

Lack of land may slow Habitat's home building in York County!

Habitat for Humanity York County is thriving, but it needs land to build more homes for deserving families. Though funding is the most well-known obstacle for developing affordable housing, the actual biggest obstacle for Habitat is the lack of affordable land. Without land, affordable housing can't be built regardless of the amount of funding or the number of volunteers that Habitat raises for a homebuilding project. Habitat is asking all landowners to consider how they can help meet this challenge.

The best locations for Habitat and low-income families are near jobs, schools, and services. Regular builders and developers are concentrating on the same areas which limits the supply and increases the price. Habitat simply can't compete without community support in some fashion.

For the past 30 years in York County Habitat has relied on gifts of land to assure the affordability of the houses that we build. York County towns have donated town-owned property to Habitat for affordable housing. In addition, a few individuals have donated land or houses in need of repair and renovation. These donations have allowed us to build 27 homes in York County.

There are many possible alternative sources of land for Habitat: vacant building lots, existing homes, tax sale land, foreclosed properties, or parcels that would provide land to build a number of houses over several years. Depending on the structural integrity of a building, Habitat can rehab the house or demolish it and clear the property to build anew.

Donated real estate to Habitat can serve as a charitable contribution for income tax purposes. Another option for landowners is to sell a building site or home to Habitat at a greatly reduced price – which may also qualify in part as a charitable contribution.

Individuals and organizations who wish to donate land, a home or make a financial donation to our Land Fund, Habitat can assist you. Towns, churches, organizations, banks, and businesses with excess property can also donate. Your gift will help to create continued opportunities for affordable housing in York County. Please email John Stoma at stomajohn@gmail.com or call the Habitat office at 207-985-4850 to explore these options.