



by *Karen Derr*

People Do Business with People They Like... Karen Derr Presents W.E. Gilbert Co.

Construction has begun at 507 and 511 W. 16th on the first Heights homes built by builders who have signed onto the Greater Houston Builders Association's Green Building Initiative. We thought you'd like to know more about green building and builder W. E. Gilbert Co, one of the first seven Houston builders participating in the green building initiative. While GHBA's green initiative is relatively new, W. E. Gilbert Co. president Jeff Sipes has lived in the Houston Heights with his wife Meredith since 1993. He and business partner Jim Schultz first worked together on the renovation of St. Mark's Methodist Church on Pecore. They bring to W. E. Gilbert Co. an impressive list of credentials. Jeff has a civil engineering degree from Texas Tech and is a LEED Professional, accredited by the U.S. Green Building Council. Jim has an environmental design (architecture) degree from Texas A&M. He has worked for twenty years in residential construction and he is a Certified Graduate Builder.

The project on West 16th satisfies all the GHBA green guidelines but the builder has focused particularly on energy efficiency and indoor air quality. Key features include an upgraded thermal envelope including R-19 wall/floor insulation, R-30 attic insulation and low-e windows by Pella. The home will be Energy Star certified and includes a 14 SEER Air Conditioning system including a fresh air management system and whole house media filter. It will also utilize tankless water heaters.

Another key to building green is judicious material selection. The 16th street homes will incorporate low VOC paints and pre-finished materials where available to offer a healthy indoor environment. We have selected flooring and finish materials that are natural and renewable (e.g. bamboo floors.)

Regarding site selection, Jeff says, "Of all the markets in Houston, we thought that buyers looking for homes in the Heights would respond to our focus on energy efficiency and indoor air quality as well as our respect for the neighborhood with regard to architecture and site planning." W. E. Gilbert Company's homes will be priced in the \$600,000s on large lots, near the proposed hike and bike trail. For more information call Rich Martin or Theresa Garza at 713-862-1600.

Visit us online at www.KarenDerr.com

