The LaSalle Eco-Demonstration Home

Background

Built in 1926, the LaSalle Home embodies many of the distinctive characteristics of that era. Originally intended as a multi-family home, it is a two-story, all-brick home with Tudor influences—a peak roof is complemented by a triangular gable and half-timbering wood detail. Spacious windows allow light to filter throughout the entire structure and detailed masonry breaks up the brick walls. The house is roughly 2,500 square feet (excluding the basement) and offers spacious, well-lit rooms. At the time of its construction, houses were built to accommodate growing families and many were two family flats.

The LaSalle Home is located one block south of Focus: HOPE’s main campus on a tree-lined, residential street. The two family flat had been abandoned, and become a neighborhood eyesore and blighting influence, having twice been the subject of fires, and a frequent target for illegal dumping. Scavenger activity has resulted in the stripping of nearby homes and apartment buildings. The former owner had twice purchased the property at the Wayne County auction, and allowed it to revert after not paying the taxes. Focus: HOPE Revitalization purchased the property at auction in 2012, and, with the pro bono assistance of Dickinson Wright, filed suit to quiet title.

14030 LaSalle, aka The LaSalle Eco-Demonstration Home is an ideal location for community use as it is positioned midway between Focus: HOPE’s campus and the LaSalle/Ford Play Lot, a hub of community activities.

LEED Platinum

As part of Focus: HOPE’s leadership efforts to radically transform the HOPE Village neighborhood surrounding its campus in the heart of Detroit, it is rehabilitating the abandoned two family flat to LEED Platinum standards. The plan is to maintain the first floor unit for use as a community meeting space, available for tours and viewing of the LEED Platinum features through exhibits, cut-a-ways and interpretive signage.

Eco-Features

Included in the project design are exceptionally high R-Values for insulating materials, on-site renewable energy in the form of a photovoltaic power generating source (5.9 kW) and a significant use of reclaimed and recycled materials.
Closed Cell Spray Insulation: provides an airtight seal and acts as a barrier to moisture; deters mold. R-40 insulation in most areas.

**Insulated Basement Floor Slab and Basement Vapor Barrier:** basement is dry and warm

**HVAC Air-Source Ducted Heat Pumps** – heat pumps are highly efficient, and are capable of providing one-and-a-half to three times more heat energy to a home than the electrical energy they consume. This is possible because a heat pump moves heat rather than converting it from a fuel. In addition, the heat pumps avoid problems of carbon-monoxide poisoning, and enable all the energy for the home to be supplied by the PV units on the roof.

**Radon Extraction system, LED lights, Energy Star windows**

**Why is this Project Important?**

- This state of the art high performance home demonstrates what is possible with thousands of other similar abandoned structures in the city of Detroit
- The local contractors and subcontractors involved in the project are being exposed to and are learning LEED approaches to energy efficiency, equipping them to use those techniques in other projects in Detroit.
- The home will become a living demonstration in the heart of the city, allowing Detroit residents to tour the home and see firsthand affordable strategies for making their own homes more energy efficient.

**Current Status**

EcoWorks, a Detroit nonprofit organization with expertise in energy efficiency, green building, and sustainability, collaborated with Focus: HOPE Revitalization to prepare the LaSalle House for redevelopment. Detroit Future Build Construction, an affiliate of Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice, is the general contractor for the project, and is close to completion on the interior work. Solar panels are installed, and exterior work is slated to be completed by the end of October.

Kevin McNeely, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Detroit Regional Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council is providing advice and assistance in meeting the LEED requirements.