

HOMES TO BE BUILT ON EMPTY CITY LOTS

Developers seize opportunities created by newly vacant spaces.



Construction on homes in Wolf Creek in West Dayton is scheduled to start this summer. CONTRIBUTED

By Thomas Gnau
Staff Writer

ONLY IN THE DAYTON DAILY NEWS

After years of razing abandoned and dilapidated homes, the Montgomery County Land Bank is partnering with County Corp. and developer Oberer to build single-family homes on empty lots in Dayton's Wolf Creek neighborhood.

Construction will begin this summer, the Land Bank said.

Since 2014, the Land Bank has been awarded \$21.2 million and demolished more than 1,200 nuisance structures in nine partner communities.

In Dayton's Wolf Creek neighborhood, the Land Bank will transfer cleared titles of 21 demolition sites to County Corp Affordable Housing, a nonprofit affordable-housing agency. A grant from OHFA's Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program to the agency and its co-developer, Oberer, will make possible new, single-family homes built as affordable rentals.

"This project gives people an opportunity to build wealth that they wouldn't otherwise have,"

County Corp Vice President of Housing Adam Blake said. "It will also result in an \$8 million investment that will help stabilize the Wolf Creek neighborhood."

Near the Wright-Dunbar area, Wolf Creek is located just west of the Great Miami River, roughly north of West Third Street and south of Wolf Creek, extending west to James H. McGee Boulevard.

The new homes will be built on lots in an area bound by Broadway Street on the east, Edison Street on the north, McGee on the west and Second Street on the south.

Scott Sliver, a resident who lives on Second Street, praised the new construction.

"Any time there is something positive, especially on this side of the river, is exciting. People see it. They feel like the city cares about them and shows that more is being done other than downtown. It's residential so it will bring young families who will have good jobs and can pay taxes on these empty properties," Sliver said.

The tax-credit program allows a developer to claim tax credits over a decade to offset construction costs.

In exchange for the credits, the company must keep rents affordable and limit occupancy to residents with low-to-moderate-incomes for at least 30 years, when the units may be sold at market rate.

“Filling in these lots with housing will be a positive sign to encourage other developers to look at Wolf Creek,” said Oberer Chief Financial Officer Bob McCann. “Without the Land Bank clearing the titles, this project wouldn’t have gotten off the ground.”

“This project is a great example of the Land Bank’s ripple effect in the community,” Land Bank executive director Mike Grauwelman said.

The Land Bank’s role has been to supply lots on which new homes can be built, Grauwelman said Tuesday.

“Generally, the lots are those remaining after we acquire and demolish structures that were vacant and abandoned,” he said. “We have worked with organizations like County Corp. and the Long Term Tornado Recovery group to build new homes on these properties.”

The Land Bank has also provided lots for the Long Term Tornado Recovery project, including one at 4189 Saylor St. in Harrison Twp., he said.

The Harrison Twp. home is being built by volunteers, Grauwelman said. “There was a similar release today for a lot at 4646 Marlin (Ave.) in Trotwood. Again, it was a property that the Land Bank demolished and made available for reuse,” he said.

Together, these projects demonstrate how a “large number of organizations are working together to address the challenges in our community,” he said.

“The use of our lots is just gaining momentum,” Grauwelman said.

Contact this reporter at 937-681-5610 or email tom.gnau@coxinc.com.