III – Best Interior, Best Kitchen & Best of Show
- **Web site:** www.FolinoHomes.com



Marco Folino