

THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

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Bellingham's first 'expedited' green home finished, celebration planned

JARED PABEN - THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

BELLINGHAM - The first home to go through the city of Bellingham's expedited permitting process for environmentally friendly homes is complete, and officials are holding an open house for contractors to learn about it.

The house at 2200 King St. went through the planning department's "bin bump-up" program, receiving a permit in less than four business days.

The house, which uses many materials recycled from the previous home on site, includes a heating and air conditioning system that's within the insulated portion of the building, saving energy, and more widely spaced wall studs, saving wood.



Landowner Grant Myers said that during construction he decided to add green features. The house was constructed by builder John Nelson.

Because of the high cost, Myers decided against pervious paving, but he added high-cost rooftop solar panels, which are rare on new homes built without a buyer lined up, he said. The builder also later added foam insulation between the studs and siding, providing a significant improvement to insulation.

"It's quite a bit better insulated on the walls," Myers said. "That's probably one of the more significant features that I think we've incorporated."

Myers also decided to add reused rain barrels to catch water for watering the yard, and a rain garden to treat stormwater.

He doesn't know yet what utility bills for the house will look like. The solar panels haven't been connected to Puget Sound Energy's grid, he said, and crews have used electricity for equipment like saws, but that's not necessarily representative of a typical family's energy use.

The house is still on the market, listed for \$314,000, and there's been a lot of interest, he said. He'd like to build another green home, but he's not sure when that might be, given the state of the real estate market.

Bellingham-based nonprofit Sustainable Connections plans to celebrate the house as part of a contractors' open house Tuesday, Aug. 31. The event is aimed at teaching contractors about the city's expedited permitting, environmentally friendly development codes, and energy rebates.

ATTEND THE OPEN HOUSE

- What: Bellingham nonprofit Sustainable Connections hosts a barbeque and open house for contractors to celebrate construction of the first house to go through the city's expedited permitting program for environmentally friendly homes. Bison burgers and beer will be provided. A \$5 donation is requested.
- When: 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 31.
- Where: 2200 King St. (near Hardware Sales).
- RSVP: Please RVSP with Nick Hartrich at Sustainable Connections, at Nick@sconnect.org
- Details: sustainableconnections.org/events/binbump-celebration.