



Wiggins Residence in Armstrong THE ADVENTURES OF BUILDING A MODULAR HOME

BEFORE

"A few years ago, I saw a beautiful modular home online, and it got me thinking," said Leanne Wiggins. At the time, she and her husband, Blain, were living in Revelstoke, B.C., and Blain was talking about retirement.

"I came up with a three-year plan," Leanne said. "Once Blain retired, we would sell our home in Revelstoke and move to the Okanagan where we could build a house on my parent's rural property."

Leanne contacted the modular home company online and asked about the specific house plan that she saw. They assured her that it could be done. Eventually, she and Blain visited a subdivision that the company was building in order to view their products and talk about future plans. "Okay then," she told them confidently, "I'll get back to you when I'm ready."

Blain and Leanne were convinced that building a modular home was the best option for them, based on several factors, but mostly because of the shorter timeline. In Revelstoke, they had watched as people embarked on building homes by traditional construction that took up to four years to complete.

"We didn't want that," Leanne said. "We had never built a house before, so we wanted a company to walk with us and take care of us from beginning to end."

So, when the time came, Leanne called the modular home company that she contacted earlier, but this time something was different. "I talked to the same salesperson," explained Leanne, "but he



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didn't have the time of day for me. Wow, if they don't want our business, what's our next option?"

Leanne went back online and found Chaparral. She sent an email to them, and within a day she got a friendly reply saying, "Let's talk. We'd love to do business with you."

DURING

Before long, Blain and Leanne were in Kelowna visiting the Chaparral factory and sales office. "They were very open to us," she said. "We liked them right off the bat."

At the factory, Blain and Leanne were shown what kind of options they had with various house plans. "We talked about a lot of stuff with the salesperson," said Leanne, "and then he finally said, 'Okay, you find something you want to build, and we'll make it happen.'"

At that stage, Blain and Leanne were still unsure about what the North Okanagan Regional District



would allow them to build, since they were proposing a secondary dwelling on her parent's eight-and-a-half-acre piece of property. "We thought we were restricted to a smaller carriage home, or mobile home, or maybe just an addition to my parent's home," Leanne explained, "but we found out that the zoning allowed for a lot more!"

With bigger options in mind, Leanne went back to Chaparral to look over numerous house plans until she finally found one that she liked. "To be honest, the house plan we chose wasn't exactly what I wanted," she said, "but they told us we could tweak the design to make it work for us."



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Chaparral collaborated with Leanne to customize the house plan. “We took bits and pieces of the plan, and I made it my own,” she recalled. “I added a second bedroom but reduced the overall square footage.”

Leanne went back and forth with Chaparral’s designers to make sure that the house plan matched the Wiggins’ budget. She felt vulnerable at that point, saying, “You know, I was wondering if we were going to get screwed because I’m going to tell them what my budget is, and then they might back out.”

However, Leanne was not disappointed. “I trusted them, and they came back to us and said, ‘Okay, we can do that for you.’ So we agreed on the plan, and they told us we’d be locked in at that price per square foot, which was very significant, because the lumber market was extremely volatile at that time.”

Leanne and Blain discussed it and decided to go ahead with Chaparral. They signed the papers, paid their deposit, and put their house in Revelstoke up for sale.

As the Wiggins waited for their contractor to put in the foundation at the property in Armstrong, their home was underway at the Chaparral factory in Kelowna.

However, at a certain point, the completion date for the house seemed further away than Leanne had originally thought. So she phoned Chaparral and asked if it could possibly be ready sooner. They looked at their schedule and said, “Sure, we can arrange that.”

The building started in November and the house was finished in late January.

Then, when arrangements were being made in February to deliver the house to the property, the Wiggins met another obstacle. The crane company made them aware that roads in the area were subject to load restrictions at that time of year due to winter freezing and spring thaw. “I’m like, What?” said Leanne, “so we just prayed and prayed that the timing would all work out.”



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The logistics of the delivery were not uncomplicated, but Chaparral made the necessary arrangements with both the trucking company and the crane company.

Leanne was relieved. "Sure enough, on the evening of March 5, the road restrictions were clear," she said, "and we got the call to say that the trucks and the crane were on their way. I woke up in the middle of the night and looked out the window to see one of the units arriving. It was so exciting."



The next morning, March 6, in the early dawn, the crane started moving the units into place. "It was so cool to watch," said Leanne.

In all, three modules were fitted together to make up the 1668-square-foot home.

The day after the delivery, the roofers arrived on site to ensure that the modules were joined together and the roofing membrane could be properly sealed. Soon after, the spray foam was installed under the house to seal the foundation. Then the carpenters and other trades came in to join the interior walls and finish any of the drywall, trim, and door casings. Finally, the siding and decking was installed, and the house was ready to be occupied.

"There are always little things with the finishing trades that don't quite go like you expected," explained Leanne. "But whenever anything wasn't quite up to our satisfaction, we'd call Chaparral and they would say, 'Don't worry, we'll make it right.' And they did."

In May, Blain and Leanne moved into their new home.



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AFTER

"I love my house," said Leanne. "I'm thrilled with it. It's taken a while to get everything just right, but it's beautiful. The fit and finish and the quality that Chaparral provides is top notch. It's that good. Honestly, it's better than some of the two-million-dollar houses that I've been in."

One thing they became convinced about through the process of building a modular home is that big square footage is unnecessary. "You don't need a huge house," Leanne affirmed. "It's just me and my husband here, but we use our whole house, which is great. We even have an office and a den, and when our kids come to visit, there's tons of room."

Beyond the satisfaction of a beautiful, well-built home, the Wiggins also appreciated the working relationship with the people of Chaparral. "They were very easy to deal with," Leanne said. "They realized what I wanted, and they worked with me. When I had questions, they answered them. We did a good job together, and it was fun. In the end, I felt proud of our house."

In particular, Leanne mentioned Zac Addorisio, Chaparral's Director of Sales and Marketing. "It was a real pleasure working with Zac," Leanne recalled. "When I went down to Kelowna to discuss a few things and pick some things, I just hit it right off with Zac, he's just so great, so much fun, and he answers every question, and if he doesn't know, he finds out right away, and gets right back to you."

In terms of the process and timeline, the Wiggins were thrilled that Chaparral took responsibility for what happened when. "They set the timeline for me," Leanne explained. "They told me what I needed to do, and they kept me updated on the progress. Zac would send us photos of our home as it was being built in the factory, which was great. Then we did a site visit, which was also really cool. Very impressive."

Throughout the process, Leanne appreciated that she only needed to know one phone number. "That's the piece that I really liked—Chaparral was our one-stop shop. They were the only people we called. They were our general contractor."

In terms of value and pricing, the best thing for the Wiggins was that they paid the same price at the end as was stated in the contract they signed at the beginning. "And that includes the trucking, the crane, and everything," said Leanne. "Our excavation guy was over budget. Our foundation guy was over budget. But we arranged those. Chaparral kept their price. They stayed on budget."

Overall, the experience with Chaparral was very positive. "I highly recommend them," Leanne said without hesitation. "I've given their names out to quite a few people. I say to them, if you're thinking about building a modular home, these are the people to call."

Leanne recalled a recent example of this, which came unsolicited. "We had ordered gravel and, when the dump truck rolled up to our property, the young lady driving said, 'Hey, is this one of those modular factory homes?' When we replied yes, she said, 'You know what? It looks awesome! I've been to million-dollar homes all over the Okanagan and they look like crap. I need to know who built this one.' Of course, we told her to go and have a chat with the people at Chaparral."

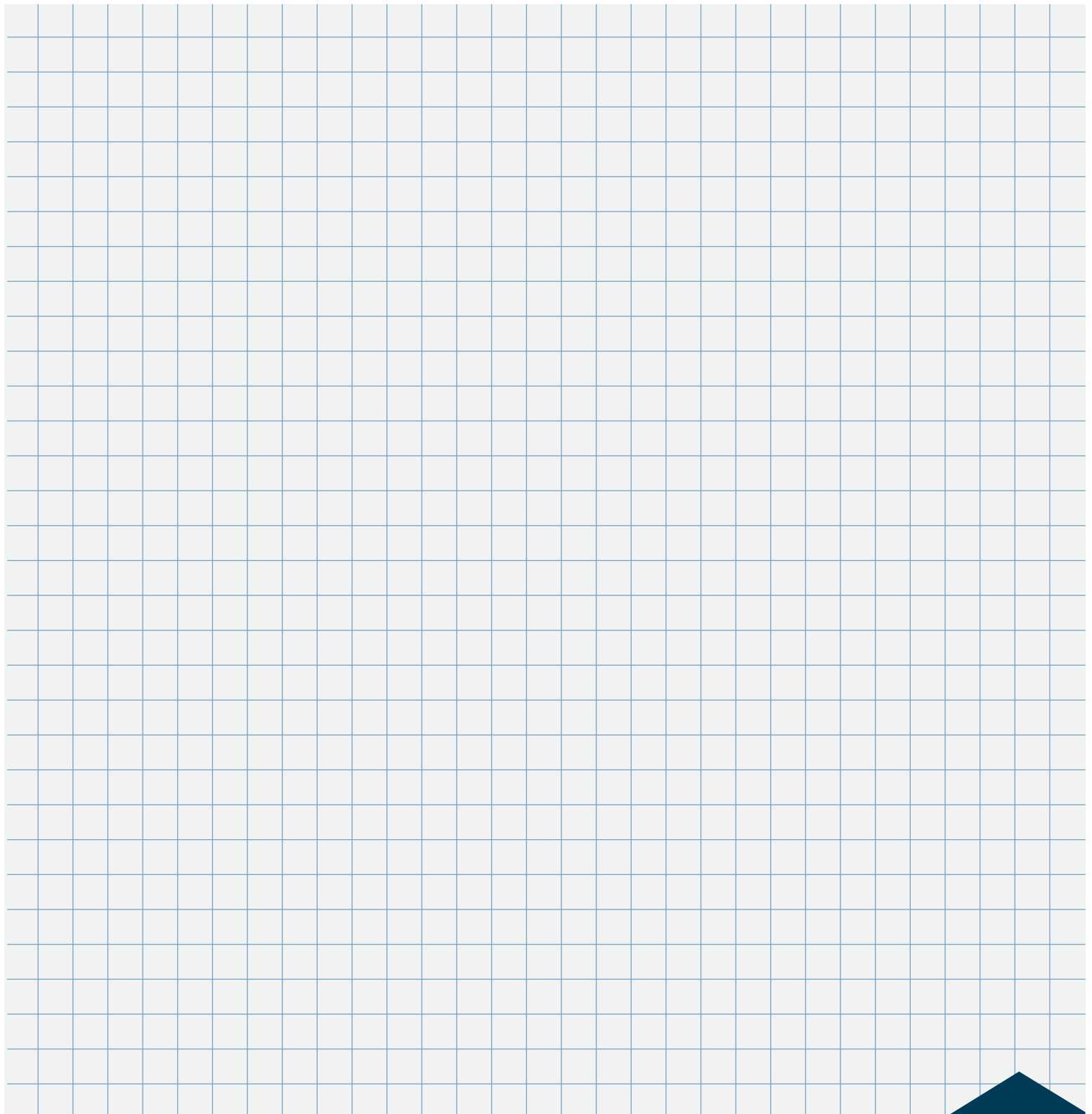


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