

Rebuilding Union Beach

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the “Rebuilding Union Beach” project?

Rebuilding Union Beach is a demonstration project to purchase and install modular homes for 13-15 Union Beach families whose homes were destroyed by Hurricane Sandy.

Project Goals:

1. Help eligible families in Union Beach return to resilient, durable homes
2. Create an affordable demolition-to-reconstruction program model for families rebuilding with their insurance proceeds, government program grants and other funds.
3. Rebuild the community using resilient and eco-friendly construction principles and standards
4. Inform the rebuilding efforts of other shore towns affected by Hurricane Sandy

Why Union Beach?

Union Beach is a small, low to moderate-income community located on the Raritan Bay in New Jersey. 85% of its 2,600 homes were flooded with at least two feet of water. 272 homes have been demolished to date.

How is the project funded?

Grants to support the project have been awarded by The Hurricane Sandy New Jersey Relief Fund (\$1,670,000) and the Robin Hood Foundation (\$750,000). The Princeton Area Community Foundation is the fiscal sponsor. Many non-profit organizations, faith-based groups and volunteers have provided assistance to the project. *Rebuilding Union Beach* Partners are recognized on Page 3.

How were homeowners selected?

Program candidates participated in a financial interview. The information was provided anonymously to an independent Selection Committee appointed by the Mayor of Union Beach. The Committee, comprised of non-residents used a lottery system to select participants from a pre-qualified pool of candidates.

Eligibility requirements for participation:

1. Primary residency and home ownership in Union Beach
2. At or below 175% of the Area Median Income (AMI)
3. Have a funding gap between the cost of rebuilding a new home and benefits received
4. No contract with a state-managed program or contractor.
5. Agree to remain in the home for three years
6. Sufficiency of income and/or other resources to pay projected mortgage costs, real estate taxes, insurance, and other debt service payments, and home and living expenses
7. Manageable debt to mortgage ratio

Why Modular Homes?

Modular homes are constructed in accordance with state and local building codes in the controlled environment of a production facility, transported in one or more sections, and secured to a permanent structural foundation. Modular homes may take as little as 4-6 weeks to build and install. Building in an enclosed facility minimizes weather delays, enables efficient staffing, and effective re-use of excess building materials. In addition, fewer building inspections are required than for conventional homes. Modular home construction offers a potentially fast and cost-effective way to rebuild from Hurricane Sandy.

This project does not use “manufactured homes,” formerly known as mobile homes. These are built to the Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards (HUD Code) which are not as stringent as state and local codes.

How were the manufacturers selected?

A variety of modular construction types and more than 50 manufacturers were considered. The *Rebuilding Union Beach* project team visited 8 production facilities, examined models and specifications, and interviewed staff.

Criteria for manufacturer and model selection included:

1. Cost
2. Quality
3. Ability to meet project specifications for resilience and durability
4. Ability to meet production and time frame requirements
5. Energy Star Rated homes that incorporate eco-friendly features
6. Financial capacity

Who manufactured and installed the modular homes?

Home models are designed and built by Foremost Industries working with Contractor, DSW Homes, and by Wimbledon Properties, a subsidiary of Clayton Homes. Foremost Industries, DSW Homes and Wimbledon Properties are all on the list of approved contractors for the New Jersey Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Elevation and Mitigation Program. Design, construction and project management is in collaboration with the Rebuilding Union Beach Project Team.

What are the homes like?

Six home models have been chosen ranging from 950 – 1,350 square feet. They incorporate many resilient, durable and eco-friendly features and materials including:

1. Homes raised on pilings to heights exceeding FEMA regulations
2. Hurricane strapping between foundation, walls and roof and other construction details that meet or exceed current building codes
3. Higher rated insulation to increase energy efficiency and reduce utility bills
4. Cement board siding which is impervious to water, insects, and mold, and able to withstand high winds
5. Flood water mitigation and water conservation features including semi-pervious driveways, rainwater catchment, and erosion-resistant native planting
6. Renewable and non-toxic materials such as bamboo, linoleum flooring and zero-VOC paint
7. Materials with recycled content including roof shingles and cement board
8. Larger window area to increase natural light
9. Installation of solar panel systems to reduce energy costs
10. Front porches to provide easily accessible outdoor space and promote an active streetscape

Rebuilding Union Beach Partners

Major Financial Support:

Hurricane Sandy New Jersey Relief Fund
Robin Hood Foundation

Additional Financial Support:

Borough of Madison, NJ
Johnson & Johnson
KPI Bridge Oil
Princeton Area Community Foundation
Rotary International
Wade Martin of Morgan Stanley

Donations and Professional Services:

A Room in Our Hearts
American Standard
Burners Without Borders
Buhler Ford
Capmark
EHI, Environmental Health Investigations
Gateway Church of Christ
Gibbons Law
Green Depot
GRID Alternatives
High Socks for Hope
Home Depot
Jersey Shore United
Jewish Federation
Master Gardeners
Matrix New World Engineering
McCarter-English
Mellick-Tully
New Jersey Phoenix
Operation Hope

Paul Beck & Associates Engineering
Petruzelli General Contractors
R&B Debris LLC
Rebuild/Recover
Richard E. Stockton & Associates
Rosen Group Architecture + Design
Samaritan's Purse
Steven Watson
Target
UB Union Hose Fire Department
Volunteer Lawyers for Justice
Princeton University
Rutgers University

Union Beach Mayor Paul Smith and Municipal
Department Heads

Hundreds of dedicated volunteers who came from
across town and across the country to help our
families and rebuild our community

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR FUNDERS, SUPPORTERS AND VOLUNTEERS!

Rebuilding Union Beach Project Team

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