

RDA properties going to Habitat, church



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Advocate file photo -- Workers and volunteer students from LSU help in March with two homes built by Habitat for Humanity. Habitat is getting nine pieces of property from the Redevelopment Authority to build up to seven homes in Scotlandville and on Mohican and Evangeline streets.

BY CHAD CALDER

Advocate business writer

The East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority on Thursday approved the transfer of nine pieces of property to Habitat for Humanity and one to Bethel AME Church.

The RDA also discussed a program to help corner supermarkets offer healthier food to customers and additional funds for its ongoing façade improvement program and the demolition of blighted properties.

Project manager James Andermann said the houses that will be transferred to Habitat for Humanity are in Scotlandville and on Mohican and Evangeline streets. The one going to Bethel is across from the church on South Street.

Habitat will build between five and seven homes on the properties, while Bethel will use its lot for parking in the short term and a community center in the long term.

Andermann said the average cost of acquiring and clearing title to the properties was \$8,500.

The RDA also discussed a grant program that will allow corner supermarkets in the 70805, 70807 and 70802 ZIP codes to apply for grants for improvements and technical assistance that allow them to offer healthier foods — such as meats and produce — to customers.

Project manager Marcelle Boudreaux said the RDA partnered with the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Healthy City Campaign, which received \$100,000 in grant money from Blue Cross Blue Shield. She said the RDA will begin accepting applications next year.

The RDA also approved an agreement with the city-parish that will give it access to \$250,000 in community development block grant money to fund its ongoing façade improvement program and a second agreement for \$140,000 in CDBG funds for the RDA's demolition work on blighted properties.

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