



Winston Jones/Sentinel

Members of the Westside Home Builder Association (WHBA), recently completed a training program to qualify them as EarthCraft home renovators. Left to right are Leslie Choo, Lake Forest Builders; Robert McMillan, R&R Enterprises; Don Moore, Don L. Moore Inc.; Joe Irons, Frank Irons and Matt Irons, Irons Construction Inc.; Jeff Camp, Camdur Building Group Inc. and David Reynolds, D. Reynolds Construction Company.

Builders certified as 'green' renovators

By Winston Jones
Staff Writer

Area home builders may not be building many new homes, but they have been preparing to renovate foreclosed homes in an energy conserving and earth friendly way.

Eight members of the Westside Home Builders Association (WHBA) recently became certified as EarthCraft renovators. EarthCraft is a green building program that serves as a blueprint for healthy comfortable homes that reduce util-

ity bills and protect the environment.

These builders will use their EarthCraft knowledge in a program unique to Douglas County called "Westside Goes Green."

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"The program is designed to take advantage of the \$3.8 million in Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funding recently awarded the county by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA)," said Chris Collier, WHBA executive officer. "The funds will be used to renovate blemished and foreclosed properties within the county."

Home buyers can qualify for up to \$20,000 assistance to cover the costs of green renovation, Collier said.

EarthCraft will be offering an EarthCraft Realtor training class Friday, June 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the West Georgia Board of Realtors office, 8486 Bowden Street, Douglasville. For

more information or to register, contact Ed Carlton, chief executive officer, 770-949-9966.

Collier said the EarthCraft approach to home renovation takes a whole house approach, looking at what's needed throughout the house to improve energy efficiency and indoor air quality. Renovators work closely with EarthCraft inspectors to prioritize improvements, he said.

The original EarthCraft guidelines were developed in 1999 for new homes and modified in 2002 for use in renovating existing homes.

Collier said the first EarthCraft model home is under construction at the Whitestone subdivision, located off Highway 5, about a half mile south of the Highway 166 roundabout. A second site will be Ashley Falls on the north side of Douglasville

and another at Providence Walk.

"This is something Douglas County will have that nobody else will have," Collier said. "It'll attract buyers to the homes and create jobs in the county."

Three banks have agreed to work with the Douglas Goes Green mortgage program, Collier said. They are First National Bank of Georgia, Douglas County Bank and First Georgia Bank.

The mortgage program will provide down payment assistance with only 5 percent required at closing and a \$20,000 maximum, no-interest second mortgage to bring the foreclosed homes up to minimum green standards.

More information is available at the Web site, www.westsidegoesgreen.com.