Project: **Habitat for Humanity**, *Yonkers, NY*

Concrete Facts
5,000 psi carbon fiber grid reinforced concrete

Products Used
Precast waffled foundation panels
Precast stem and roof decks with carbon fiber
Precast insulated carbon fiber wall panels
Precast insulated demising wall panels

Owner
Habitat for Humanity of Weschester County
New Rochelle, NY

General Contractor
Habitat for Humanity of Weschester County
New Rochelle, NY

Architectural Firm
Equus Design Group
Belmont, MA

Engineering Firm
Stephen Winters Engineers
Norwalk, CT

Precasters
Oldcastle Precast, Building Systems Division
South Bethlehem, NY
High Concrete Structures, Inc.
Denver, PA

Precaster/ Erector
Oldcastle Precast, Building Systems Division
South Bethlehem, NY

CONCRETE EVIDENCE:

MAPA
Mid-Atlantic Precast Association
www.mapaprecast.org

Habitat Breaks Wood Frame Habit for Homes

When we think of the organization, Habitat for Humanity, we recall the image made popular by former president Jimmy Carter—crews of volunteers swinging hammers and raising studded out walls in urban neighborhoods. While this image may still hold true for many Habitat for Humanity projects, Jim Killoran, Director of Habitat for Humanity of Westchester County in the New York metro area, sees it differently. Building ten to twenty homes a year in the densely populated area, Jim likes thinking outside the box. Jim, who has neither a construction or engineering background, doesn't look at construction in terms of pure costs and logistics. Driven by his faith and a social services background that covers some of the toughest spots in Los Angeles and New York, the former seminarian is chiefly concerned with getting families in decent, cost effective housing as quickly as possible. So when Killoran was approached by Oldcastle Precast, Building Systems Division. about the possibility of using precast for residential units, Killoran was more than receptive. Recalling that a great mind like Thomas Edison first conceived and built the concrete house, made the concept of using precast for residential housing even more inviting.

"Precast breaks the traditional mold. I can do twenty-five shells collectively, knowing I am getting a great product that will get families in homes quicker and last much longer than a frame structure. After all, when you look at the great structures of Rome that have stood for thousands of years, they were made of stone and concrete," remarks Killoran. Although this 2800 sq. ft. double in Yonkers is Habitat's first experience with a total precast structure, Killoran is already thinking about getting more families into similar housing and possibly condos down the road. "The homeowners are very excited about the homes, precast costs less to maintain and they are more energy efficient, which saves expensive oil," says Killoran.

Precast by it's very nature is also fireproof, vermin resistant and has excellent soundproofing qualities—a real advantage in dense urban settings. Plus, the exterior of precast can be made to look like residential siding and a wide variety of other finishes. Killoran, one day, can envision precast curing some much larger ills of modern urban living. He sees precast as a tool in building better cities. Better housing and more attractive urban environments would have a snowball effect on social and transportation problems. Less commuter time would allow families to be together more, reduce oil consumption and lessen the load on major thoughways and bridges in and out of our cities.

"Our mistake in the 60's was building apartments for low income families. Since the family had no ownership in them, they quickly deteriorated. Habitat has corrected that error by creating wealth and ownership for families," remarks Killoran.

With the help and durability of precast and the aspirations of visionary humanitarians like Jim Killoran, Habitat for Humanity will be able to fulfill the American Dream for more families quicker and better than ever.

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