


# Builder/Architect

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A woman with her arms crossed stands on a white staircase with wooden treads. The staircase has a dark wood handrail and white balustrade. In the background, there are large glass doors leading outside, a second-floor balcony with a white railing, and a polished floor with square tiles.

Cindy Stumpo

## International Builders

# C. Stumpo Development

C Stumpo Development owner Cindy Stumpo says that pride in her work and attention to detail set her apart from her peers. In the past 10 years, the Newton-based builder has constructed nearly

two dozen homes—each of them a masterpiece of traditional architecture and quality craftsmanship.

“I feel that when you have a lot of finishing detail in your home, it reflects a feeling that care was

taken in building it,” Stumpo said. “You want people to walk in and see details. That is what makes your home beautiful—the crowns, the raised paneling, the mahogany library, square columns and plas-



Right: Millwork, Van Lumber. Photo by Alex Beatty.

Below: Builder.  
Photo by Alex Beatty.



tered medallion ceilings; then, when you're finished decorating it, it looks like a piece of art to me."

Stumpo, 35, launched her company 11 years ago after successfully completing the construction of her own home in Newton. Working with subcontractors and coordinating the final stage of building inspired her to obtain her builder's license and enter the field herself.

"I'm very proud of my work. I'm very proud of my subcontractors," Stumpo said. "As a builder, you are only as good as your subcontractors. I haven't changed a subcontractor in seven years. Why change somebody who's great?"

C. Stumpo Development focuses on constructing mostly speculative homes in the Newton/Brookline area, in the \$800,000 to \$2.5 million price range. The concentration in familiar communities is deliberate, Stumpo said, in

order to better manage the construction projects.

"I know this area like the palm of my hand," she said. "I know the character of the neighborhoods and which streets you can put a \$2.5 million home on, and which streets you can put an \$850,000 home on. You only get that knowledge by working in the same area, year after year."

Stumpo pointed to her deep roots in the community as an asset to her business and that of her husband, Joseph, who owns International Auto Haus in Chestnut Hill. Stumpo's parents and grandparents still live in Newton.

"I was brought up here, and my life is here," said Stumpo, who has a 12-year-old daughter and six-year-old son. "I live here, my kids go to school here. So that means if you are buying a home in my neighborhood, I have to be 125 percent better than anyone else out there, because I'll see you at the grocery store, or I will see



Elegance is found in this bathroom. Photo by Alex Beatty.

Library by American Diversified.



you at a PTA meeting, or an open house at the school.

"I want to be able to look you in the face and say, 'How is your beautiful home?'" and know that

you're going to turn around and tell me that you are very happy," Stumpo added. "That's what it's all about."

As one of her customers re-

flects, "Every time I walk into my house, I have a calm feeling, just being in my own home surrounded by the beauty of the architecture, and details in my home."

Because of her family's presence in the community, much of her business is through referrals from satisfied customers.

"We are well known in our community, and it is important that people feel comfortable dealing with my family," Stumpo said. "What's interesting, too, is about 60 percent of the people who have bought homes from us have bought cars from my husband."

C. Stumpo Development recently completed and sold a home on Bald Pate Road in Newton, and now is working on a speculative project in Newton.

Stumpo's choice of building speculative homes allows her to complete construction quickly, usually within 100 days, because she is in control of the process.

"With speculation, the home is built to my tastes, and not everyone is going to totally agree with that, but I think we put up a very elegant, traditional home," Stumpo said. "With custom building, it's like a marriage, and there are difficult decisions that need to be made. Home buyers can be told by an architect that the home looks beautiful on paper, but I can see past the paper to what it will be like in reality."

Stumpo also is not fazed by the prospect of waiting until construction is complete before selling the home. She said she tries to build no more than two houses at a time in order to give each project her full attention.

Among the challenges of the business, aside from ensuring quality construction, is balancing the demands of home and family. She said that although she takes pains to spend "quality time" with

This entrance is inviting and elegant. Photo by Alex Beatty.





her husband and children, she truly loves her work.

"When most girls wanted to put on an apron and bake cookies with their mom, I wanted to take my father's briefcase and go to work with him," Stumpo said. "You could say that business is in my blood."

For information on C. Stumpo Development call (617) 909-6868

*Architect Magazine is proud to recognize Cindy Stumpo, C. Stumpo Development —for your commitment to high quality work and service, along with your desire to provide the best value for your clients—as the featured "Builder of the Month."*

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