

Expanding our Reach: Building Hope for Veterans



After 36 years, and our 300th home in Paterson beginning the predevelopment process, Paterson Habitat for Humanity (PHFH) is excited to be expanding our footprint into Passaic County and beginning a new project in the City of Passaic. This new project will develop a mixed-use building in the City of Passaic's 2nd ward, primarily for veterans.

In December 2019, the roof failed at Passaic's Albert Lawson Memorial VFW Post, and given the cost to repair it, the post seemed fated to go the way of so many others that have closed their doors permanently over recent years.

Although initial fundraising efforts were undertaken, it became apparent that the hundreds of thousands of dollars needed to rehabilitate the building would put repairs out of reach.

That's when the city decided to reach out to Paterson Habitat for Humanity, initially seeking help with repairs. While the repair project was deemed unviable by Paterson Habitat, those discussions eventually led to a different project proposal combining a new building for the VFW post with home ownership opportunities for veterans. This project was a winner.

The existing 100-year-old building will be demolished and replaced with a new two-story mixed-use building. The ground floor of this project will serve as a new Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) Hall for VFW Post 10117, which will also be available as a meeting space for the community, with a capacity to hold over 100 people. The second floor will offer 4 units of affordable housing for veteran families.

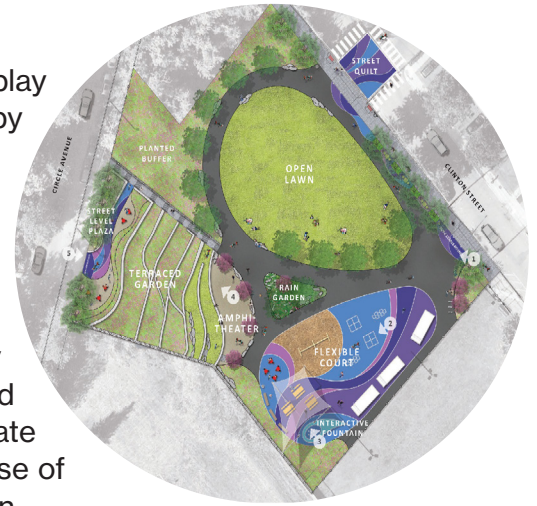
This project will help ensure the continuation of the VFW program, which currently supports 67 veteran members and their families, provide a gathering place for the community, as well as provide needed affordable veterans' housing.

The City of Passaic passed a redevelopment plan for the site in May 2020 and Paterson Habitat received site plan approval in December 2020. The professional team, under PHFH's leadership, is now proceeding with construction drawings and permitting. *(continue on page 3)*

Building a Safe Place to Play

A safe, stable, affordable place to call home, and a safe place to play outside. These are two of the biggest needs voiced over and over by community residents in Paterson's Northside neighborhood.

While Paterson Habitat for Humanity's (PHFH) housing development efforts over the past 30 years have been helping to address the first need, addressing the second has been more elusive. Until now. Utilizing funding from the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) program, PHFH has worked with the community to design **Clinton Street Park**. Guided by community input and stakeholder evaluation, the vision for Clinton Street Park is to create a safe and fun community park that promotes a positive image, sense of place, and becomes a catalyst for greater neighborhood revitalization.



The park design features three main areas: flexible court, open lawn, and terraced garden. The flexible court will include an interactive water feature, swings, and space for events. The open lawn allows for picnics and informal gatherings. The terraced garden includes a performance area and a street level plaza with game tables and seating.

Goals for the park include:

- Provide residents a park within a 10-minute walk
- Space for flexibility that allows for a variety of seasonal programming
- Develop a long-term maintenance program
- Offer diverse programmatic elements for a variety of potential park users

PHFH and the City of Paterson have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that provides PHFH with access to this city-owned property to conduct community-based planning charrettes, contract with a landscape architect to design the park, and work cooperatively to access funding to help develop this community-designed park.

A Note from Scott

I'm excited. Despite the very real challenges we continue to face as a community and country, I'm excited. I'm excited for the 11 families (9 new homeowners and 2 new transitional tenants) who moved into safe, stable, affordable Paterson Habitat homes during 2020.

I'm excited the completion of the Hamilton 7 project is now in sight (save the date for a community celebration on 5/1/21). I'm excited by our expanding partnership with the City of Passaic and the opportunities the partnership will bring to *Build Hope* for more families and more communities.

I'm excited by our award of \$2.6 million from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund which will enable us to move forward with the \$5.4 million (yes, we still need your support to fund the other 50%) development of our newest Paterson 4th Ward projects: Harrison 8 and Governor 5. I'm excited for the future of our work in the Northside neighborhood, guided by our updated Neighborhood Revitalization plan and the

Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit program, including Clinton Street Park and our 300th Home in Paterson.

I'm excited to expand on our work with the Social Justice League of Passaic County and other community partners through the Building Healthy Equitable Communities program and other community wide initiatives. I'm excited we are intentionally addressing issues of Racial Equity in our organization, community, and sector.

I'm excited by the future plans that are coming into focus as we work to finalize our new strategic plan *40 & Beyond*.

I'm excited. For all of the above reasons and more, I'm excited. None of this will be easy, and all of these initiatives are made more complicated by the multiple expanding crises we are facing, but I'm still excited. I'm excited not because it will be easy but because we are doing the hard work of *Building Hope*. Thank you for continuing to build with us.

(page 1 continued) The VFW Hall will have a total of 3,172 square feet. In addition, four units of affordable housing for veterans will be built above. Three of the four units will have two bedrooms and one bathroom. The fourth unit will have one bedroom and one bathroom. All units will be handicap accessible and each unit will have a dedicated parking spot. All units will come with air conditioning, stove, refrigerator, and hook-ups for a washer/dryer.

By working with the City and the VFW on this project, our partnership together and the invested interests of all will mean that this project will be sustainable long after the building has been constructed. Furthermore, the current and future VFW members will continue to be served by the VFW post for years to come in the new space.



Paterson Habitat is excited to partner with the city of Passaic, the Albert Lawson Memorial VFW Post, and YOU on this initiative. **Please help us provide a place to call home for four veteran families.** You can give today by using the enclosed envelope or by visiting patersonhabitat.org/donate.

Building Community

What is the NRTC? The Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) program provides an opportunity for companies that pay state tax in NJ to support non-profit organizations in lieu of paying a portion of their tax bill. Non-profits, who have an approved Neighborhood Revitalization plan, submit project proposals each year to the Division of Community Affairs (DCA) for acceptance into the qualified tax credit pool.

Paterson Habitat for Humanity oversees the Northside Neighborhood Revitalization plan and submitted our annual project proposal in the fall, which was accepted into the qualified pool for the third year in a row!



As part of our 2021 project plan, we will:

Invest in Affordable Housing:

- Build a new Energy Star compliant home in Paterson's Northside neighborhood, our 300th home in Paterson!
- Rehabilitate and upgrade existing affordable housing stock through a roofing & siding program offered to qualified homeowners.

Enhance Community Recreational Space:

- Begin construction to convert a vacant lot on Clinton Street into much needed public green space. The design of this new park was completed as part of a previous years NRTC project plan.

Support Small Businesses: Micro-grants for Microenterprises:

- Award two \$10,000 grants to Northside businesses with less than 5 staff members to improve visibility along the West Broadway and Haledon Avenue commercial corridors.
- Support the creation and expansion of microenterprises along the North Main Street corridor.

Our 2021 project plan continues and extends Paterson Habitat's 30-year mission of helping families in the Northside on a path toward stability, self-reliance, and strength.



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