25 YEARS in their brand-new home... see page 3

NEWS FROM CHAMPLAIN HOUSING TRUST

PROFILES • RESOURCES • EVENTS

FALL 2013
This fall CHT embarks on a new strategic plan, as we do every three years. The work of setting these goals started in January with the entire staff thinking for a day about what CHT needs to change, add, or just do more of to best meet our mission. We also asked thirty partner agencies to give us feedback.

Then our board explored these and other ideas over several meetings and a full-day retreat, and early this summer we set down an ambitious and detailed plan that will be available soon for all to see on our new website.

Our last plan completed a six-year effort we had dubbed ‘Strength Matters’ in which we rebuilt our systems, upgraded properties and made CHT a strong organization that our residents can count on to get through the tough economic times and fiscal austerity that is our new world. That work is never done, but we have built sufficient strength now to add services and programs to support our residents’ wellbeing and success, and we call this new plan ‘Community Matters.’

In the next three years, in addition to creating new affordable homes and caring for the ones we have, we will add services for seniors in our apartments, community-building opportunities for renters in our large properties, and financial education for residents and applicants. We are also answering broader community needs by adding services and shelter for people who are homeless, in cooperation with partners.

In spite of the national fallout from the mortgage meltdown, we continue help people become homeowners. A new partnership with Habitat for Humanity will enhance these programs and bring new opportunities. The crisis has also shined a light on the great value of our financial counseling and we are expanding our offerings for courses, counseling, and workshops to all corners of the community; this will continue to grow.

Perhaps one upcoming development will stand as the flagship of the ‘Community Matters’ direction: the planned co-op community on Bright Street in Burlington. For nearly two years CHT staff has consulted with neighborhood residents and leaders to plan these new homes, including a 500-home survey of the area. A new co-op community will enhance and complement the strong bonds that people feel in this historic and vital part of Burlington’s Old North End.

This new beginning comes just as the Flynn Avenue Co-op in the South End celebrates its 20th anniversary. ‘Community Matters’ and all that we will accomplish under this banner, truly returns us to our roots and core mission.

Happy Fall,

Brenda Torpy,
CEO

www.getahome.org
Newest project is in Burlington’s Old
Development area. The Bright Street co-op will feature a
community room that will fit with the scale of other buildings in the area. The right to set their own policies allows for
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SHRELBURNE GROUNDBREAKING

This June we broke ground at Harrington Village in Shelburne, to build 42 rental apartments and 5 homes for shared-equity ownership; the complex will also include affordable rentals for seniors built by Cathedral Square. Attendees at the ceremony included housing professionals who helped organize over $10 million to finance our project, and community members who donate in support of CHT’s work.

MEMBERS’ DAY

Our annual members’ picnic gets better every year – especially when the sun shines on us! Board members served burgers, hot dogs and Ben & Jerry’s ice cream to nearly 200 members at Oakledge Park on Burlington’s waterfront. During an update from CEO Brenda Torpy, we were impressed to learn that members came from as far as Swanton for the get-together. We hope to see you next summer.

EVENTS

WERE WE’VE BEEN

DRAGONBOAT TEAM

CHT employees competed in the Dragonboat fundraising races this August and had even more fun than they expected. “We were 17th out of 34,” reported property manager David Ellsworth-Keller, “not awful for our first time but we’ll do better next year.” The team, organized by senior accountant Kerry McManamon, was proud to raise $1,590 for Dragonheart Vermont, which supports survivors of cancer.

SAVE THE DATE


The evening features music, a cash bar, and a sit-down meal with a choice of salmon, pasta, or roast beef. The meeting includes awards and celebrations, the election of new members to the Board of Directors, and updates on our work. It is an opportunity to share ideas and questions, to learn more and show your support.
O ur largest department by far is property management. With 70 priests and 90 nuns, 1,734 households and 7,594 call home, it takes over 200 staff members to manage the properties, provide maintenance services, and keep them physically and financially sound for the long term.

This gives the director plenty of opportunity to do outreach in multiple locations, since that’s where the work and applicants are to be found. The director must also make sure they comply with all regulations, use of public funds, and ensure that the apartments and vouchers for the many on incredible long wait lists. I wish more people knew all of the great things about their work you would be happy to change:

I could use more hours in the day (or more people all over). Seeing staff learn and use technology to assist CHT. Things about your work you would be happy to change:

One thing people may not know about CHT is:

I would create more subsidized housing situation.

One thing people may not know about me is:

If you had a magic wand, what would you do to improve Vermont’s housing situation?

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