



Architects collaborating with engineers for shelter

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Architects Collaborating with Engineers for Shelter (ACES) was formed in 2006 by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Rochester chapter and the American Council of Engineering Cos. (ACEC) Rochester region. The two organizations came together to jointly fund and construct a city residence (ACES House) in cooperation with Flower City Habitat for Humanity (FCHH).

The 2006 ACES House project was so successful that the two organizations are coming together for a second house (ACES 2). The goal set for the 2009 ACES 2 House is to construct a LEED-certified structure. To this end, an ACES 2 subcommittee was formed in late 2007 to review the FCHH standard house design that will be built in 2009. FCHH designated a site for the project in the city that meets the LEED siting criteria. The subcommittee also reviewed each part of the building construction to assess the concept for sustainability.

The result of these efforts will be a building constructed using sustainable materials. The ACES 2 House will be a one-story, three-bedroom, wood-framed building with a full basement that meets the requirements of both the NYS Energy-Star program and USGBC LEED certification program. It will be an energy-efficient structure. When the house is completed, it will be submitted to USGBC for review under the LEED gold level.

The ACES 2 House will be funded with donations from engineering and architecture firms in the area along with personal contributions of individual design professionals and fundraising efforts by the ACES 2 Steering committee. In-kind material and services donations will be solicited from the construction community. To cover the processing cost of the LEED certification, the ACES Steering committee solicited financial aid from the construction community. DAY Environmental Systems has contributed a cash donation that will cover all of the anticipated processing costs.

The construction of the house will be accomplished largely with volunteer work-teams developed from the design firm staff member under the supervision of Habitat's professional construction superintendents. During the 2006 house construction the experiences of engineers and architects working together to erect a shelter fostered a great sense of cooperation in the design community. The experience also provided an opportunity for the individuals involved to contribute, in a tangible way, to the city and society in which they practice their respective professions.

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