

Canal Street Housing: Housing Homeless Veterans

Welcome to HAC's webcast!

**The webcast, sound, and recording will begin at
2:00 pm EST.**

To submit a question during the webinar please use the chat box on the lower right-hand side of the screen. If you would like to verbally ask a question, please click the "Raise Hand" button at the top of the screen.

Canal Street Housing: Housing Homeless Veterans

Sponsored by: The Home Depot Foundation

Presented by:

Rita Markley, Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS)

Kenn Sassorossi, Housing Vermont

Housing Assistance Council

July 23, 2014



Presenters

Rita Markley Committee on Temporary Shelter

Rita Markley is the executive director of the Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS). Rita has worked tirelessly to expand housing options for homeless families and individuals. Under her leadership, COTS received a national Blue Ribbon award from HUD for its Families in Transition program and a U.S. Conference of Mayors award for leadership in creating the Continuum of Care in Burlington. COTS was a ChangeMakers honoree for the success of its homeless prevention initiative, the Housing Resource Center.

KENN SASSOROSSI HOUSING VERMONT

Kenn Sassorossi is Vice President of Partner Relations for Housing Vermont, a nonprofit developer and syndicator of affordable rental housing, since December 2000. Kenn has primary responsibility for facilitating and maintaining strong alliances with local housing development organizations, banks and tax credit investors; developing new sources of equity; coordinating public relations/communication and directing internal planning. He also manages Housing Vermont's external relations including the development of public policies.



Canal Street Veterans Housing

A partnership between COTS & Housing Vermont

What the heck is COTS?

- The Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) is the largest service and housing provider for the homeless in Vermont. Despite the misleading name, our focus is on solutions to homelessness.
- The majority of our funding comes from foundations, business and community support.
- COTS has been recognized nationally for its innovative programs and housing with the following: **Maxwell Award for Excellence** from the Fannie Mae Foundation; **The Gunther and Blue Ribbon Best Practices** from HUD; the **ChangeMaker Award**; and honors from U.S. Conference of Mayors for our leadership in building community partnerships to address homelessness.
- In 2008, COTS launched the largest homeless prevention initiative in Vermont and we have **averted homelessness for 1,517 households** since that time.
- COTS has developed a number of tools from risk guarantee programs to master leasing

Why did we focus on homeless veterans?



In late 2007, a growing number of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan were struggling with homelessness in Vermont.

Our rental housing market was (and remains) astronomically high and Vermont incomes were flat or falling.

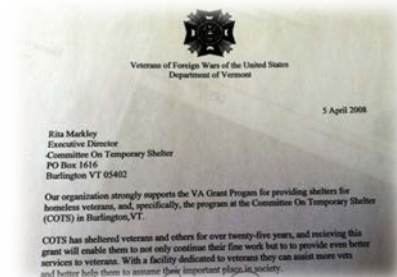
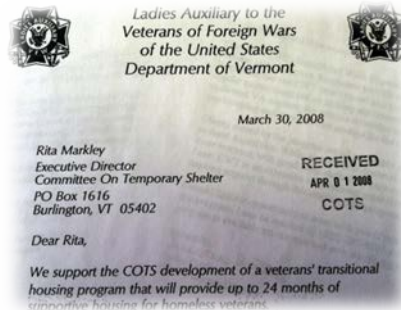
Marty Martinez, a formerly homeless Vietnam veteran, and longtime COTS volunteer, began advocating that we create a better option for them than emergency shelter beds.

Marty is very persuasive. And we had the good sense to listen.

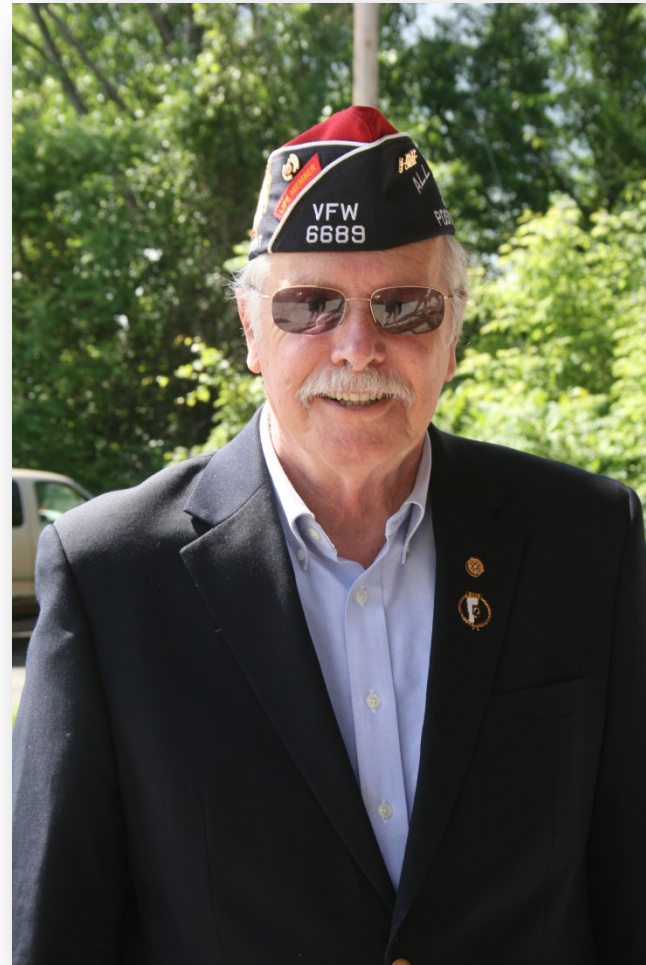
What was the timeline?

2008 We learned about a **capital grant opportunity** through the **Veterans Affairs (VA)** and began pulling together the very complicated application; it was a long shot.

One of the *key* requirements was a **demonstration of support from local veterans**. We reached out to all our veterans groups – from VFWs, to Legions, to Auxiliaries – for support letters. And they responded enthusiastically.



As word spread about our plans,
other veterans stepped forward to help.



We formed a **Veterans Advisory Council**
– a group of dedicated volunteers to help share
our story and our vision with other veterans
and community organizations,
and generate additional support for the project.



Any other Community Support?

- Housing Vermont
- VFW posts
- American Legion Posts
- VVA – Vermont
- Blue Star Mothers
- Rotary Clubs
- Lions Clubs
- Sister Irene and Religious Hospitallers of St. Joseph, Sisters of Mercy
- VT Agency of Commerce
- Fanny Allen Foundation
- VHCB – VT Housing & Conservation Board
- VA White River and Outreach clinic
- VT Dept. of Labor
- Community College of Vermont, University of Vermont, St. Michaels
- Winooski Fire Dept.
- Ladies Auxiliaries across Vermont
- Furniture supply companies

Then what happened?

- We tried not to think about our pending VA application every *single* moment of the day.
- We reached out to Housing Vermont to let them know that we had a very, very, very slim chance of winning a \$1.2 million capital grant from the VA to create housing for homeless veterans.
- We continued to shelter, serve and encourage the growing number of homeless veterans (both families and individuals) while we awaited word.
- We sketched out pie-in-the sky budgets and designs for a building that did not yet exist.

GOOD NEWS

After six weeks of pins & needles...

We **won** the \$1.2 million grant from the VA!

The *real* work was set to begin ... after a little celebrating.



We scoured the region for a site and found the perfect *challenge*...



Canal Street Veterans Housing Groundbreaking Ceremony, October 2009



About the site

Built on an abandoned cellar hole, believed to have been site of former veterans' organization



About the structure

The building is steel and concrete, with fiberglass windows for energy-efficiency



About the site

The site is a sloped, triangular space of .12 acres, yielding a density of more than 230 units per acre.



About the structure

The inner and outer steel studs are separated to eliminate thermal bridging



Canal Street Veterans Housing

Construction under way: 2009-2010



About the construction materials

The exterior siding is a fiber cement panel system with an integrated rainscreen clip system.



Canal Street Veterans Housing

Construction under way: 2009-2010



Construction completed!
Construction was finished in January 2011.



Canal Street Veterans Housing

Ribbon-cutting Ceremony: January 2011

(Major General Michael Dubie, Sister Irene, Mayor O'Brien, - all wearing blue booties to protect the floor)



Canal Street Veterans Housing

Ribbon-cutting Ceremony: January 2011



Canal Street Veterans Housing

Winooski, Vermont



Canal Street Veterans Housing

The facility has 16 transitional & 12 permanent apartments: Studios or 2BR



What kind of layout and interior?

- Independent apartments vs. dorm-style accommodations
 - Mix of studio and 2BR
 - Private bathroom and kitchen in every unit
- Ability to host men, women – and families
- All of the units have large windows and lots of natural light
- Large program space and Kitchen on the first floor
- There are meeting rooms on site for use by VA staff and other community partners who work with our residents
- Laundry facilities and storage on alternating floors



COTS program suite

First floor has kitchen, living room – and full-time support services & residential manager.

Energy-efficient, fully ADA-accessible building



Canal Street Veterans Housing



The hallways are bright and spotlight the angular design.

Canal Street Veterans Housing

Apartments are fully furnished, including linens and household items.
They feature Vermont maple kitchen cabinets and tiled floors.



What's the program?

- Creates two years of transitional housing, not shelter
- Provides full-time case manager and 24-hour live-in residential manager on site for supportive services
- Offers drug and alcohol-free space
- Every veteran is required to participate in developing and following an individualized service plan; focusing on stabilizing health, obtaining new skills or training, engaging constructively with the Canal Street community.
- Resources to restore and repair credit
- Coaching and support for return to permanent housing

Canal Street Veterans Housing

Stunning views from the apartments



Canal Street Veterans Housing

We welcomed the first residents in February 2011.



And the Veterans who live there ?

* Many of the first Canal Street residents had been homeless for extended periods of time, some were labeled chronic homeless, and most were Vietnam veterans.

* There is now a mix of ages and demographics and military service.

Veterans in the program typically:

- Enroll in school and further their education
- Pursue job training or enhance employment skills
- Connect with any services necessary to address mental and physical health issues



How to build meaningful connections?

Quilts from across Vermont with messages for the veterans moving into Canal Street Housing. This one from Wells River, says “Thank you for all you have done.”

What about volunteers?



They help with community meals, quilts, gardens ...

What about the children of veterans?



We have art shows, field trips, birthdays, holiday preparations.

Holiday celebrations are often organized by volunteer groups



Come Join Us For a...

St. Patrick's Day Dinner Celebration

When: Friday, March 18th
@ 6pm

Where: the Program Area

What: There will be traditional Irish food served. Including, Dublin Coddle, Piperonata, Mince Tarts and Shamrock Cookies!

★ COURTESY OF
The Blue Star
Mothers! ★

How do we connect residents and volunteers ? (Hard labor)



Shared goals and projects



Canal Street Veterans Housing

Gov. Peter Shumlin visits with veterans, supporters



What now?

Our work with Veterans' groups continues and includes awareness events to bring attention to the continued need for housing



And we celebrate program milestones

Flagpole Dedication Ceremony: June 2013



Canal Street Veterans Housing Flagpole Dedication Ceremony: June 2013





Canal Street Veterans Housing

A partnership between COTS & Housing Vermont

Canal Street Veterans Housing, Winooski, Vermont



Housing Vermont

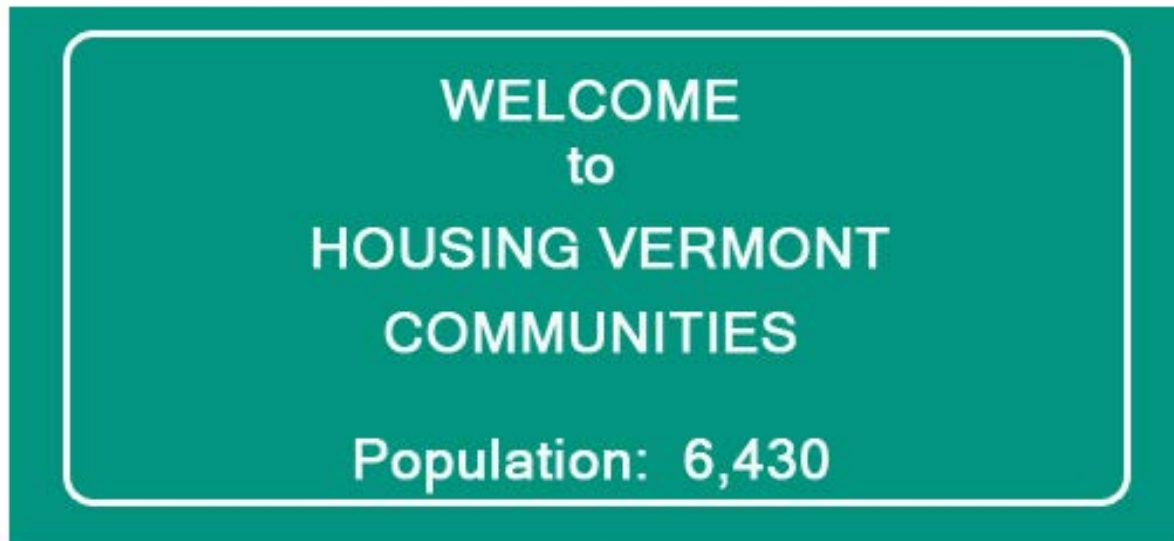
Statewide nonprofit created in 1988 by VHFA to create affordable apartments across the state in partnership with communities:

- Real estate development services
- Tax credit syndication services



Track Record

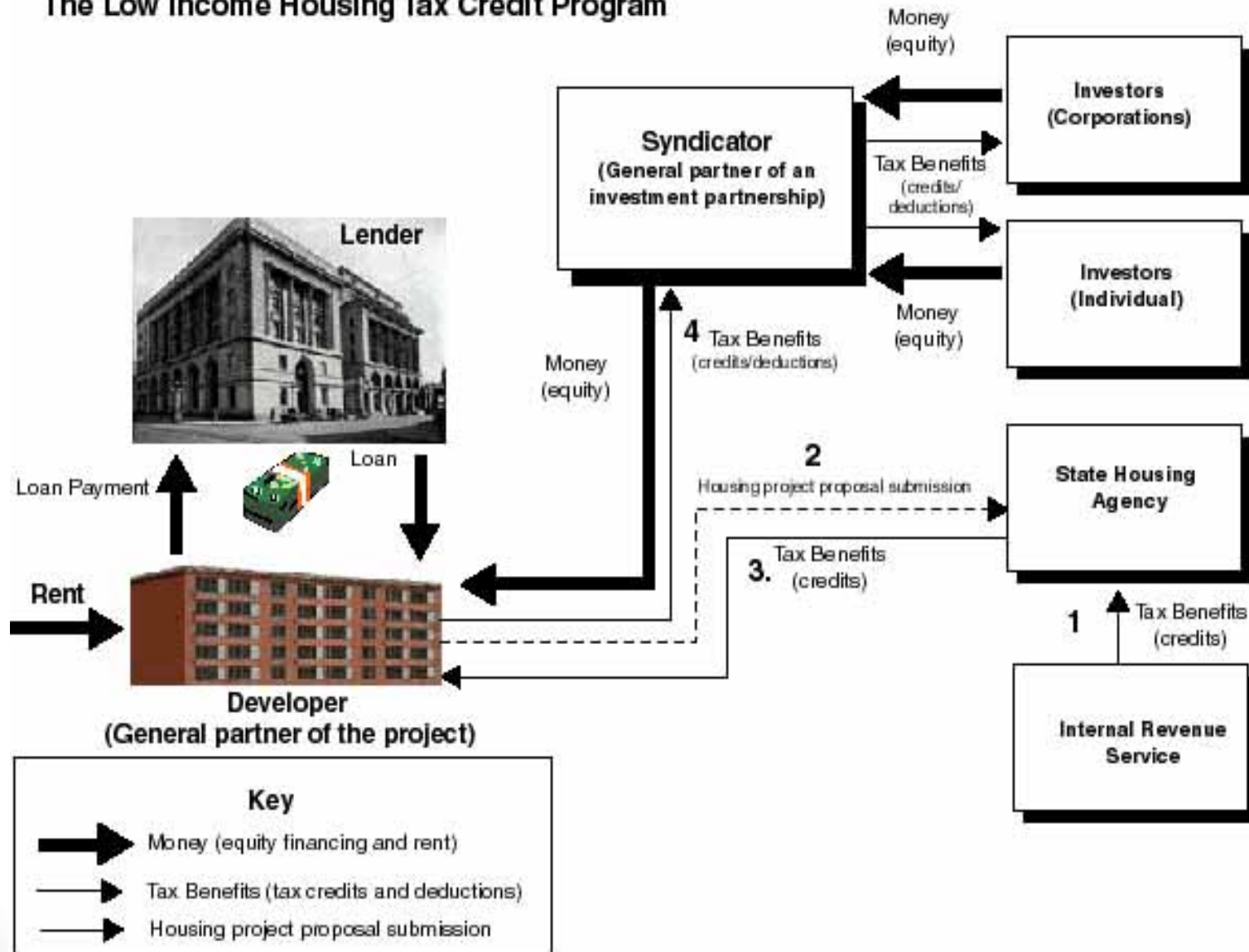
- Developed 4,825 permanently affordable apartments in 161 developments
- Raised and deployed more than \$280 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credit and historic rehabilitation tax credit equity



Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)

- Created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986.
- Intended to offer investors incentive to invest in affordable rental housing.
- Provides a 10-year stream of federal tax credits in exchange for equity investment.
- Promotes affordability by minimizing debt service.
- Projects must meet occupancy and affordability criteria.
- IRS sets rules. Administered by states.

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program



The Local Housing Market

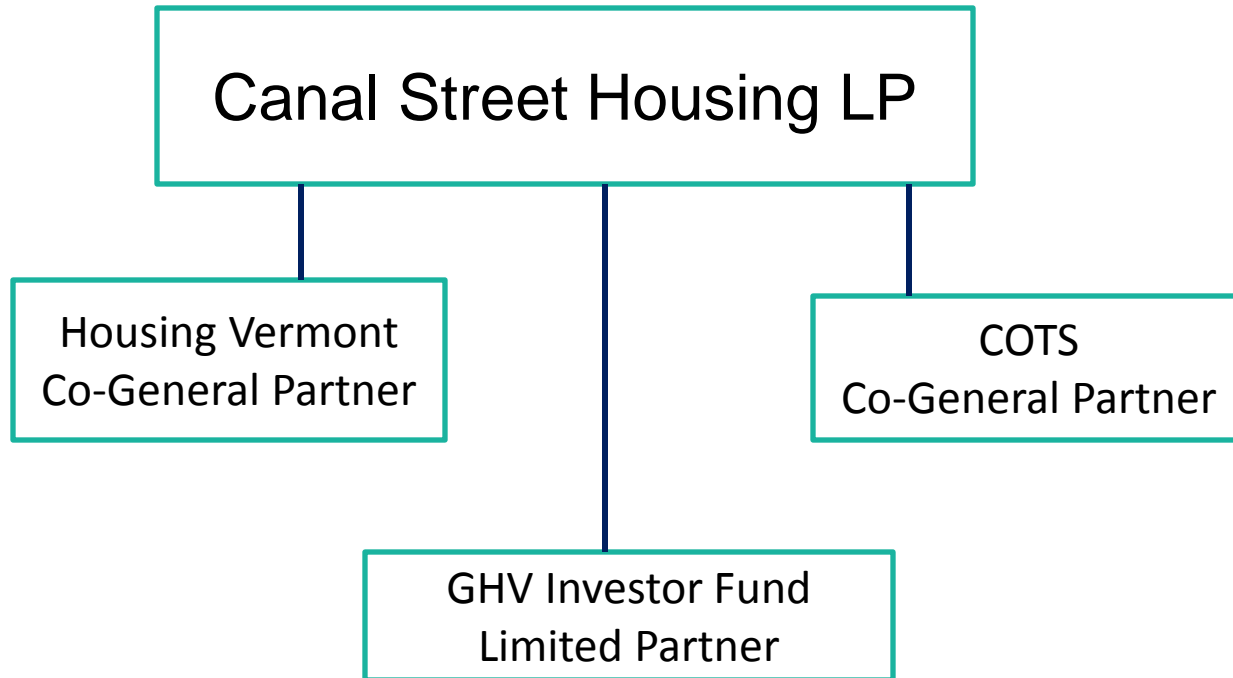
	<i>1 Bedroom</i>	<i>2 Bedrooms</i>	<i>3 Bedrooms</i>
<i>FMR</i>	\$1,003	1,309	1,639

June 2014 Vacancy Rate is 0.9%

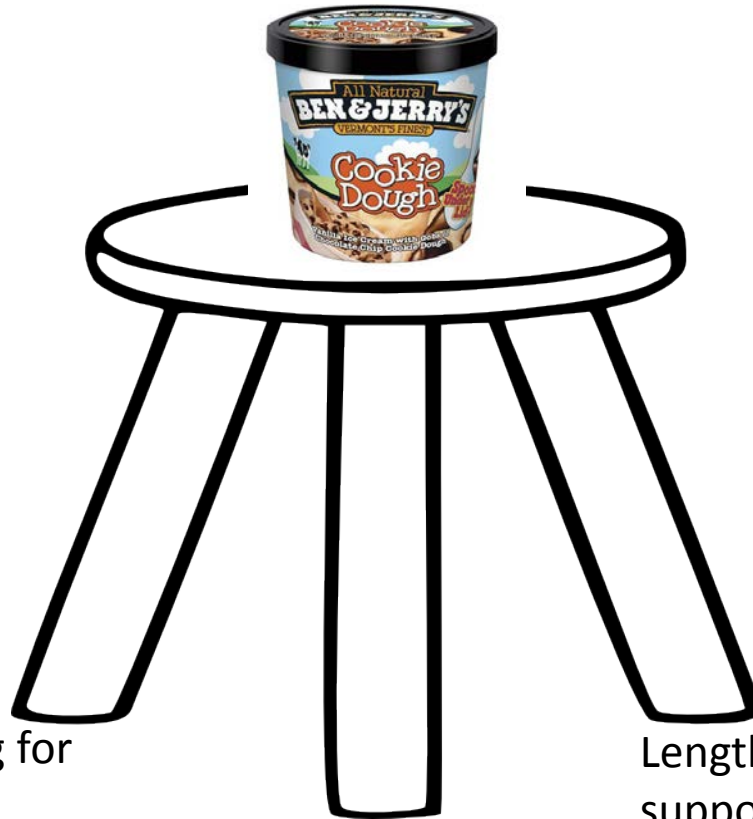
VT Affordable Housing Delivery System

- Develop affordable rental housing with local partner
- Complementary skills brings strength of each into play
- Fosters housing created from the bottom up
- LIHTC requires limited partnership ownership structure

Project Level Partnerships



Three-Legged Milk Stool Provides Strong Foundation



Capital funding for
construction

Availability of rental
assistance

Length and depth of
support service funding

Canal Street Housing

- Located in Winooski, Vermont
- 6 stories, 10,700 square feet
- 28 apartments



Housing Elements

- Transitional housing for homeless/at risk veterans
 - First 4 floors
 - Mastered leased to COTS by partnership
 - 16 apartments
 - 12 efficiencies
 - 4 two-bedrooms
- Permanent affordable housing
 - Top 2 floors
 - Operated by tax credit partnership
 - 10 efficiencies
 - 2 two-bedrooms

Development Sources

Permanent Funding Sources	
Green Mtn. Housing Equity Fund	\$3,059,028
TD Bank Loan	190,000
Veterans Administration	1,240,000
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) Loan	325,000
VHCB HOME Program Loan	200,000
Vermont Community Development Program Loan	740,000
City of Winooski Loan	25,000
Efficiency Vermont Loan	21,050
COTS Loan	24,758
TOTAL	\$5,824,836

Uses of Development Funds

Uses		
		Per Unit
Acquisition	\$447,958	15,999
Construction	3,981,524	142,197
Soft Costs	1,395,354	49,834
Total	5,824,836	208,030

Who Am I:

Kenn Sassorossi

VP, Partner Relations

Housing Vermont

Kenn@hvt.org





Learn more

COTS website: www.cotsonline.org

Housing Vermont website: <http://www.hvt.org/>

Video about the project, includes interviews with veterans :
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cl0evbINNiU>

VA funding and glossary:
[Http://nchv.org/index.php/service/service/grants/](http://nchv.org/index.php/service/service/grants/)

HOUSING VERMONT
Building possibilities.



Questions?



Next HAC Trainings

- **July 30: Webinar *Nonprofit Strategic Planning***
(2:00 PM - 3:00 PM) EST
- **August 12-14: *Sharpening Your Skills: Financial Management for Rural Nonprofits*** (All Day)
New Orleans, LA - French Quarter
- **August 12-13: *Acquisition Rehabilitation for Rural Nonprofit Affordable Housing Development*** (All Day)
New Orleans, LA - French Quarter
- **August 20: Webinar *Building a Community for Veterans: Patriot Place, Tennessee*** (2:00 PM - 3:00 PM) EST

<http://www.ruralhome.org/hac-services/training>

Thank you

Housing Assistance Council: www.ruralhome.org

 <https://www.facebook.com/HousingAssistanceCouncil>

 <https://twitter.com/RuralHome>

 <http://www.linkedin.com/company/housing-assistance-council>

The Home Depot Foundation: www.homedepotfoundation.org

 <https://twitter.com/TeamDepot>

<http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/blog>

