



CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Program

IMPORTANT

2023 CDBG Guidebook

****DO NOT attempt to complete this application prior to reviewing the 2022 CDBG Guidebook (link provided above). Questions should be directed to the Community Development Planner at Amber.Upton@saratoga-springs.org****

Applicant Organization*

Habitat for Humanity of Northern Saratoga, Warren and Washington Counties

Address*

1373 U.S. Route 9

City*

Moreau

State*

NY

Zip Code*

12828

Phone Number*

518-793-7484

Email Address* executivedirector@glensfallshabitat.org

Proposal Abstract *

Please provide an overview of your proposal.

New Single Family Home at 141 W. Circular Street, Saratoga Springs, NY

Over the past thirty years, Habitat for Humanity of Northern Saratoga, Warren and Washington Counties has partnered with 35+ homeowners in fulfilling the American Dream of homeownership. The affordable housing crisis has hit home in the city of Saratoga Springs, and Habitat's leadership and knowledge of affordable housing strategies has been leaned on heavily by community leaders in both the private and public sectors. In 2022, the plot of land on 141 West Circular Street was donated to Habitat on which to build a single family affordable home. This project will be our 5th home in the city of Saratoga Springs and we are grateful to collaborate with the City of Saratoga Springs, Saratoga Builders Association and the Affordable Housing Corporation of New York State to provide affordable homeownership opportunities within the City of Saratoga Springs. Habitat is thrilled to begin construction in Spring of 2023 on this three bedroom home for a low-to-moderate income family living at or below 80% of the Average Median Income.

After pre-qualifying for an affordable mortgage with Glens Falls National Bank, Brenda was selected as the future homeowner for the home on West Circular Street. Brenda is a single mom raising four teenage kids on her own. She works around the clock (literally) in healthcare, but with the rise in the housing market, Brenda started to become more and more doubtful that she would ever become a homeowner - especially within the kids school district here in Saratoga Springs. The apartment the family lived in previously experienced ever-increasing maintenance issues. Plumbing issues caused Brenda and her family to be without a shower or laundry access at regular intervals forcing her family to find alternative housing. She reached out to Habitat for Humanity for help and that's when she learned about the homeownership program. Brenda is so happy to have a home of her own for her family in Saratoga Springs, and her kids are relieved that they get to stay with their friends and graduate high school in their district. Habitat's unique Homeownership Program was the only path for affordable homeownership for Brenda and her family.

The funding from this grant will directly impact the future homeowner of 141 West Circular Street - Brenda and her four children - by providing down payment assistance. This will help to make Brenda's mortgage affordable, allowing her to build equity to pass on to her children, creating generational change in our community.

We are shovel ready. The planning board has approved the subdivision, the site plan is complete and we expect to receive the building permit by March 2023.

Priorities Addressed*

Please include which of the community development priorities listed in the City's 2020 Consolidated Plan this project will address. Describe how the project fills those identified needs.

The creation of a new, affordable, three bedroom home on 141 W. Circular St, in the city of Saratoga Springs would fulfill the city's highest funding priority by addressing the "continuum" of housing needs with the creation of permanent affordable housing for one low-to-moderate income family living at or below 80% of the Average Median Income.

The need for permanent affordable housing is well documented and is a high priority for the City of Saratoga Springs.

At the heart of the Consolidated planning process is the City's intent to meet the three statutory goals embodied in Federal housing legislation governing community development programs:

- Provide Increased Access to Decent, Affordable Housing
- Promote a Suitable Living Environment
- Encourage Expanded Economic Opportunities

The Habitat model provides numerous benefits as a partner in that effort:

- Applicants are vetted through the Family Selection Committee to verify a need for improved housing, ability to pay and willingness to partner with Habitat. “Partner Families” are required to contribute 250-500 hours of “sweat equity” (250 for single individuals, 500 for partners) as part of their commitment to homeownership. In addition to a \$2,500 down payment the Habitat Partner Families literally work to build their own house. This encourages the family to establish the kind of community relationships that help support the transition to homeownership.
- Habitat employs as much volunteer labor as possible and for this reason a Habitat for Humanity Build typically costs approximately half of what a for-profit builder requires.
- Habitat for Humanity partners with SONYMA (2% mortgage rates) and/or other local banks to provide an affordable mortgage to the homeowner. Low income families have been greatly impacted by inflation and the recent skyrocketing of mortgage interest rates (now hovering near 7%), making affordable homeownership even more so out of reach. By being able to offer Habitat homeowners a fixed 2% mortgage rate through SONYMA, we’ve provided a viable solution. Habitat subsidizes the remaining value of the home, which the homeowner can earn by maintaining ownership over the life of the 30-year mortgage. In the transition from renting to homeownership, most Habitat Partner families see no increase in their monthly payments, and in some instances, they may even pay less.
- Habitat returns properties to the active tax rolls, contributing to the overall vitality of the community.
- Through homeownership, Habitat Partner Families develop higher self-esteem and responsibility through homeownership, which typically results in greater long term employment opportunities. Habitat is especially proud of the generational change that comes with safe, affordable housing: children perform better at school, have better health outcomes and develop the confidence in their long term ability to break the cycle of poverty-housing.
- 100% of the funds from this grant will go towards improving the lives of low-income residents.
- Owner-occupied housing has a demonstrated positive impact on neighborhoods: reducing crime, building long-term relationships and improved housing maintenance that strengthens the fabric of the entire community.

Activity Beneficiaries* Identify who will benefit from the proposed activity. If the activity is designed to benefit: 1) individual persons of low- to moderate-income, describe the process you will use to identify these persons and determine their income eligibility and the number of persons you expect to serve. 2) The inhabitants of a predominantly low-moderate income area, identify the Census Block Group in which the activity is located. 3) A low-moderate income “limited clientele”, identify the “limited clientele” group.

Habitat builds permanent and decent homes for working-class families who otherwise find homeownership - and the stability it brings with it - just out of reach. We are currently the only local organization working to provide affordable homeownership to families living at or below 80% of the Average Median Income. Selection for homeownership is based on the need for improved housing conditions, the ability to make monthly mortgage payments and willingness to partner (i.e sweat equity). Habitat partners with local banks and/or

SONYMA (2% mortgage rates) to provide affordable mortgage payments for our Partner Families. With current interest rates

approximately 3x higher - hovering around almost 7% - we are proud to offer our Habitat homeowners a fixed 2% mortgage rate through SONYMA.

The house to be built at 141 W. Circular St. has been assigned to Brenda and her four kids, who qualify as a low-to-moderate income family. The opportunity to apply for homeownership of this home was opened to the public and any qualifying individuals were encouraged to apply through Habitat for Humanity of Northern Saratoga, Warren and Washington Counties.

Qualifying individuals/families are characterized as:

- Current Saratoga County resident living in substandard housing.
- Low-to-moderate Income; earning at or below 80% of the Average Median Income for the region (less than \$76.5K, per our application standards).
- Show a demonstrated ability to pay an affordable mortgage through credit history and income.
- Willing to commit to 250-500 hours of “sweat equity” through Community Service and/or on-site volunteer hours towards the construction of their future home.

Applications are first reviewed by the Habitat Family Selection Committee to confirm eligibility and completeness. Eligible applications are then forwarded to a local partner bank to review for credit qualifications. A short-list of applicants was presented to the Habitat Board of Directors. The Board selected Brenda, who demonstrated the greatest need for housing. For families that did not qualify for a mortgage, Habitat refers them to our credit-repair team to help them improve their chances on a future Build.

Performance Goals and Indicators* Identify your performance goals and the types of indicators you will use to document activity accomplishments and success. (Examples should include: # of persons with new/improved access to services, # of affordable houses rehabilitated, # of businesses assisted, # of jobs saved or created, etc.)

As an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, we are required to submit multiple tracking reports on productivity, homeowner payment performance, volunteer management, house pricing and community engagement. Our goal is to build a home at 141 W. Circular St., which will add one more affordable home within the City of Saratoga Springs. This project is a continuation of Habitat’s efforts to expand our impact on this crucial issue of access to affordable housing, particularly among the workforce within our city. Habitat will subsidize the mortgage, allowing the family to have affordable monthly payments. The family will pay 30% or less of their monthly income towards housing (mortgage principal, interest, insurance, and taxes). Additionally, to ensure a foundation of success, Habitat Partner Families are required to undergo financial training.

Activity Time frame/Schedule * Include start, completion dates, and other significant performance stages.

The timeframe for the 141 W. Circular St. project:

- Building Permit: March 2023
- Breaking Ground: Spring 2023
- Dedication and Celebration: Winter 2023/4 (You'll all be invited)
- Brenda buys her home Winter 2023/4!!

Organization Overview*

Provide an overview of your organization including length of time in existence. List current officers and board members.

Our affiliate was founded in 1991 by Ralph and Lillian Nicholson and was originally named the Glens Falls Area Habitat for Humanity. In 30 years, our affiliate has partnered with 35+ families to provide the opportunity to live the American Dream of homeownership. Due to the gracious contributions of our skilled and unskilled community volunteers, our organization is able to leverage money given to us multiple times over.

In 2015, the name was changed to Habitat for Humanity of Northern Saratoga, Warren, and Washington Counties to reflect the anticipated broader impact of the organization. Habitat adopted a strategic plan to grow its impact. From 2016-2017, and in partnership with the City of Saratoga Springs and the Saratoga Builders Association, Habitat successfully completed a single family home at 195 Division Street and constructed two homes: 26 and 28 Cherry Street. In the fall of 2017, to fund our expansion plan, we opened the Southern Adirondack ReStore in Moreau, where the profits from sales of donated housewares are used to fund future Builds and further our mission of bringing affordable housing to families of low-moderate income in this region. In 2018-2019 we completed builds in Lake George and Granville. In 2020, with support of CDBG funds, we constructed and sold an affordable home at 8 Locust Grove Rd in Saratoga Springs. In 2021-2022 we initiated and completed three more rehabs/builds to help revitalize Hovey St in Glens Falls. In 2023 we anticipate providing affordable homes in Saratoga Springs, Glens Falls and Corinth, and expanding to multi-units to provide more affordable housing in the counties we serve.

Habitat for Humanity has previously been awarded the Community Development Block Grant in 2015, 2016 and 2019:

- In 2015, we were awarded \$50,000 for a single-family at 195 Division Street
- In 2016, we were awarded \$92,288 for revitalization of a two-family unit at 26-28 Cherry Street
- In 2019, we were awarded \$73,179 for the purchase of a 1.22-acre lot at 8 Locust Grove Rd, to build a single family-home

Current Board of Directors + Executive Director:

Name	Position	Employer or Other Affiliation
Mike Gestwick	President	The Pike Development Company
Michael Doud	Vice President	Director of Development - Matrix Development
Joseph Conway	Secretary of the Board	M&T Bank
Debra L. Smith, CPA	Treasurer of the Board	Marvin & Company, P.C.
June Neeson	Board Member	Outside Sales, Curtis Lumber
Chris Round	Board Member	Chazin Companies - Senior Principal, Vice President, Planning Services
Tim Hughes	Board Member	VMJR - Vice President, Construction Services
Adam Feldman	Executive Director	Habitat for Humanity of NSWWC

Experience*

Describe your organization's experience in successfully conducting this type of activity. Identify any skills, current services, or special accomplishments that demonstrate your capacity for success.

Habitat for Humanity of Northern Saratoga, Warren, and Washington Counties has extensive experience in successfully completing new construction of simple, basic homes. We've been in operation for over 30 years and have built 35+ single family residences across the three counties we serve. Each of our homes is occupied by a hardworking, low-moderate income family that is paying an affordable mortgage. Each family is building equity and improving their long-term socioeconomic status. In fact, several Habitat Partner Families have recently fully paid-off their mortgages!

Key Persons*

Identify the person(s) responsible for program and financial management of the activity. Identify all other persons involved in this activity noting whether these positions are current or new, pending this award. For construction/site development projects, identify the development team including proposed contractors, subcontractors, and project manager.

Executive Director, Adam Feldman, is responsible for all program and financial management activities related to this grant. Adam joined our Habitat affiliate in 2015 as a member of the Board of Directors. He has been in the role of Executive Director since 2016 and has overseen the launch of the Southern Adirondack Habitat for Humanity ReStore and the construction of ten new homes.

Mike Gestwick is the Board President and consults on all aspects of each Build – he previews construction plans, budgets and labor needs. Mike Gestwick has been active in our affiliate for four years and is the Chairman of our Board. Mike is a professional Project Manager for the Pike Development Company and he brings with him extensive expertise in leading large commercial construction projects.

Director of Operations & Volunteers, Kathy Keenahan has a background in Social Work and has exceptional people skills. She has been with our Habitat affiliate for over almost four years after having worked at Ronald McDonald house for 14 years. Kathy heads up operations on our build sites and cultivates relationships with local businesses to recruit volunteers for our Build projects as well as for staffing the ReStore. Kathy also partners with nonprofits and community organizations to form collaborations that grow our reach and impact within the region.

Director of Communications & Family Services, Molly Dunn, leads our marketing & communications and works with our Family Selection Committee to recruit and vet eligible applicants for our Homeownership Partner Program. Molly has over 20 years experience in marketing and strategy, and is active in community advocacy on a local & state level.

Day-to-day construction and labor oversight is provided by Art Moyer. The project at W. Circular street will be Art's third Build with our Habitat affiliate.

Partner Agencies*

Identify any other agencies/partners involved in this activity and define their roles and responsibilities.

This new single-family home construction at 141 W. Circular will be the product of a collaborative partnership between the following agencies: Saratoga United Methodist Church, the Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC), Saratoga Builders Association, and our affordable mortgage provider, Saratoga National Bank.

A parishioner of the Saratoga United Methodist Church has donated the land and the church has donated \$50,000 to cover the cost of site work: excavation, foundation and materials. The Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC) will provide funding to help subsidize the affordable mortgage. Saratoga National Bank/SONYMA will offer a 2% mortgage rate to our Partner Family to keep their monthly payments affordable. The Saratoga Builders Association provides funds each year from the Showcase of Homes and provides a network of skilled labor to assist with the build. The project is also supported by gift in kind work from Munter Enterprises, Environmental Design Partnership, Engineering America, Granite Excavating as well as our core group of volunteers.

The final and most critical partner is the Habitat Partner Brenda! Brenda will contribute 250 hours of “sweat equity” to help build the house with her own two hands. Additionally, members of the community who volunteer their time and labor will be instrumental to building this house and in doing so, helping to foster the sense of community that is part of our mission.