



EARTH DAY IN WHISTLER WAS GROUNDBREAKING FOR AUSTRIA PASSIVE HOUSE

April 30, 2009 - Whistler, BC: Earth Day was a groundbreaking day for new Austria Passive House, which will be located in Whistler, as ground was literally broken for construction of a new permanent Austria Passive House. Austria House will be the headquarters of the OC (Austrian Olympic Committee), the ORF (Austrian Public Broadcaster), and a regular meeting place for the Austrian Olympic athletes and team members during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

QUOTE from Austrian Trade Commissioner

"For Austria, it is an honor to leave a permanent symbol of our advanced building technology in the passive house construction sector. And to have this in an enviable location like Whistler is a fantastic bonus added to the fact that our two countries can look forward to develop more of these in Canada." says Robert Luck, Austrian Trade Commissioner, Toronto.

Located on the Lost Lake Trail, between the upper and lower villages and a short-walk from the Village Stroll, the Austria Passive House represents a unique partnership between the aforementioned Austrian partners and the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW). The partnership was formed based on a shared commitment to developing innovative, sustainable technology and showcase Passive House technology in Whistler during the Games.

QUOTE from the Mayor

"We are so pleased to be working in partnership on this project," says Ken Melamed, Whistler Mayor. "Whistler is working hard on its journey towards sustainability and Passive House technology will demonstrate improved building design and construction, and make home owners and builders more aware of energy efficient construction methods."

The concept and design for the Austria Passive House is based on cooperation between three Austrian building companies that together form the APG (Austrian Passive House Group). *SOHM Wood Technology* builds the wood structures, *Freisinger OPTIWIN Windows* the windows and *drexel & weiss passive house technology* is the ventilation and air exchange specialist. This project provides APG a unique opportunity to showcase its expertise in this field, create consumer awareness and transfer some of this knowledge to Canadian businesses looking for original and unique environmentally friendly construction concepts and technology.

Post-Games Austria Passive House will remain in Whistler as a permanent building and will be used by community recreational organizations. Of added long-term benefit to Whistler is the fact that the Austria Passive House aligns with the priorities outlined in Whistler2020: it's a highly efficient building that will use virtually no energy for its heating, cooling and ventilation needs. With low maintenance costs and the long-term community benefit it provides Whistler residents, the Austria Passive House provides a lasting benefit to recreational users in the Lost Lake area.

Construction work is carried out and supervised in Whistler by *Durfeld Log Construction*.

All engineering equivalencies and requirements are overseen by Vancouver based *Equilibrium Engineering Consultants*.

WHAT IS A PASSIVE HOUSE

A passive house is a building in which a comfortable interior climate can be maintained without active heating and cooling systems. The house heats and cools itself, therefore the name "passive".



For all its energy requirements (light, cooking etc.) it uses about one 10th of the energy a traditional Canadian house consumes or, has less than half of the energy consumption of a Platinum LEED house. The necessary end energy can easily be provided though renewable energy.

The technology is based on highly sophisticated concepts for air exchange and circulation, thermal insulation, high efficiency windows and wood structure construction.

Passive houses are well-established in Europe with over 17,000 existing passive units, of which 4000 homes and other facilities are in Austria. There are less than a dozen Passive Houses in North America. For more information on Passive House technology please visit www.passiv.de

AUSTRIA HOUSE

So far Austria is the only country that is building a national house in Whistler for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games. No surprise here, as Austria is usually a very big medal winner at winter Olympic Games.

This house will be housing the ÖOC, Austria's Olympic Committee and the ORF's (Austrian public broadcaster) studios, from which they will produce and air their daily Olympic programs.

It will also be a hub of social events, attended by athletes, Austrian Olympic Committee members, business and political dignitaries from around the world, and international media.

Helene Perndl
Project Coordinator
sea sky consulting Inc.
604.649.0861
hperndl@stscon.com
<http://www.stscon.com>

Jessica Delaney
Media Relations
Resort Municipality of Whistler
(604) 935-8104
jdelaney@whistler.ca