

HABITAT STUDIO & WORKSHOP LTD.

TAKING PROJECTS FROM
CONCEPTION TO COMPLETION

by Dorothy V. Malcolm

NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH HABITAT FOR Humanity (another worthwhile building project they respect), this Habitat is poles apart in that they don't use blueprints—or for that matter, go by anybody's books. This company is the embodiment of freshness and originality.

According to Habitat's vice president Trevor Hoover, who underscores the company's catchphrase, "We never build the same house twice," this construction management firm devises and builds superb, even dramatic, residences that are vastly energy efficient.

"Quality is always at the forefront," Hoover says. "Quality is never compromised— from design to construction to energy efficiency." What sets Habitat apart from other firms is that they are resolutely client-centered. So customer-oriented is this company that it won't create cookie-cutter plans for homes, but rather it gleans all the intricacies of a client's lifestyle and habits, hobbies, possessions, and preferences before any ideas are drafted. Only then will they design and build around that.

The Habitat Studio team conjures some of the most inspiring and outstand-



Above: Trevor Hoover, vice president.
Right: A new home in central Edmonton.



DESIGNERS &
BUILDERS

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Above: The completed Riverdale Net Zero project, a semi-detached duplex.

ing strategies for their ultra-modern homes and use designs that brush aside mainline trends with no apprehensions of cliché. Yet, with Habitat's more traditional designs, many of which hail from the arts and crafts era earlier in the last century, the designers stay within the style's organic and linear contours while generating a crispness that says right here and right now. These houses are as green as they can get because conservation is a benchmark of the company.

Sixteen years ago, Bruce Watt, Vince Campbell, and Peter Amerongen, the "three amigos" as they call themselves, pooled their collective talents and experience and launched Habitat Studio & Workshop. They agree that good design requires beauty and functionality, but should be green too. Senior partner Amerongen is realizing his vision of total energy efficiency with enthusiasm and resourcefulness.

"Peter's passion in life has been to design and engineer an eco-friendly residence and he's accomplished that with Riverdale," Hoover says. Amerongen and Habitat has been an integral part of the Riverdale team, a net zero energy housing estate that is all but completed in

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the Edmonton area. These remarkable homes use “no commercial product energy, no natural gas, no furnace,” Hoover says, “and you know how cold our winters are here in Alberta.” He further explains the complex mechanical system. “It will produce more electricity in summer than it needs, and over the course of a single year, it will use no product energy whatsoever.” None.

The Riverdale team utilizes some of the following energy-conserving strategies:

- Sixteen-inch walls;
- Quad-glazed windows;
- Photovoltaic panels (similar to solar panels);
- Thirty-two inches of attic insulation;
- No natural gas or furnace/heating equipment;
- Exceeds LEED levels of energy efficiency;

“ We never build the same house twice. ”

Trevor Hoover, Vice President

- Delivers well-designed, attractive architectural and functional interiors.

Another net-zero energy project, the new Millcreek Residences, will begin soon, and Amerongen will lead it. “The future looks bright,” he says, “especially with the housing and construction boom here in Alberta.”

Another feature that sets Habitat apart is their philanthropic and pro bono work

with The Mustard Seed, a non-profit organization. Hoover explains, “We flew as much equipment as possible and built a house in Honduras for a woman with five children living in a shack. You know, some of us are more fortunate than others. And with Habitat, we’ve all been blessed.”

Add integrity, talent, conservation, plus originality, and whoever hires Habitat to design or renovate their home will gain more than the sum of its parts. CBQ

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