Land Access and Opportunity Board: Shelter for All

Agenda

May 28th 2026, 12:00-1:00PM

Meeting Facilitator:

Notetaker:

Attendance:

Guests & Public:

Not Present:

Brian Cina, National Association of Social Workers

Mary Gerisch, NAACP

Jaada Longmore, VRJA

Mark Hughes, VRJA

Zack Hughes, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors

Tentative:

Susan Aranoff, Vermont DDC

Sonali Samarasinghe, US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)

Agenda:

-Check ins: Name, Nominating Organization (5mins)

-Review 4.16.26 Draft Minutes (5mins)

-Bill updates (20 mins)

- S.325: An act relating to establishing a forensic facility for certain criminal justice-involved persons

- H.772: An act relating to residential rental agreements, eviction procedures, and the creation of the positive rental payment credit reporting pilot program

- H.938: An act relating to establishing the Vermont Homelessness Response Continuum

-Update on Emergency Shelter Grants & discussion on end of grant meeting.

-Update on Emergency Shelter Grants & discussion on end of grant meeting (20mins)

-Public Comment (10 mins)

Minutes:

Join Zoom Meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82376461938

Meeting ID: 823 7646 1938

Reference - 12.16.24 LAOB Board handout on Shelter for All Committee Update

Shelter for All Committee

Land Access and Opportunity Board

12.16.24

Potential initiatives outlined by Shelter for All Committee for LAOB to pursue:

1. **Center those who are most impacted**

- Shelter for All Committee public comment
- Host unhoused community members for LAOB open statehouse days
- Note: Engaging the unhoused and unsheltered community is really challenging right now when people's material safety are in dire condition. How do we shape engagement to meet individual's present needs?
- Question: How do we follow the leadership of those most impacted? We have heard asks for:
    - Help with acute resource needs: rides, money for short term shelter, tents/sleeping bags.
    - Supportive services that are respectful and treat clients with dignity.
    - More attention and care for those who fall through the cracks.

- Inclusion of people with direct experience of homelessness and lack of shelter in plans and policy making around shelter issues.

2. **Make grants and community investments to alleviate the trauma of the shelter crisis. fund initiatives that align with LAOB's strategic priorities of centering the leadership of impacted communities, mutual care, and seeding power to build community resilience.** Examples include

- Community leadership (stipends, administrative support, food, childcare, resources to address acute stressors for those on the frontlines)
- Mutual aid
- Community resilience toolkits
- Co-living and intersectional residences
- Emergency shelter - led by those most impacted
- Land banks
- Library based infrastructure and programming

3. Stay connected

- Stay connected to our hearts and bodies. Speak and act with love and care for one another.
- Communicate what we are seeing
    - LAOB Position Statement
        - Acknowledge: what are we hearing, what are we seeing, what is our community saying
        - People are dying and suffering. We cannot normalize to this.
        - All support systems need to be reshaped to meet people where they are.
        - Homelessness cannot be criminalized. This is backwards and unethical.
        - People want sanctuary shelter. We need to activate underutilized spaces.
        - We all need secure housing. Secure housing belongs to the whole community - it is not one person's job or failure.
        - Housing First

        - If the government is going to fail, we are going to step up and community is going to care for ourselves. It feels like SOV is not actually interested in supporting housing as a human right.
        - Network of Mutual Aid: Wrap these residents with love - with vetted volunteers. Mutual aid that is trustworthy.
    - Advisory Powers
- Act with care not to duplicate existing resources. Don't get stuck in analysis paralysis. Do the right next thing.

4. Advocate for policy and system change to ensure all of our community members have dignified shelter

- Investigate Coordinated Entry: Who is being served well by CE? Who falls through the cracks? What is the relationship between CE and VHIP?
- How much money do our communities spend on the impact of homelessness? How does this compare with the costs of Housing First policy design?
- Support increased collaboration between the homeless and housing systems.
- Encourage resource hoarders to seed power so that communities can effectively and resiliently ensure shelter for all neighbors.
- Investigate Section 8: Who is being served who is left out? Can Section 8 support home ownership? What is Vermont's relationship with HUD's Family Self Sufficiency program?
- Investigate VHCB's strategy for administering funds to support shelter for all. What did VHCB do with $30M of investments into shelter and ending homelessness?
- What are the conditions for people working to support unhoused and unsheltered people? How do we ensure this workforce is being supported and held accountable to values of dignified shelter and care for all.
- Sign the disability rights letter to advocate for people with disabilities under 50 being included as priority population
- How can eminent domain be utilized? How do we de-incentivize landlords sitting on vacant property? What about all the empty dorms? Vacant properties need to be activated. How can we activate Seasonal and other shared properties.

5. Other ideas

- Everyone Sleeps: a community campaign, everyone deserves access to the dreamtime.