

## **Property Proposal**

Habitat for Humanity of Marion County, South Carolina, Inc., was organized as a nonprofit corporation under the South Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501C(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code in 1994. Our stated mission is to work with the economically disadvantaged citizens of Marion County to help them create a better human habitat in which to live and work.

Since our founding on October 31, 1994, our Habitat affiliate has built a total of 31 quality, affordable homes for our citizens. Construction is currently ongoing on our 32<sup>nd</sup> home. A total of 22 homes have been constructed in the city of Marion and 9 homes have been constructed in the city of Mullins. We are currently in the planning phase of construction on 2 new homes in the city of Nichols in late 2011 or early 2012.

Our Habitat office is currently located in a small office within Marion City Hall. The city of Marion has been very generous through the years allowing us to use this office space at no cost. However, the space is very limited as our affiliate has grown over the course of 11 years.

In June 2010, our affiliate had a desire to open a Habitat for Humanity ReStore in the city of Marion. Habitat's ReStore resale outlets sell reusable and surplus building materials to the public. While every ReStore outlet is a little different, most focus on home improvement goods like furniture, home accessories, building materials and appliances. ReStore resale outlets accept donated goods which are sold to the general public at a fraction of the retail price. The proceeds help local Habitat affiliates fund the construction of Habitat homes within their communities.

Mr. Cyrus "Rus" Sloan has been generous enough to allow our affiliate to use the old Coca-Cola Bottling Warehouse located on Bobby Gerald Parkway as a "Warehouse Sales" outlet until we can be certified as an official Habitat ReStore by Habitat for Humanity International. While we are grateful for the opportunity to use this facility, again the floor space allowing us to display our merchandise for sale to the public is very limited. Another issue we have had in generating more income for our Habitat affiliate has been the location of the building. It is not in a high profile area of our county and we are limited in generating additional income.

Recently, I have been in discussion with Mr. T.J. Johnson in regards to the old Pee Dee Ford dealership property located on U.S. Hwy. 76, (tax map #56-134), between the cities of Marion and Mullins. I, along with our Board of Directors, believe this piece of property would be ideal in moving all of our Habitat operations. The building would provide us with ample office space in which to work and store all of our homeowner and office records, as well as provide us with a high-traffic opportunity to display the Habitat ReStore name. We are confident that the sales generated from this move would greatly enhance our ability to build more affordable homes for the citizens of Marion County.

Since the downturn of the United States economy in 2008, most of the industry that we have relied upon to help us build homes has left the county. We have also seen our contributions from the local churches and civic organizations take a huge hit. We have been relying upon the payments from our homeowners to sustain our home building as well as our administrative expenses. This is the primary reason our Board of Directors would like to see our Habitat ReStore become a reality.

Not only would this property benefit Habitat, it would also benefit the citizens of Marion County. As previously stated, ReStore resale outlets accept donated goods from businesses and individuals which are sold to the general public at a fraction of the retail price. The home improvement goods we sell offer low-income families the opportunity to purchase furniture, home accessories, building materials and appliances at a cost that is very affordable to them.

Mr. Johnson has quoted Marion County Habitat for Humanity a price of \$650,000 for the building and 6<sup>+</sup> acres of land. Affording this much needed property would be impossible for our affiliate at this time. Is there any state or federal funding available to help us secure this property, which in turn will help us fulfill our mission to the economically hard hit citizens of Marion County?

The Board of Directors and staff of Marion County Habitat for Humanity appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Ricky Hardee  
Executive Director