

## OPEN HOUSE

## LI'S HOUSE



United Way of Long Island's Housing team, Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, center, and Suffolk County Landbank volunteers gave hands-on help to build a house that they hope will be a model to local developers.

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

The new year promises to be an awesome one for one lucky homeowner who will be enjoying all the features that an innovative house of the future offers.

Located at 23 Furman Avenue in East Patchogue, the 1,360-square-foot abode on a 10,000-square-foot lot is a new build scheduled to be completed this month. The modest Farm Ranch-style dwelling may seem like an ordinary three-bedroom, two-bath home with a yard, although it's

anything but ordinary. It's a certified Zero Energy Ready Home featuring advanced energy savings, comfort, health, durability, quality, and performance that can be expected to stand the test of time.

"Homeowners will benefit long term and save money on electric, heating, and gas," says Rick Wertheim, senior vice president of Housing and Green Initiatives at United Way of Long Island, which has been involved with innovative building projects since 1996. "That's the transformational thing about

this house. We're building these houses to educate and make communities aware of what is a terrific resource when you're building or remodeling."

The nonprofit, which has won U.S. Department of Energy awards for similar high-tech homes the group built on LI, follows recommendations from the federal agency on how to build energy-efficient homes. Most Long Island homes aren't built to such high-level stringent construction standards.

This is the first time that the Deer Park-based nonprofit is teaming up

with Suffolk County Landbank to sell a home for struggling first-time home buyers who would otherwise be unable to afford one.

"The work of the Suffolk County Landbank is vital to our operations, helping to fight against blight and abandonment," said Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone. "I want to thank our partners at United Way of Long Island, whose commitment and investment have made this project possible."

The new structure replaced a boarded-up abandoned house that



Professionals and volunteers joined forces to build the house.

had been a blight on the community. The price of the new home is \$375,000.

"One of United Way of Long Island's goals is to develop quality housing and to ensure that families and individuals are living in healthy and safe environments," says the organization's President and CEO Theresa Regnante. "Our organization is not new to housing development...we are simply doing more of it and taking advantage of the latest technology in the industry, such as using tablets to control room temperatures."

So, what makes this 'little house that could' so unique and ahead of its time? According to United Way of LI, such homes have pre-engineered components and advanced insulating materials.

"We build the house as a system," says Wertheim. "Every component complements the other. Everyone works together for the same goal."

Key features include:

- High vaulted ceilings and an open-plan living, kitchen, dining area
- Generous-sized covered porch for outdoor living; a drainable driveway
- U.S. Department of Energy Zero Energy Ready Home certified
- Solar panels provide low- or no-energy bill
- Healthy home with continuous whole-house ventilation and advanced air filtration
- State-of-the-art heating and cooling system
- Energy Star certified
- Water management system to protect roof, walls, foundation from water damage

• Advanced exterior wall system consisting of air sealing, quality insulation and high-performance triple-pane windows

- Smart home technology
- Low VOC (volatile organic compounds) paint and interior finishes
- Water conservation fixtures
- Energy-efficient lighting, appliances
- Advanced septic system protects local groundwater
- Drought-resistant, native-grown landscaping

"This is our recipe for all homes: healthy, super energy-efficient and bright," says Wertheim. "You live better, feel better in them."

"These homes are so energy efficient — you only need 20,000 BTUs — that all or most of their annual energy consumption will be offset

with renewable energy, like solar panels," he adds.

Workers have been schooled at United Way of Long Island's E3 SmartBuild Training Center, which also offers residents free Healthy Home Energy Assessments. But best of all, this is a rare case of a builder not trying to make a buck on the deal.

"The Patchogue house is new construction and will be completed February 2019," Wertheim says, noting that a lottery for qualified applicants will be announced at a later date.

Individuals who are interested in first-time homebuyer counseling or education should contact Elaine Kaleta, United Way of Long Island at 631-940-3721 / ekaleta@unitedwayli.org. To view more images & videos visit; unitedwayli.org/homeofthefuture



BEFORE: The new house replaced an abandoned home, which was demolished.



AFTER: An artist's rendering of what the completed house will look like.