



For more information, contact:
Kathryn Prioli, Community Relations Manager
kprioli@sshahabitat.org
781-337-7744 x. 10

20 Mathewson Drive
Weymouth, MA 02189
781-337-3775(fax)

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The Economic Benefits of Investing In South Shore Habitat for Humanity

A Chairman & CEO's View

When Andy Rodenhiser, CEO of Rodenhiser Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning was approached by Ron Yates, CEO of Iwaki America and the founding member of the Tri-Valley LPC of South Shore Habitat for Humanity about building a home in Medway, it was at a Town of Medway Planning Board meeting.

It was not a chance meeting of two area CEOs who just happened to be at the same town meeting. They were there because, as successful business leaders, they understand the value of personally investing in the community. Rodenhiser also serves as Chairman of the Planning Board for the Town of Medway.

In this interview, Rodenhiser outlines for us the economic benefits that building affordable homes with South Shore Habitat for Humanity brings to towns, to developers and builders and to all the other CEOs and businesses in the 35 communities that South Shore Habitat serves.

Interview:

South Shore Habitat (SSHH): Why invest in housing? Why Habitat?

Andy Rodenhiser (AR): When people are simply economic investors in housing there are no economic incentives to invest in the community. It is simply a portfolio investment in which they are only investing their money in hopes of getting the highest return at the lowest cost. There is no personal investment in the building, the community or the town. Worse yet, they are all too often completely oblivious to the rules, and even the standards, of human decency.

Habitat for Humanity is about people – about human dignity. Habitat puts housing into the hands of people who will value that home the most. These are homes where the people that are going to live in them are personally invested in the building, the community and the town. These are people who have come to raise their own families in this town. The connection to the person who is actively participating in the actual building of the home, who does the sweat equity work on the build site side by side along with his or her new neighbors, is making a personal investment in the community. It's a very different value proposition.

SSHH: From the view of a Town Planning Board Chair & CEO what are some specific economic benefits in working with Habitat?

AR: There are many economic benefits in working with Habitat for Humanity because of how the program was architected from the very beginning. It's a huge win for everyone involved.

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There are economic benefits to Towns:

- Habitat holds the deed to the land so the program allows towns to keep a piece of housing stock on the tax roll and each Habitat home goes toward a town's affordable housing credit in perpetuity.
- By purchasing a home, these homeowners are investing in their future and in the town.

There are economic benefits for developers and builders:

- When developers and builders fulfill their affordable housing requirements through Habitat for Humanity they immediately reduce their building costs and mitigate their risk, as Habitat takes on the financial responsibilities of building those homes.
- In addition, developers and builders benefit from the positive brand image and goodwill this creates for their companies within the local community.

There are economic benefits to area businesses:

- Great companies have great employees and that means creating a work environment where employees can excel. Sponsoring a Corporate Build Day with Habitat helps create a culture of team-building and community that translates into great customer service.
- Companies that invest in their local communities at the individual level create sustainability. They help strengthen and grow the regional economy.

SSHH: What message would you like to share with your leadership peers?

AR: With the economic horsepower this nation has there is no reason that people should have to go without a roof over their head. Rodenhiser Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning not only donated the entire HVAC system but we made certain it was the most energy efficient system on the market. When a family just does not have the opportunity to break through a certain economic threshold that they have no control over, we as leaders in the community need to step up and give back to our fellow man. I look forward to partnering again with South Shore Habitat on the next Tri-Valley project!

About Rodenhiser Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning

Rodenhiser Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning has served the 495 /128 area of Massachusetts since 1928 - building a reputation for professional and friendly service throughout the years. That superior level of service is one of the reasons more and more families and businesses continue to choose Rodenhiser for their plumbing, heating and air conditioning needs. For more information about Rodenhiser visit www.rodenhiser.com

About South Shore Habitat for Humanity

South Shore Habitat for Humanity (SSHH) located in Weymouth, MA was founded in 1986 and is an independent, nonprofit organization working in partnership with families, volunteers, congregations, and community leaders, throughout 35 cities and towns south and southwest of Boston

The cost for building homes is raised through private donations, corporate contributions, and through the support of faith congregations throughout the South Shore. Today, Habitat homes are in Abington, Braintree, Brockton, Cohasset, Duxbury, Easton, Hanover, Hanson, Hingham, Marshfield, Medway, Norwell, Pembroke, Quincy, Randolph, Rockland, Scituate, Sharon, Stoughton, Weymouth and Whitman. Since its inception the organization has built 50 homes for more than 85 adults and 170 children. For more information on services provided and how you can get involved, visit www.sshabitat.org.