

REAL ESTATE

EXECUTIVE

Chicagoland Edition

DEVELOPER PROFILE

A man with dark hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, stands in the foreground. Behind him is a three-story brick building with light-colored stone accents around the windows and corners. A black metal fence is visible in the lower right. The background shows trees with yellowing leaves, suggesting an autumn setting.

**City View Real
Estate Group, Inc.**

City View Real Estate Group, Inc.

A Combination of Function and Beauty

By Megan Brody

When Brad Schreiber, owner and founder of City View Real Estate Group, Inc., begins a project, he has a certain demographic in mind — a demographic he, his wife, two children and dog fit into. That is, couples who have started families but can't imagine abandoning urban dwelling. While many young families head to stake their roots in any number of suburban neighborhoods, there's no denying there is something to be said for city living.

"I have a pretty good idea what people like myself would like," he said.

Schreiber builds his homes as functional dwellings foremost, but manages to retain aesthetics and craftsmanship as top priorities as well. His homes are not only beautiful — they're livable.

"I kind of like building for people who are going through the same kind of growth process I am," he said. "I'm not really building for empty-nesters so much as people who are just to the

point now where their kids are getting into the school systems, and their needs have changed."

Schreiber employs such family friendly features as mud rooms, separate kids' bathrooms, a home theater, attached garages for extra security and convenient grocery hauling, and computer stations in the kitchen to monitor children's Internet activity. Other design features include pocket doors to section off the living and dining rooms for when parents need a break and built-in shelving and automatic light activation in all closets.

"The parents are going to want their own opportunity to use the house," Schreiber said, sitting in the sectioned off living room, while his children played just one room away.

His designs work well for people like Dr. Larry Wolin and his wife, Stacey, who moved into a City View home with their two children, 8 and 11, three months ago. Like many families,

An example of a functional and unique city outdoor living space.



the Wolins moved to the suburbs, settling in Northfield, but eventually made the decision to return to the city.

“We had been looking for about three months, and each house seemed to have a design or quality issue that was so glaring, we had no interest,” Stacey Wolin said. “Our broker finally told us that a builder he knew had decided to put his house on the market. Once we saw the house, there was no need to look any further.”

What stood out for the Wolins was the remarkable beauty of the finishes such as bamboo flooring, Macarai kitchen cabinets, the Tom Ash Burl cabinets in the penthouse, the staircase balusters, the Jerusalem stone and glass tile tub surround of the bathroom. Stacey Wolin raved about Schreiber’s choice of hardware and materials.

“We knew this builder had an aesthetic



Custom-built living room optimizes city corner lot site.

Master bathroom exemplifies unique tile work.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF RICHARD FOERTSCH; RICHARDFOERTSCH@SEGLOBAL.NET

similar to our own, and unlike other homes, we could visualize this space as our own,” she said.

Beside the impeccable craftsmanship, the design functions in real life, Stacey said.

“The desk and surrounding cabinetry in the kitchen is not for the children. It’s for the house manager — me! This area is the family pulse, and having it in the kitchen makes tremendous sense,” she said.

IT’S ALL IN THE DETAILS

It is clear Schreiber’s attention to detail is one reason his homes stand out. It’s a claim many builders make; however, the level Schreiber takes it to is nearly unprecedented.

Yehudah Cohen, an agent with Century 21 Sussex & Reilly, first brought potential buyers to see a City View project three years ago.

“It became very clear that he wasn’t hurried. It wasn’t something to get through and get done to get to the next project,” he said.

Cohen witnessed just how far Schreiber will go for perfection when he heard him on the phone with a subcontractor trying to get a different color nail to more closely match the wood of the deck.

“That’s something a buyer likes to hear,” Cohen said. “My clients and I were impressed with the attention to detail. He’s very methodical.”

Again, Schreiber’s colleagues tout his eye for design.

“He brought in a lot of classic elements,” Cohen said. “He’s able to picture what a lot of people who want to have a beautiful home would want. He’s thinking about what would be important to them in a home.”

Schreiber has actually altered a room’s design in order to change materials.

“People want something unique, something different. For instance, some tile you’d want to use that’s different. It’s bigger than regular tile. It’s different to work with, so you have to change something in the house so it can work well with that house. You change the house to work with the tile,” he said, referring to a beautiful herringbone tile foyer that took precision and flexibility to install. “With a house like this, everything has to be perfect. Perfect.”

Schreiber is not shy about sending materials back, reiterating how he was forced to return a railing that day because it wasn’t a precise match.

“I look around a room. When I go to any room, in anybody’s house, I go in there, and I see everything.”

In addition to creating aesthetic masterpieces, Schreiber doesn’t skimp on the nuts and bolts either.

“He’s always thinking about mechanical systems for hot water and heat. He’s always looking at what the current standard of state of the art would be,” Cohen said.

Schreiber’s success could be attributed to that in addition to being a developer, Schreiber is a residential client, living in homes he has built himself.

“A developer has a bottom line. A residential client wants something nice, and he has the ability to combine the two,” said Don Gray, a contractor who works with City View installing exterior lighting, decks and exterior ornamental carpentry. “Some developers only care about the bottom line.”

GOING NATIONAL

Schreiber’s designs have not only been noticed by local buyers, but a national audience will soon be exposed to City View’s building style after the company caught the attention of editorial staffers from *Cottage Living* and *Cooking Light* magazines. Each year, *Cooking Light* features a “fit house.” Executives select a builder to construct and design a home where the magazine can host events for entertaining sponsors or fund raising. The home is also used for editorial staging for a variety of articles. The intention is to inspire consumers to make their home environments more comfortable and healthy. City View will build the magazine’s 2007 “fit house” and the home will be featured in an attractive multi-page spread.

“We will be interviewing architects and beginning construction

A signature custom kitchen that comes with a CVRG home.



in March of '06," he said, for the "fit house" slated for 2258 N. Magnolia Ave. in Chicago.

One of the reasons Schreiber was chosen for such a high-profile assignment goes back to the functionality of his designs. His kitchens are very usable while still maintaining an organized, visually pleasing look.

"They're doing this feature on houses that the design uses the full potential of the house and organizes for it for the target market that I'm looking for, which is the two to three kids," he said.

The magazine describes a "fit home" as incorporating a lifestyle into a building. The home is to be warm and inviting and environmentally friendly in design. Everything from the building materials to the furniture is carefully selected to encourage a healthy lifestyle. The home will have an area dedicated to exercise and will provide improved air and water quality. It will be a home that promotes quality living.

THE BEGINNING

Schreiber was born and raised in Flint, MI, as the oldest of three children. His mother ran the household, while his father

Inviting 8-foot custom pocket doors open into the formal living room.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF RICHARD FOERTSCH; RICHARDFOERTSCH@SEGLOBAL.NET



Custom stairs are an integral part of a CVRG home.

earned a living running a small business — perhaps installing a sense of entrepreneurial spirit into his oldest son. After high school, Schreiber headed west to the rocky mountain state, where he pursued perfecting his downhill ski moves along with earning a business degree from the University of Colorado in Boulder.

After returning to the Midwest to help run the family business, Schreiber decided it was time to return to school. This time, he wanted to learn more about the real estate game and earned a graduate level degree in real estate finance from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. After a summer internship with Mitsubishi Bank, Schreiber landed a full-time gig with Bank One, eventually changing jobs to work for a real estate developer. After gaining hands-on knowledge and buying a piece of land in River West, City View Properties, Inc. was born.

"It's something I always wanted — to own my own company," Schreiber said.

Next year City View will celebrate its 10th anniversary. Schreiber built the company from the ground up and remains the primary contact for all projects, employing one project manager as his assistant.

THE FAMILY

1996 was an important year for Schreiber. Not only did he start his own business, he married his wife, Susan, who is one of the city's top fertility doctors. She is the assistant vice chair of obstetrics at Rush North Shore Medical Center in Skokie and runs her own fertility practice. The Schreibers have two children — Nicole, 7, and Noah, 6, and a dog named Rosie.

When this busy husband and wife team takes a break from work, the Schreibers enjoy spending time at their summer home in Wisconsin, in addition to running and skiing.

BUILDING A NAME

City View's first projects were mainly townhouses and condos, including revamping a 100,000-square-foot warehouse into loft apartments. Eventually Schreiber moved into the single-family home market.

In 2005, City View will have completed three single-family homes and several condos, including a condo/retail mix in Bucktown. In 2006, the company will tackle five single-family homes, including a three-home subdivision in north suburban Glencoe. Although City View's roots are in Lincoln Park, Schreiber is trying his hand at several

Brad in front of a recently completed teardown/new construction home in Lincoln Park.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RICHARD FOERTSCH; RICHARDFOERTSCH@SBGLOBAL.NET



Brad, Susan, Nicole and Noah enjoying an autumn day.

suburban projects, including a townhouse development, also in Glencoe.

After running into roadblocks with a condo slated for Glencoe, Schreiber created a subdivision from two lots and plans to construct three single-family homes instead.

"I decided it was just as profitable with three houses as 10 condos. I was running into too much resistance with the condo project in Glencoe. It's probably easier to build in the city," he said, citing less red tape and quicker returns on permits.

City View keeps a solid tempo — steady enough to be profitable and slow enough to provide enormous amounts of attention.

"I like the pace I'm at," he said.

Schreiber wants to eventually expand the business by taking on more projects and adding staffers. In addition to providing a fine product, Schreiber's business practices have been applauded as well.

"He is straightforward, honest and up front," Gray said. "He makes a deal and sticks to it."

The Wolins also felt confident in Schreiber's customer service.

"Before we closed, he told us that if ever there was any problem with his construction, he would be there to remedy it. He has certainly made good on his promise, personally accompanying each and every trade. We are confident Brad will continue to stand by his work in the years to come," Stacey said.

There are any number of developers who can build a home, but Brad Schreiber and City View Real Estate Group, Inc. employ a solid design, visually pleasing features and the reassurance of a promise for excellence.

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