

Habitat group applies to build more homes

Brandon Canevari - Editor

Posted: 06/03/2009 03:10:44 PM EDT
Friday, June 5, 2009

MANCHESTER — Bennington Area Habitat for Humanity has submitted their formal application to the town to construct 22 single family homes on Jennifer Lane.

Currently Habitat for Humanity is raising funds to purchase the 48 vacant single family residential lots that are owned by four different property owners — a process they must complete by Sept. 1, according to President of the Bennington Area Habitat for Humanity, Richard Malley.

The organization has hired engineer Ellis Speath, owner of Speath Engineering, to determine the requirements needed to meet town and state standards. Malley said it was essential to know the approximate cost of the necessary improvements to ensure that they had enough money to not only purchase the land, but develop it as well.

Seeking permits now

Though they currently do not own the land, Habitat for Humanity is applying for the necessary permits because Malley said they believe it may help them in their fundraising efforts.

"It's one thing if it's a big question mark. It would be quite another if we could say the town likes the plan and has approved it," said Malley. "This is not a great time to try to raise money. This project I believe is so important for our community I'm

hoping we'll find people who will invest in this project, that people will find it compelling and want to help."

Even if Habitat is successful in purchasing the land, a lot of work must be done before it can be developed. First, the 48 vacant lots must be re-configured into the 22 single family residential lots. The project would require a new road — expected to be 493 feet long — to be constructed.

Unlike the homes that Habitat plans to build along Jennifer Lane that would utilize the existing roadway, the town water main, and the existing electrical — which would be Phase I of the project according to a letter from project engineer Christopher Ponnessi — the homes built along the new road in Phase II of the project would require improvements to the town's water system, a storm water treatment facility, extension of electrical and telephone utilities and the completion of the sewage system that would have to be built for Phase I of the project.

Another added expense that Habitat would have to cover is the property taxes. Still, despite the infrastructure costs and the taxes they would have to pay, Malley said the project was very favorable because of its close proximity to town, stores, places of employment and schools.

"We think this would be an outstanding opportunity and contribution to the Manchester community," Malley said. "The need for affordable housing throughout the state is huge. If we could do something like this in Manchester that would be huge."

If Habitat is able to purchase the land and the town approves the project, Malley said the organization would like to begin building the septic system sometime in 2010 so that they could begin building

Advertisement



Bring the Classroom to Your Home
With a Degree Online From Florida Tech

FLORIDA TECH
UNIVERSITY ONLINE

APPLY TODAY!
FloridaTechOnline.com/FD | 1-888-253-5946



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™



on the land by 2011.

If construction were to begin in 2011, Malley said that it would not take place all at once, but over a period of years. According to previous reports, houses would be constructed at a rate of one per year. However, it was also stated that the Bennington Area Habitat for Humanity — which also serves the rest of Bennington County and strives to construct two homes a year — would not want to concentrate their efforts in one town for more than a decade.

Planning Director and Zoning Administrator, Lee Krohn, said at the moment it was difficult to perceive whether there may be any problems with the application, but that it would be reviewed at the Design and Development Review Boards (DRB) next meeting on June 17.

"The board saw this as a preliminary phase and encouraged Habitat to pursue the project," said Krohn. "I think it has the potential to fill a great need in the community, but we'll have to take a look at it with all its details."

Not only is Habitat for Humanity looking to construct affordable single family housing, but they are also considering the possibility of incorporating green technology into the houses.

Malley said that a number of people such as architects Ramsay Gourd, Bill Badger, Cliff Beebe, and Greg Boshart have come forward to offer their assistance with the design of the buildings and Alan Benoit, Bill Calfee, and Jaime and Thomas Hand — all of whom have been involved in energy saving projects in the past — have shown an interest in trying to make the buildings as "green" as possible.

Malley said if they are able to incorporate green technology into the buildings it would not only be beneficial for the homes, but may also set a trend for

builders in the future.

"If Habitat can afford to do it my hope is that this will maybe inspire others to follow that example," he said. "The good news with the energy crisis is that everyone is focused on this now."

Advertisement



End-to-End Training as It Should Be: 100% ONLINE!

Earn Your Master Certificate in Internet Marketing

- SEO & Paid Search
- Online Branding
- Web Analytics
- Internet Law
- Media Buying
- Social Media

➔ 1-800-268-9943
USanFranOnline.com/FD

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™