



COMMUNITY

Habitat Homes Anchor Major Transformation South of Downtown

An anyone driving or walking along Elliott Avenue recently has seen a dramatic transformation taking shape. Eighteen new Habitat homes and several market rate homes are under construction at *Burnet Commons III: The Park*, in the heart of Charlottesville.

Future Habitat homeowner Shymora Cooper will be among the first people to move in to this new, environmentally-friendly and inclusive community. She can hardly wait.

"I always knew I wanted more for my children than I had—to provide a safe and stable home for them," said Shymora. "This is a dream come true."

The Park is a collaborative effort among Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville, Southern Development Homes and the City of Charlottesville. When complete, the new neighborhood will transform a long-time City dumping ground into a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-income neighborhood built around a central park.

"*The Park* will be extremely unique and special," said Dan Rosensweig, Habitat President and CEO. "Rather than design a community around the automobile,

Above: When complete, Burnet Commons III will transform a long-time City dumping ground into a beautiful and thriving neighborhood in the heart of Charlottesville.

we've chosen to put the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, stickball and soccer players first."

The new community—the first significant investment in the City Council-adopted Strategic Investment Area—will eventually unite 28 market-rate homes with the Habitat homes in a calm, tree-lined neighborhood with narrow streets and abundant green space. Located a five minute walk from the Downtown Mall and offering some of the best views in the City, it will have significant appeal to a wide range of people looking for comfortable, neighborly, walkable and energy efficient urban living. Southern Development and Habitat anticipate the neighborhood to be fully built out within a couple of years.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

"Home represents the most precious human treasures—that of encounter, that of relations among people, different in age, culture and history, but who live together and together help one another grow."

Dear Friends,

This quote from Pope Francis beautifully describes the transformation taking place on Elliott Avenue—and in people's lives throughout the community—thanks to your help.

In this issue of *Blueprint*, you'll read about progress at *Burnet Commons III: The Park*, a partnership among Habitat, Southern Development and the City of Charlottesville to transform a former dumping ground into a glorious place of encounter among people from all walks of life.

By year's end, six families will have moved into homes there, including Johanna Velasquez, who will purchase the "Pope Francis Home." This home, made possible by a generous donation in honor of the Pope, is being built by Johanna, her future neighbors and hundreds of volunteers who have come together every day to contribute their sweat equity.

When complete, Johanna's new neighborhood will be a wonderful, sustainably-built, diverse community within a few minutes' walk from the Downtown Mall.

And the social connections underpinning the community are as critical as its architecture. For months, Partner Family homebuyers who have selected to purchase homes at *the Park* have gotten together for *community conversations* to share their dreams and aspirations, address potential conflicts that could arise in their future together, and begin to plan their future together.

This 360-degree approach to community building is part of our commitment to working side-by-side with our neighbors to make all of Charlottesville a better, more inclusive and prosperous place to live.

We hope that you too will take inspiration from Pope Francis' words and join with us this year as we bring people together in great new communities.

Best,

Dan Rosensweig

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Southern Development is very pleased with the progress of the community thus far.

"When you drive down the street in one of our communities, Habitat's homes fit right in," said Charlie Armstrong, Vice President of Southern Development. "That visual fit in the community is a good metaphor for the relationship we have with Habitat, and also for the relationships among residents within our communities."

This partnership is the next big building initiative propelling Habitat toward unprecedented heights. The 18 homes at *The Park* are part of an ambitious effort to work on a record 43 homes within the Greater Charlottesville service area this year. **B**

For more information about how you can support Habitat families, please call the office at 434-293-9066 or visit cvillehabitat.org. For information about purchasing Southern Development Homes at *The Park*, please contact Charif Soubra at 434-227-4191.

PROJECT 20

Scattered Site Initiative

Habitat is pleased to announce a new partnership with the City of Charlottesville. Finding ways to incorporate affordable housing opportunities throughout the City has long been one of Charlottesville's most elusive goals. In response to this, Habitat is working to provide a helping hand up out of housing poverty to twenty new, hard-working families this year both in mixed income communities and in upper income census tracts. The challenge is significant. Land is scarce in Charlottesville and land prices for infill lots are high.

To find out more about the Habitat scattered site initiative or to offer information about land to donate or sell, please contact Habitat Land Development and Special Projects Director Rush Otis at (434) 293-9066.



Above: Shymora Cooper and her children will be among the first people to move into the new Burnet Commons III community.



Above: Project 20 is Habitat's commitment to build at least 20 homes annually in partnership with low-income families and the community.



Habitat Building Home in Honor of Pope Francis

In September, during his inaugural visit to America, Pope Francis inspired millions with his message of peace and inclusion. In a few short weeks, his blessings will extend directly to a Habitat family here in Charlottesville.

Thanks to an anonymous donation of \$50,000 in honor of the Pope, Johanna Velasquez and her children will move into their new home in December.

"Owning my own home is a lifelong dream," said Johanna. "We are investing in something, and it has united us as a family even more."

The donation was inspired by Pope Francis' commitment to social justice and the reinvigoration of the Roman Catholic Church. In addition to furthering Habitat's mission of building and preserving homes, the Pope Francis Home will provide a unifying, celebratory opportunity for both Catholic and non-Catholic volunteers to work towards a common goal.

Hundreds of volunteers from the Church of the Incarnation, St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish, the Charlottesville Catholic School, and other parishes and volunteer groups have been hard at work on the Velasquez's home. These local Catholic Church partners are also banding together to raise an additional \$50,000 in matching funds to help Habitat extend a helping hand up to more members of the community.

At a recent blessing, corresponding with the start of construction, celebrants praised the Pope for his belief that decent housing is a basic human right. "We are so grateful for this thoughtful donation," said Habitat President and CEO Dan Rosensweig. "Pope Francis is a beacon of light, an incredible inspiration who, like his namesake St. Francis of Assisi, believes in spreading the joy of community to all." **B**

For more information or to support the Pope Francis House, please contact Development Manager Sasha Greene at 434-293-9066.

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SPOTLIGHT

Habitat Film: **Celebrate Home**

This fall, Habitat premiered a **NEW FILM** showcasing our work. We hope that you'll take a few minutes to watch it, meet some of the Habitat Homebuyers and see the new projects that we're working on.

Visit WWW.CVILLEHABITAT.ORG/FILM
or text **Film** to the number **51555** to have
a link to the film sent to your phone.

Questions? Contact Sasha Greene,
Development Manager at
sgreene@cvillehabitat.org
or 434-293-9066.

