



NEWS RELEASE
www.habitatwake.org

Contact:
Caroline Cate
Communications Manager
833.1999 x241
caroline.cate@habitatwake.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wake County Habitat Breaks Ground at New Site for Offices and Retail Warehouse

RALEIGH, North Carolina – Approximately 140 people gathered Friday, September, 16, 2006 to witness the turning of the dirt and to see building plans for a new facility to house the Habitat for Humanity of Wake County ReUse Center and affiliate offices. The new 6.5 acre site is just off the beltline at Capital Boulevard. After a brief program, the crowd cheered as two current Habitat homeowners, who had just addressed the group, donned hardhats, climbed aboard a Caterpillar front-end loader and pulled the lever to scoop the first turn of earth. The event was co-sponsored by Jackson Builders, BB&T, and Habitat for Humanity of Wake County.

The new, purpose-built facility will enable Habitat Wake to better serve homeowners, volunteers, donors and shoppers by improving their access to Habitat programs and services. As a result, the facility will greatly enhance Habitat Wake's ability to continue building simple, decent, affordable homes and creating sustainable communities in Wake County.

"Habitat Wake manages the mortgages for nearly 300 families and continues to promote homeownership to additional low-income families," said John Cramer, president of the board of directors for Habitat Wake. "It is a thriving operation with staff who support homeowner families, engage volunteers, reach out to civic and faith groups, construct houses, partner with corporations, and run a retail facility, the ReUse Center."

The Habitat Wake Board envisioned the first ReUse Center as early as 1991 when Dewey Alley served as president. Since then the facility has moved every few years to accommodate inventory expansion. “We all stand here today after literally hundreds and hundreds of volunteer hours have been invested to make this happen,” said Cramer. “It is the conviction of many people over many years coupled with the power of faith that make it possible for us to be here today breaking ground for our new facility.”

“The Habitat Wake ReUse Center will continue to be a retailer of donated, salvaged and surplus building supplies that raises funds to build Habitat homes,” said Woody Yates, Habitat Wake executive director. “The ReUse Center will continue to be a clearinghouse for building materials offered to the public at discounted prices. In fact, with our new facilities, we’ll be able to improve upon the shopping experience with generous parking, easy access to purchase pick-up and multiple donations docks. In our previous fiscal year the ReUse Center generated enough funds to support the building of seven Habitat homes. We believe the new facility has the potential to increase that number within two years to ten homes.”

With improved access at the new facility, the Habitat Wake ReUse Center can accept as well as display larger quantities of building materials. “This means we will increase our potential for sales—that provide financial resources to expand our home building capacity—and we’ll divert larger quantities of materials from landfills,” said John Stees, Habitat Wake ReUse Center operations manager.” In fiscal year 2005-2006, the affiliate diverted more than 2000 tons of construction and demolition debris from Wake County landfills.

Habitat Wake currently rents a warehouse on Alwin Court that is about 756,000 cubic feet; the new facility will dramatically increase the affiliate’s administrative and retail space to more than 1.2 million cubic feet. Parking will increase from 35 spaces to 107 spaces, and the new location will provide convenient roadway access. Meeting space for Habitat homeowner training classes and staff and volunteer work spaces will increase by more than 3,000 square feet. Project partners currently on board for the new facility include BB&T, Jackson Builders, and T. L. Williams Company.

Habitat Wake was recently awarded an \$8,500 grant from Wake County's Solid Waste Management Division, which will allow the incorporation of recycled content materials in the building. The affiliate is also seeking donations of building materials to help offset the costs of the new facility.

"Overall, our new 6.5 acre site and facility represents a \$4 million investment in our community to enable more families to achieve their dreams of first-time homeownership through a hand-up and not a hand out," said Yates. With the purpose-built facility that Habitat Wake will own, Habitat Wake will have the means to partner with more families.

"I am thankful that Habitat is taking this step to build a new ReUse Center and offices because I know that it will make it possible for more families to experience the joys and responsibilities of owning homes and taking care of their children," said Jean-Felix Milandou, a Habitat homeowner who spoke at the event.

Photos available upon request. Sample photos posted at <http://www.habitatwake.org/news.html>

About Habitat for Humanity of Wake County

Habitat for Humanity of Wake County develops partnerships to build simple, affordable homes with and for God's people in need, promotes self-reliance through homeownership, affirms the dignity of the family, and creates sustainable communities. In 2005-2006 Habitat Wake, a nationally-recognized affiliate of Habitat International, built 40 homes – 20 using the traditional volunteer-built model and 20 built by builders who donated their skills for Home Builders Blitz 2006 in June. Habitat Wake is considered to be in the top 2% of 1700 U.S. Habitat affiliates, based on housing production. www.habitatwake.org.
