

Habitat is building new home for Rochelle family

Group is hoping for donations of funds and materials

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The build is on for a new Habitat Home for a Rochelle family.

Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County had to cancel its spring fundraiser due to COVID-19, losing \$15,000 in donations, but construction for a new home for the Vega family will begin this summer.

Felix and Tanya Vega and their five children will be the recipients of the home slated to be built at 122 S. 9th St. in Rochelle, by the end of the year. A groundbreaking and land-blessing ceremony was held in June.

“COVID-19 impacted us,” Ogle Habitat Executive Director Vanessa White-Broome said. “We’re really trying to write additional grants to make up for it. We’re hoping for donations of funds and materials. We’re going to go on with it anyways and hope to get the family in by the end of the year. We need money for materials.”

Habitat is also looking for skilled and unskilled volunteers to help with the project. The lot was donated by Tim Bruns two years ago.

That’s always beneficial. It saves us the cost of the land, which I believe in this case was \$5,000-\$6,000.”

The home will be the 13th that Habitat has built and donated in Ogle County. Excavation is lined up as well as custom concrete for the foundation. The building permit was issued last Friday. Building will



Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County’s newest home recipient’s Felix and Tanya Vega pose with their children and Rochelle Mayor John Bearrows at the site of their new home. Photo supplied.

begin this month.

The house will be four bedrooms, one room larger than the one Habitat built last year. That one cost \$97,000, and White-Broome said this one is estimated to cost \$95,000 thanks to not having to do any demolition on the lot.

“But that depends on the materials we get donated,” White-Broome said.

The Vega family was selected from an application process that began last fall. They were chosen based on need, a willingness to partner

and level of income. The families Habitat partners with help build the home themselves.

Habitat prides itself on its policy of “hands up, not a hand-out.” Those that receive homes make mortgage payments to Habitat. They stay engaged throughout the mortgage and provide counseling on how to pay for and maintain a home.

Those that apply for Habitat homes are usually unable to receive a loan due to credit issues.

“This family’s current living situation was inadequate and unsafe,”

White-Broome said. “They were living with a family member. It was in a basement. There were concerns about if they could get out if there was a fire as well as the condition. There was water and sewage that was coming in. It was very cramped.”

The Vega family’s children range from 8-18 in age.

“They’ve been with that family member for a while,” White-Broome said. “But they need a home of their own.”

