



“Deconstruction pays for itself.”

—Dr. Tim Meyers, Boulder resident

by Spenser Villwock, MA, LEED AP

Dr. Tim Meyers, graduate of University of Colorado Medical School and emergency medicine physician, rolled up his sleeves and dove deep into his renovation project on 5th and Forest Streets. After he and his wife, Cheryl, learned about a property nestled in a west Boulder neighborhood they wished to live in, the wheels started moving forward. The couple quickly decided that they would deconstruct the entire structure of the existing home. The full deconstruction enabled them to leverage tax incentives for a \$51,000 building material donation to the CRC’s ReSource program, not only allowing the Meyers’ project to go green, but also save green.

Dr. Meyers, who worked summers in Boulder as a house framer and holds an engineering degree, originally began to assess the 1,000-square-foot existing home on the property for the viability of retrofit to accommodate their needs and efficiency features. After careful deliberation and assessment from their architect, the Meyers determined that the cost-benefit of integrating new efficiency technologies in the quaint home would be trumped by new construction on the site. Features for their new home will include a 6kW photovoltaic solar array, an evaporative cooler, radiant heat floors, low-flow water fixtures, a smart irrigation system, over 60% FSC-certified lumber, organic spray foam insulation, and countless other green products.

The Meyers found a contractor who specializes in green building science and features that they wanted for their home, but the couple discovered their builder was unfamiliar with deconstruction. The new home builder had not

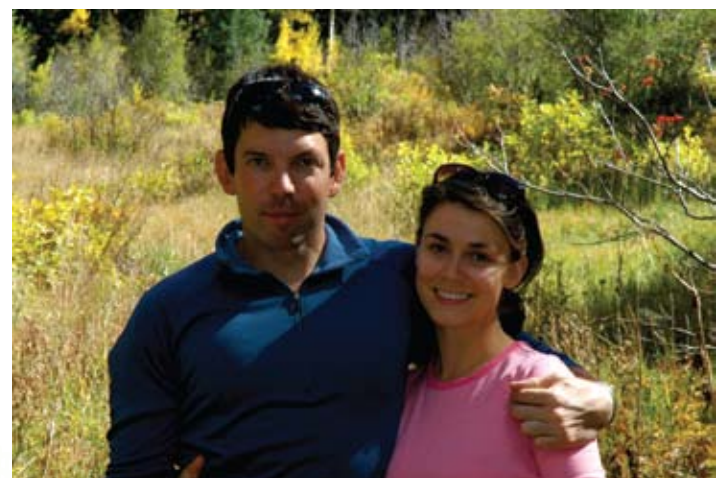
worked on a full deconstruction before and asked Meyers to consider fulfilling the minimum 65% construction and demolition (C&D) waste diversion as required by the city of Boulder Green Points building code. To hit the minimum diversion, the builder estimated a cost of roughly \$10,000. The Meyers are pragmatic environmentalists, so they explored a higher diversion rate, analyzing the benefits of comprehensive deconstruction.

The city of Boulder Permit and Development Services (P&DS) office became the couple’s reference library to learn more. The Meyers were instructed by the P&DS staff to contact ReSource Boulder Program Manager and city of Boulder deconstruction professional, Shaun LaBarre. LaBarre conducted an onsite assessment of the existing home and helped to educate the homeowners on compliance with the Green Points C&D diversion program, details of the deconstruction process, and learned about the Meyers interest in exceeding the bare minimum. LaBarre recommended that they contact seasoned deconstruction contractors in the area and that a certified building material valuation appraiser assess the home.

After carefully screening deconstruction contractors, Tim and Cheryl selected one with good references and the ability to carefully dismantle the entire home for an additional \$6,000 to the bid the new home builder would perform to reach the minimum requirement. From the third-party building material appraiser, investment in full deconstruction would earn the couple an additional \$20,000 in tax-deductible material donation. The financial



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Tim and Cheryl Meyers



Existing 1,000 sf home prior to deconstruction



Walls carefully stripped to the studs



Studs from the old home stacked and ready for reuse

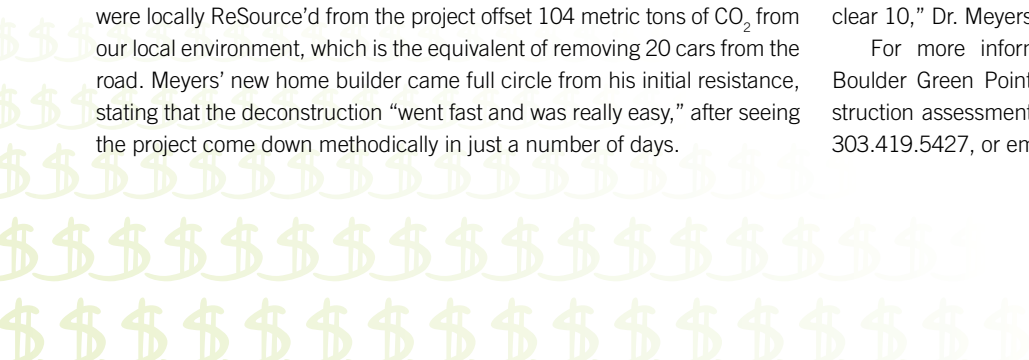
benefits were obvious to Meyers, so he moved forward with the seasoned deconstruction contractor.

“It was all easier than I thought it would be,” said Meyers about the deconstruction process. He documented a photo log of the two-week dismantling of the home, which achieved an amazing 87% total C&D waste diversion. The 120.8 tons of material (nearly 20 full garbage trucks) that were locally ReSource’d from the project offset 104 metric tons of CO₂ from our local environment, which is the equivalent of removing 20 cars from the road. Meyers’ new home builder came full circle from his initial resistance, stating that the deconstruction “went fast and was really easy,” after seeing the project come down methodically in just a number of days.

The tax benefits from the \$51,000 building material donation will be realized on the Meyers’ 2008 state and federal taxes. The financial gain of maintaining the embodied energy in each constituent building material via deconstruction has great potency in achieving community sustainability goals, conserving your bottom line.

“On a scale of 1 to 10 for the entire deconstruction process, it was a clear 10,” Dr. Meyers added.

For more information on benefits of deconstruction, the city of Boulder Green Points C&D diversion program, or to schedule a deconstruction assessment, visit www.ReSourceYard.org, call Shaun LaBarre at 303.419.5427, or email at slabarre@ReSourceYard.org.



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