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## Housatonic Habitat begins Ridgefield “house hunt”

Local Habitat returns “home” to fulfill its mission

Danbury, CT 02/17/21 – Thirty years and 34 homes after its founding in 1991, Housatonic Habitat for Humanity is returning “home” to Ridgefield to change the life of a first-time homeowner. The initiative is the partnership between Ridgefield’s Affordable Housing Committee and Housatonic Habitat for Humanity.

“We are proud that our local heritage means Ridgefield businesses, churches and individuals can build on the original local Habitat commitment begun by a group of Ridgefielders around a kitchen table decades ago,” said Ridgefield resident Kent Rohrer, who is Habitat’s Board president. “The Habitat model places qualified local working families in homes they can afford.” Called “Habitat Ridgefield Site Search ’21”, the initiative is on the hunt for donated or near-donated land, gifts, including homes to be renovated. Housatonic Habitat’s Executive Director Fran Normann, said, “Many good sites are out of reach so we hope someone can work with us to make acquisition affordable for us.” The ideal site, she said, is served by town sewer and water, or by an existing well and septic system. “We aim to build on land in Ridgefield or renovate a single-family home that fits into its neighborhood, and sell it to a family who qualifies because they have the goals to succeed.”

Normann praised today’s initiative launched by local Ridgefield housing advocates. “Home is the key. The current pandemic has taught us that families can thrive in a safe environment. It is the foresight of Ridgefielders like Joanne and John Patrick, the late Lou Price and others that encourages us to pursue this mission.”

The Executive Director explained that the Habitat model is a hand up, not a hand out. “Working with volunteers and materials and services from local business, Habitat builds or renovates a home that is sold to a qualified working family who lives or works in the region. Habitat’s cost savings are passed on to the homeowner in the form of a low purchase price and subsidized affordable mortgage. We are committed to sustainable long-term results. As the builder and the bank, Habitat maintains a long-term relationship with its homeowners which is a value add to families and communities.”

Dave Goldenberg, chair of Ridgefield’s Affordable Housing Committee, praised the search. “Each Habitat home changes the lives of its homeowner as well as towns like ours. We are adding hard-working families who will contribute to the rich fabric of Ridgefield.”

First Selectman Rudy Marconi also lent enthusiastic support. “Habitat was founded here, and many of its volunteers and donors are from Ridgefield,” he said. “I’m hoping Ridgefielders will step up and help realize a dream for Housatonic Habitat—and a deserving family.”

For more information on how to donate, volunteer, or apply for a home, contact Fran Normann, Executive Director, [fran@housatonichabitat.org](mailto:fran@housatonichabitat.org) or call 203-744-130 x101.

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