



## KEN GROTSKY

*Senior Project Manager*

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### Residential Architectural Designs that Stand the Test of Time: Ken Grotsky Shares About 34 Years in the Field

Although he admits it’s cliché, Ken had a fascination with Architecture from a young age. That fascination, combined with seeing Mike Brady’s career as an architect on “The Brady Bunch,” led him to enroll in a drafting class in high school, and he has not looked back since.

“I don’t remember wanting to do anything else but this.”

His single-focused dedication to the field has stood the test of time, just like his residential architectural designs. With 34 years as a designer, he understands the elements that make designs livable and lasting.

### Cutting Teeth in Contemporary Residential Architecture

After attending The Ohio State University, Ken got his start with Schooley Caldwell Associates where he worked on both the Ohio Statehouse Restoration and Thomas J. Moyer Judicial Center projects, along with several branch libraries around central Ohio.

Early on he was assigned projects designing military family residences all over the country. Ken enjoyed the opportunity to work on residential projects, where he could enjoy the fruit of his labor at a much quicker pace than commercial projects which solidified his desire to specialize in residential design.

To give himself the opportunity to develop his residential architectural designs, he transitioned to working for his good friend Gene Milhoan at Milhoan Architects LLC, a smaller firm in Columbus who designed houses for clients like Jack Nicklaus and Dave Thomas of Wendy’s.

“I really received my first true residential experience under him,” reflects Ken. “For the next 12 years of my career, I worked on projects of high caliber and that’s where I really cut my teeth residentially.”

According to Ken, the firm gained its reputation because of Gene’s unique style of design.

“I would describe it as soft contemporary residential architecture,” said Ken. “Not modern, but large expanses of windows, custom-built fireplaces, and other amenities that made them warm and livable.”

These principles stuck with him as he developed his own design style.

### Half Architect, Half Psychologist

The recession of 2008 hit the small architecture firm hard, and in 2009, Ken was left in search of a job.

After six months out of commission, Ken reconnected with [Dan Keiser](#), who had served as the Associate Intern Director for the Columbus chapter of the American Institute of Architects in their early days in the industry.

The two had crossed paths several times, but never officially worked together.

That changed in 2010 when Dan offered Ken a position at Keiser Design Group.

“Designing houses for clients is my favorite thing,” said Ken. “I love getting together with people, working through their ideas, and hearing about their ideal residence. Then I get to manifest that into a design that we’re all happy with when it’s done.”

But according to him, that’s not always easy.

“I look at my job as half architect and half psychologist,” he said. “Nine times out of ten when I’m working with a husband and wife they have differing opinions. It’s my job to get to the bottom of what someone likes and dislikes about a certain aspect of the design and find compromise when necessary.”

Determined to find the residential architectural designs that meet all of the criteria — Ken will work diligently on a project until all parties are happy with the outcome, including himself.

## Design That Stands the Test of Time

One of Ken’s favorite projects while at KDG is the [Miller Residence on Tollgate Road](#).

“Between the clients and our builder partner, Jay Luebbe, it was just a very enjoyable project all around,” said Ken. “And while every project has a budget, they didn’t let the budget dictate the design but adapted the budget as necessary to realize the design.”

One of Ken’s many roles as a project manager is to communicate with clients if they are going down a path that’s not aligned with the design or the budget. And one of his biggest reminders for his clients is not to rush the process.

“We have clients come in having watched HGTV shows where it appears that a designer comes up with things overnight,” said Ken. “They think design is simple and easy, but it’s not. It takes time.”

He is quick to remind clients that a home is the biggest investment they’re ever going to make, so it’s important to get it right — to never settle for “fluff” or “good enough.” And this reflects the high standards he has for his own design work.

“I have always felt that less is more, and good design is good design regardless of what style if any it follows,” said Ken. “Something can be very simple and pure and be fantastic. To get good design that will stand the test of time, you have to take the time. And surely, it will look just as good now as it will in 50 years.”

For contemporary residential architectural designs that stand the test of time, learn more about the [residential services at KDG](#).