

## Habitat seeks new volunteers for project

By RICK COLLINS  
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In some ways, the hardest part of the next Habitat for Humanity project in Braintree is done. With cheap parcels of land scarce in this highly developed community, buying a plot in East Braintree for a buck can be considered a coup.

But the next steps won't likely be as easy, and local organizers with the nonprofit organization are now looking to recruit a small army of volunteers to coordinate the effort, including raising the \$50,000 needed to start construction.

"Habitat is a volunteer organization, and without volunteers the organization wouldn't be able to operate," said Sunny Shaw, the community outreach chairman for Braintree-based South Shore Habitat for Humanity.

The group is looking for civic-minded citizens to form the local partnership committee to coordinate nearly every aspect of the project, from fundraising efforts to lunches for volunteers.

"We like for the local churches and local citizenry to get involved," Shaw said. "It's a home in the local community, and it benefits the local community."

Now in its 20th year, South Shore Habitat for Humanity, the local affiliate of the international group, has helped

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oversee the construction of 38 affordable homes in 18 towns, including three in Braintree.

The agency's involvement, however, is limited to general oversight, such as scouting potential plots of for homes, large-scale fundraising efforts, and arranging the 20-year, interest-free mortgage for the home buyer.

The nitty-gritty details, says Phoebe Morad, the community operations manager for South Shore Habitat, are left in the hands of organizing committees in the host towns.

"They're off and running once we set them up," she said. "We're here just to give guidance and support."

South Shore Habitat earlier this year bought land on Glenrose Avenue formerly owned by the Braintree Electric Light Department for \$1. It will be the second home built by Habitat for Humanity on Glenrose.

The first informational meeting drew several interested volunteers last week. Another meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Nov. 14 in Thayer Public Library.

Still needed, Morad said, are a committee chairman, and sub-com-

mittee chairmen in charge of fundraising, outreach efforts to the local churches, and the actual construction period.

"There are a lot of logistics, once you get rolling," she said.

While some of those positions will require volunteers willing to dedicate up to a year of their time, other less time-consuming positions are also available.

"There are lots of opportunities to get involved," Morad said.

The first chore for the local partnership committee will be to raise about \$50,000 to help buy supplies and construction materials. Another \$75,000 will be raised by South Shore Habitat for Humanity.

The committee also will be asked to start raising awareness about the project.

Once the money is raised, the committee will coordinate the schedule of volunteers to help build the house.

Habitat has not yet started the search process for the recipient of the house.

Families interested must earn less than \$47,000 annually, show a significant need for a new home and be willing to dedicate 500 hours of "sweat equity" to the project.

Morad stressed that Habitat homes are not given to families, but rather sold at cost. The homes are traditionally about 1,200 square feet with three bedrooms and 1½ bathrooms.

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