

The Quarterly Post

Spring 2024



Greater Matthews
Habitat
for Humanity®

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greatermatthewshabitat.org



Meet our Current Homebuyer:

Ryan



Future Greater Matthews Habitat homeowner Ryan loves sharing his passion for cooking with his two children, 10-year-old Connor and 8-year-old Izzy. Their favorite? Spaghetti and meatballs. **"That is a weekly staple,"** he says, laughing. **"And they get upset with me when we skip it."** Even though Ryan works as a line cook for a country club, as a single father, he understands the importance of the three of them cooking together and sharing meals as a family.

Currently, Ryan is renting a two-bedroom townhome in Matthews. While he can afford the rent, the unit is not sized appropriately for his family, with the children sharing one bedroom **"The one good thing about it is that it's affordable – my rent right now is \$850, so I'm very lucky. That being said, it's a two bedroom, so my kids share a bedroom. And with them getting older, being a boy and a girl, they're going to want their own spaces eventually."**

However, there are other problems. **"It's old, it's got some structural issues that I've tried to have addressed and just haven't been. It's got original windows, linoleums coming up all over the place, the counters are kind of settling and getting a little wonky. It's affordable, but it's not the nicest of places, or the safest",** Ryan explains. His particular safety concerns involve their bathtub - located on the second floor. **"They didn't do the greatest job of sealing the bath tub and as the kids were younger, they were taking baths and splashing water out it was getting under the floors and that's the part that's kind of unsafe. It's also starting to rust out around some of the drains and stuff...."**

our bathroom floor is actually a little, squishy."

With the tub being located on the second floor, Ryan worries that, at some point, it will fall through the ceiling. "I've had it looked at three different times," he explains. "Each time a guy will come take a picture and say 'ooh, carpentry needs to be involved in this one' and then I just never hear back....I really think they're just planning on dealing with it when I move out, but with the affordability of the place I've kind of just hung on."

But by partnering with Greater Matthews Habitat to build and buy his own home, Ryan looks forward to the family having their own safe space. He plans to improve their meals together by growing his own fruit and vegetables. "I'm really excited about hopefully being able to do a garden. Every year I do tomatoes in pots and they never do that well, but I keep trying every single year. So I'd really like to be able to grow my own produce and have a nice little section that I can make my own garden. And then also, doing landscaping...just watching the progress of growing all the stuff and taking care of it and having a beautiful garden out front and out back. I look forward to being able to do that with my own space."

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Ryan will be purchasing one of the homes in our first-duplex. He is expected to close on his home later this spring.

Help more families build a foundation for a better future.



The Greater Matthews Habitat for Humanity Homebuyer Program

Future Habitat homeowners are active participants in the homebuilding and home buying process. To be eligible for our program, all applicants must meet four criteria:



Need for Housing

We partner with families who experience crowding, expensive rent, or unsafe conditions in their current housing.



Demonstrated Income

Applicants must demonstrate the ability to repay an affordable mortgage, about 30% of their monthly income, and fall within our income guidelines.



Willingness to Partner

Homebuyers participate in the construction of their home by completing 150 volunteer "HIP-hours".



Residency

Applicants must have lived or worked in our service area at least 12 months prior to applying.



Our affordable housing initiatives

At the heart of our initiatives lie strategic approaches aimed at combating various facets of the affordable housing crisis.

Through targeted efforts, we aspire to achieve long-term outcomes centered around financial stability, community engagement, and improved health for all. While we realize that addressing the affordable housing crisis will require a multi-faceted approach with many stakeholders, these initiatives set our overarching goals and objectives as an organization and identify the role we can play to serve our community.



Homeownership

We focus on building affordable homes and empowering families through property equity and financial stability. This leads to:

-  increased financial stability
-  better health
-  improved education
-  increased civic engagement
-  decreased environmental footprint

Habitat Homebuyers Natalie and Isaiah's story sheds light on the tangible impact of Homeownership.





Aging in Place

We assist seniors in making essential home modifications, thus enabling them to live with comfort and dignity in their own homes.

This helps improve:

-  comfort and dignity
-  longevity and quality of life
-  mental and physical health
-  housing affordability

Through our Aging in Place Initiative, we assist older adults like Elizabeth in maintaining their homes as they age, providing a sense of security and comfort that comes with cherished spaces.



Home Preservation

Our efforts maintain existing affordable homes, preventing displacement and combating gentrification. This helps to:

-  maintain safe and healthy living environments
-  preserve housing affordability
-  boost property value & combat gentrification

The restoration of the historic Rowland-Clay home (*story next page*) exemplifies our Home Preservation Initiative. From structural repairs to accessibility modifications, it demonstrates our dedication to preserving community heritage and supporting residents like James.





Preserving Our History: The Rowland-Clay Home

When asked why James likes living in Matthews, he points to his bedroom in the home that's been in his family since around 1929 and says, **"The fact that I was born here in Matthews, in that room, almost 73 years ago, makes it home for me. Every place that I've been, you have your ups and downs, but, emotionally, when I get back here, I'm alright. Whatever happens, I'm alright."**

James' emotional tie to his home underscores its significance as more than just a building – it's a symbol of family and belonging. The Rowland-Clay house holds deep roots within the community and serves as a poignant reminder of our area's rich cultural heritage. Designated a historic property in 2005, its preservation is vital to maintaining our collective history.

Reflecting on the state of his home, James recalls, **"It was really bad... The floors were messed up, water running up under the house contributed to the structural integrity giving away. You would be sitting down there on the toilet, and you're looking up, at the stars, you don't know whether to flush cause you're going to go backwards too. A big branch kind of impaled the roof, and there was a hole in the roof coming all the way to the kitchen. Every time it rains, there's water all over the place."**

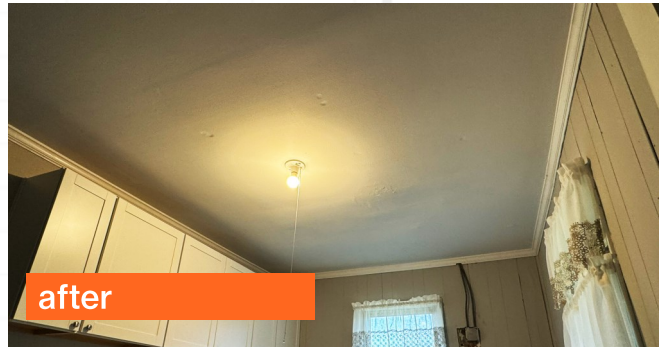
Luckily, this past winter, we partnered with James to address these concerns as part of our Home Preservation and Aging in Place initiatives. Through our Critical Home Repair Program, generously funded by the Town of Matthews, the Community Development Block Grant, Mecklenburg County, and individual Habitat supporters, we embarked on a comprehensive restoration effort. From repairing the roof and rafters to installing piers for structural support, our goal was to ensure the home's safety, accessibility, and preservation. Accessibility enhancements, such as an accessible shower, were also incorporated to improve the quality of life for James and future occupants.

Reflecting on his hopes for the future of the home, James shares, **“Oh, I'd like for it to remain a valued part of the Crestdale community. I'm gonna do all that I can to keep up with the upkeep of the house and hopefully as I have moved on to a different place, hopefully I've been wise enough to choose someone who understands and appreciates what we have.”**



before

Restoring the Rowland-Clay home is not just about preserving a piece of history; it's about honoring the legacy of those who came before us and creating a safe and dignified space for future generations. As we near the completion of this project, we are reminded of the profound impact our work has on individuals like James and the enduring spirit of our community. James expressed his gratitude for the support, saying, **“Once again, thank you to the Town of Matthews, to Habitat, the Preservation Society. This has been a lifesaver.”**



after



before



after

Our Critical Home Repair program assist low-income homeowners with essential, cost-free repairs that improve health and safety while preserving homeownership. So far this fiscal year (July 1st-now), our program has:

Repaired

15

homes

Served

27

people

The Historical Significance of the Rowland-Clay Home

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Landmark Commission judged the Rowland-Clay home as having historical significance based on three characteristics. The home is:



one of only four houses that remain to demonstrate the architecture of Tank Town, a rural community settled by freed slaves in the 1860's



only one of the four Tank Town homes that is built in the Craftsman style, which demonstrates the strivings of rural African American workers in the first half century after emancipation



an important remnant of a rural community, and way of life, that no longer exists in Mecklenburg County



Read more about the Rowland-Clay home and its historical significance:



Tank Town, now known as Crestdale, is the one of the oldest African-American communities in Mecklenburg County. Learn more:













Spring clean with a purpose!

The Greater Matthews Habitat ReStore is a good deal for you, your community, and the environment. Every purchase and donation helps fund Greater Matthews Habitat's mission.

Spring into Action with the Greater Matthews Habitat for Humanity ReStore! This season, we're inviting the community to join our spring cleaning efforts with a purpose. Donate your gently used furniture, appliances, and home goods to the ReStore and help support our work of building and repairing homes in our community. Let's clean, donate, and shop to build a stronger, more sustainable community together!

You can make a tax-deductible donation of the following items:

-  furniture
-  home decor
-  appliances
-  flooring/rugs
-  electronics
-  housewares
-  lighting
-  lawn/garden
-  building materials
-  & more!



When it comes to donating, you've got options!

Drop it off

We can help unload your donation and provide you with a donation receipt once the items have been approved. Our drop-off hours are Tuesday-Friday, 10:30am-4:00pm, and Saturdays 9:30am-4:00pm.

Request a Pickup

Our donation pick-up service is reserved for large donations in our Greater Matthews service area. We carefully evaluate each request to ensure that we can recover the costs associated with the pick-up and raise funds for our mission through the resale of your donations. Visit gmhfh.org/ReStorePickUp or use the QR code for more info.



store hours

Tues-Fri: 10am-5pm & Sat: 9am-5pm

donation hours

Tues-Fri: 10:30am-4pm & Sat: 9:30am-4pm

2447 East John Street
Matthews, NC 28105

greatermatthewshabitat.org

Blueprint Brief



Construction on our first-ever duplex is expected to be finished in late spring!



\$500,000

Granted to us by the
Town of Matthews

This largest single gift solidifies their continued commitment to affordable housing.



Gary's House

The Home Builders Association of Charlotte honored their late Board Member, Gary Loflin, who passed away in 2016, with a financial investment in the construction of our duplex.



Safety First!



We now have defibrillators at the ReStore and build site, donated and trained by From the Heart CPR and Joe from the Building Committee.

Rock the Block: Mint Hill

We will be holding our second-ever Rock the Block event on April 19th in Mint Hill. Volunteers from Canopy Housing Foundation will be performing minor exterior repairs for homes in the area. Rock the Block enhances neighborhoods through essential exterior maintenance and landscaping which boosts health, community vibrancy, and property values.



We need land!

Low-cost land is critical to our ability to build affordable housing. With land costs at an all-time high, land donations offer a tremendous way to assure the affordability of the houses that we build. We encourage the donation of any type of real estate.



No matter
who you are
or where you
come from,
everyone
needs a
decent,
affordable
home to thrive.

Visit gmhfh.org/give



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