



## Fact Sheet: The Picket Fence

### OVERVIEW:

The Picket Fence concept home originated from insights from the America at Home Study, the only longitudinal study of consumer behavior, values, and attitudes about home and community, which included nearly 10,000 responses nationwide during early, peak, and post-pandemic times.

The purpose and focus of The Picket Fence is livability and buildability. The home design will specifically address consumer insights from the study data and be built in an offsite factory using a modern method of construction called volumetric modular construction and assembled on-site on an infill lot in Pittsburgh, PA.

### THE HOME:

A 2,007-square-foot townhome + 660-square-foot full studio accessory dwelling unit (ADU) with an entry porch on the ground floor, and a main home above with three bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, a flex space, an entry porch, and a covered deck.

The three-story rental townhome + ADU is being designed for “Trail Blazers,” a millennial demographic identified using Kantar’s MindBase™ segmentation, who seek a modern and sustainable living space that suits their active urban lifestyle.

Attainability not only supports financial health for this Trail Blazer renter, it also became a motivation for the design of these homes. Creating two separate units within the structure of this home allows for a variety of livability that aligns with these renter’s lifestyles. A two-unit solution also creates a more efficient living space while not affecting the aesthetic of the home, which would not be possible with a single unit design. This solution both creates proper square footages that allow for an attainable rental cost and an efficient structure suitable for modular construction.

### SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY GOALS:

The 412 has three sustainability and resilience goals all that will be achieved while maintaining a focus on market rate attainability where housing affordability, energy, and maintenance costs are continually growing challenges:

1. Reduce carbon emissions by 70% vs. typical new home construction - by selecting alternative raw materials and products with lower environmental impacts, by constructing the home in a factory setting, and building to the Department of Energy’s Net Zero Energy Ready Home Program.
2. Generate 90% less waste than in typical new home construction - so insignificant that the waste will fit in a 5-gallon bucket.



3. Build a higher-performance home that results in a healthier indoor environment and is energy resilient in the face of a major event.

**THE LOCATION:** Pittsburgh, PA

**THE TEAM:**

- EcoCraft Homes (builder)
- Structural Modular Innovations, LLC (SMI) (factory)
- DAHLIN | Architecture | Planning | Interiors (architect, America at Home Study founder)
- Housing Innovation Alliance (developer)
- tst ink LLC (America at Home Study founder)
- Strategic Solutions Alliance (America at Home Study founder)
- d3 creative studio (digital 3D model)
- Pro Builder Media (demonstration home media partner)

**SPOKESPEOPLE:**

- Eric Newhouse, vice president of innovation, Structural Modular Innovations and liaison to EcoCraft Homes
- Ryan Bish, chief manufacturing officer and GM, Structural Modular Innovations
- Ryan White, director of design, DAHLIN | Architecture | Planning | Interiors
- Nancy Keenan, president, DAHLIN | Architecture | Planning | Interiors
- Teri Slavik-Tsuyuki, principal and founder, tst ink LLC
- Dennis Steigerwalt, president, Housing Innovation Alliance

**BEHIND**

**THE NAME:** This home was designed to advance the livability of urban infill townhomes and provide renters with the same opportunity to enjoy private outdoor spaces more typical of for-sale homes, metaphorically “a picket fence.”

Dubbed a “townhome + 1,” The Picket Fence was designed to fit on a narrow lot and provides a large, covered deck facing the street, and a private entry for the main townhouse, a fenced front yard, and large porch for the “+1” ground floor studio.

**DESIGN FEATURES  
& SUPPORTING  
STUDY DATA:**

**Arrival**

The site allows access from both the front and rear of the lot, creating an opportunity to have a private arrival experience at both residences with the studio unit entering through a front porch at the front of home and the main residence entering off the rear where a private parking space can be provided.



The main residence spans the depth of the home to provide the private outdoor space in a covered deck at the front of the home. For a demographic in which,

according to the America at Home Study, 94% say home is a “Safe Place,” this solution provides additional “eyes on the street,” while also creating more social interaction in the neighborhood.

### **The Heart of the Home**

Each home provides a spacious family room situated towards the front of the home, creating a connection to the private outdoor space, which allows natural light into the space. This “heart of the home” is a space which 67% of this demographic uses as a place to gather and entertain friends while also making it a comfortable space to relax and watch a movie or unwind.

### **The Hub of the Home**

The kitchens are sized to be better equipped for cooking with plenty of storage and, as the “hub of the home,” to allow for entertaining guests and enjoying dinner. The kitchen island in the main home is sized and situated in a location that provides social connections to the adjacent family room and supports the emotional wellness that is more important to Trail Blazers compared to all other consumer segments.

### **Precious Personal Space**

The primary bedroom needs to be sized right for a demographic in which 43% feel this space is for more than sleeping but also a place to watch TV/movies, play games, listen to music, read and even work. The lounge of the main unit is a design solution to help separate how this precious personal space can function allowing someone to unwind before they are ready to move to a social space of the home.

### **Square Footage Where It Counts**

The primary motivator for wellness features among Trail Blazers is to save money, which was important to understand when designing these homes and using square footage where it counts. Rather than thinking of this as a traditional bed/bath count for the design of this home, it was important to understand how this demographic uses the spaces and size them properly. The flex space in the main home becomes a space that is sized right, be it a place to exercise, work, relax or as a nursery as this demographic is looking to start a family.

### **Home Offices Can Scale and Flex**

One-third of the Trail Blazer demographic view home as a “place to work” making the flexibility of where work happens a design feature for these homes. The main home has a generous sized flex space on the main living level to



provide a quiet place to work while providing enough space and natural light for hobbies or other activities.

**MILESTONES:**

- October 6-31, 2022: America at Home Study Wave 3 (3,000 surveyed)
- July 2023: Manufacturing anticipated to start on The Picket Fence
- October 2023: Anticipated completion and grand opening of The Picket Fence

**DIGITAL  
EXPERIENCE:**

The digital experience will allow prospective buyers and visitors to interact with the homes virtually.

**WEBSITE:**

[americaathomestudy.com](http://americaathomestudy.com)

Demonstration Home: [Pbthe412home.com](http://Pbthe412home.com)

**MEDIA INQUIRIES:**

Katy Biggerstaff, NewGround PR & Marketing  
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**MEDIA ASSETS:**

[Link to downloadable media assets](#)

Renderings are courtesy of DAHLIN | Architecture | Planning | Interiors  
Infographics are courtesy of Hearth Agency