



PROJECT & CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT INC.

Builders of Fine Luxury
HOUSES & ESTATES

TWICE THE QUALITY IN HALF THE TIME

BY ALEX NEWMAN



FOR ANYONE WHO HAS BUILT A HOUSE OR ADDITION – OR EVEN TACKLED A KITCHEN RENOVATION – TIME LINE IS THE ENEMY. ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU’RE TALKING LUXURY AND CUSTOM.

Not so for Lisa and Peter MacDonald. When they decided to move up a few years ago from their Oakville home north of the QEW to something closer to the lake, Lisa took on the task of looking around at resale properties. For the price tag, though, she wasn’t impressed with what was on offer.

So, as girls tend to do, she asked around.

Her agent told her about PCM, and Carlos Jardino. She decided to investigate. She went through the PCM show home built for the Princess Margaret Foundation. She even toured Mr. Jardino’s own home.

She loved what she saw – and so did her husband who had by now been drawn into the search.

The one thing holding them back was their scepticism of PCM’s claims – that they could build a custom home with an extremely high level of finish and customizing in just four months.

Although the couple had never built a new home, or even renovated an old one, they’d heard enough horror stories about budgets spiralling out of control, drawn out construction schedules leaving families in the lurch, the number of crazy-making finicky problems – and marriages on the brink of divorce over the stress.

But after Lisa did her research, it appeared that Mr. Jardino, and PCM, was legit. As hard as it was to believe, he really would deliver in the promised few months. Even better for the MacDonalds was that PCM was already halfway through a home construction on a lot in their preferred area.

Lisa and Peter went back to see it – a few times – and the rest as they say is history. *“If I ever moved again, I’d start right from the beginning with Carlos,”* the couple says.

How PCM manages to deliver a luxury custom on time, says Mr. Jardino, is a source of curiosity for other builders in the area. *“The schedules posted at the front of every job site are routinely stolen,”* he says. *“I guess they study it for clues, but there’s no great mystery – I work straight through on each home until it’s complete. I use quality trades people who work for me all the time. And I have a plan – outlined in advance down to the minutest detail.”*

BEING ORGANIZED TRANSLATES INTO EXACT BUDGETS – Mr. Jardino knows from the outset exactly what the materials and labour will cost, and he sticks with his original budget.

Though the MacDonalds’ home was already halfway completed, Mr. Jardino usually meets clients before land is secured or architectural plans drawn up. It’s so he can find out what style of house they like – French country, Georgian, 1930s Art Deco, or Nouveau – and to determine their preferred location, and budget.

Once he knows the look they’re after, he then chooses the architect he knows will best deliver that look. The same two or three architects are always hired because they understand PCM’s system, and its parameters. For example, if \$65,000 has been allocated for windows and doors, the architect knows what he can design, because critical suppliers – windows and door, cabinetry, flooring – are brought into the design process at a very early stage.

WITH THE CLIENT-ARCHITECT RELATIONSHIP ESTABLISHED, Mr. Jardino then turns to a property search. Sometimes, he has a lot already in his inventory – purchased conditionally on finding an end user. Otherwise, he approaches the same three or four agents he trusts.

After the land is secured and the working drawings are complete, Mr. Jardino can then start the approval process with the municipality.

Even this is done faster than usual – not because of any special connections or treatment, but because Mr. Jardino fills out applications in the exact format the city wants. He includes a checklist noting every item that's required, but also asks if there's been anything added recently, so that he can take care of it right away. *"So much time is wasted at the municipal level because of sloppy paperwork and poor organization by the applicants."*

Before construction can begin, however, Mr. Jardino draws up a detailed schedule and set of work orders that outline every step of construction. For example, the outline for just the insulation reads like a technical manual: "placing Durock around shower liners....call crown moulding installer to do final measurements....ensure tiler has ordered all required amounts of tiles... follow up with crown molding installer."

EVERY HOUSE IS DIFFERENT – one stucco, the other stone, another cedar – but the fundamental building process is the same, Mr. Jardino



explains. And when systems are sequenced properly for that particular site – and the sequence is followed to the letter – anything can be built in a third of the time.

THE DETAILED SCHEDULE, Mr. Jardino says, is a major part of the system, *"because it's the map, the blueprint, that shows us how to get from Point A to Point B in a certain amount of time."*

Each home has its own site manager responsible for expediting jobs and ensuring the system to be carried out in proper sequence. "That manager is also onsite at all times – none of this trying to oversee five houses at once," Mr. Jardino says. "It's the only way to avoid mistakes from happening."

Every week, clients are provided with reports that track construction and budget progress. Carlos credits the planning, but also good communication for being *"always on target."*

For example, everything is pre-ordered at the design stage, with both suppliers and trades people being informed of the schedule. That means when the windows from Andersen arrive from the States, the installers have prepared the opening just ahead of time, and are on site to put them in. By end of day the windows are in, and photographed for insurance purposes.

PRECISION IS FREEING, Mr. Jardino strongly believes. The PCM system allows his trades to do their work properly because they know exactly what to expect, and can plan and prepare properly.

They also know that PCM has stringent quality controls in place – and that if something is not done well, random but regular checks will find it out. For example, if the cement truck driver refuses to give a concrete sample, Mr. Jardino says that's a red flag that *"something is wrong with the cement, that it's not what I ordered, or paid for. So if the driver says no, I tell him to leave my site, because it can only mean one thing – inferior cement is on that truck."*

Poor quality cement is no trifling matter, either. When you're building a large home, with high quality finishes, the foundation must be stable. And that's just one of the many tests PCM conducts on every house. The structural engineer is also called on to test framing before the municipal inspector comes around. *"This allows me the comfort of knowing it's done properly, plus it doesn't waste time at the city end if something is not up to par,"* Mr. Jardino says.

From beginning to end, it's the PCM system that ensures customers end up with a quality custom home that's long on details, and short on time.

"I'm very confident promising twice the quality in half the time, because I have delivered that every time on the 30 houses I've built in the past seven years," says Mr. Jardino.



That reputation is the main reason PCM and Mr. Jardino have been chosen to build four of the five last Princess Margaret Oakville luxury showhomes. It's also why regular people trust him with their dream home. Lisa MacDonald loves her new family home, because it's one that can grow and adapt to the changing needs of her young family, and one that she's proud to entertain her friends in. *"Plus, Carlos has an exceptionally nice crew, which frankly put the whole experience over the top in my view."*

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