

Downstreet Housing and Community Development  
Washington County Mental Health Services  
Norwich University School of Architecture and Art

## THE TINY HOUSE OPTION

COLLABORATIONS TO END  
HOMELESSNESS

# Motivation for Tiny House Pilot

- ⦿ Recognize that people who are experiencing homelessness are under great stress and need options to experience success in stable housing
- ⦿ Approximately 50 people in Washington County have been chronically homeless for one year
- ⦿ Recognize that congregate housing is not for everyone
- ⦿ Provide long term housing through leasing a tiny house with use of housing vouchers, if needed
- ⦿ Provide supports for the individual to exercise self-determination and work on life goals; maintain independence while living near supportive neighbors to enhance success
- ⦿ Vermont Housing Conservation Board was accepting applications for funding housing projects

# Three Years of Diligence

- ◉ Washington County Mental Health and Lamoille County Mental Health applied to Vermont Housing Conservation Board for funding to conduct a feasibility study regarding tiny house settings with Department of Mental Health support – Approved Year End 2016 (Lamoille County Mental Health project is in earlier stages of development)
- ◉ Housing & Development Consultant hired to study feasibility – 2017
  - WCMHS partnered with Downstreet which will own and manage the property - 2017
  - Locating site, planning and development – 2017 to present
  - Partnering with Norwich University School of Architecture and Art to design the house by meeting with students regarding unique needs– Sept. 2018 to present
  - Norwich University School of A&A – will build house during Spring 2019 semester, donating labor
  - Re-application to VHCB for project funding – granted Summer 2018
  - Barre City zoning ordinance change to allow for smaller square footage homes - currently being reviewed
  - Design in final stages with support to Norwich University School of A&A from TD Bank - \$20,000 February 2019
  - On-going consultation with VHCB for final design

# Location

- Two tiny houses on lot within walking distance of public transportation and multiple social and support opportunities
- 400 square foot tiny house with porch and small deck
- Sidewalk and center stairway to street
- Name of Design: The Lift

# Support & Independence

- Peer support model with two peers who will be provided housing in neighboring house and lot next to tiny houses
- Housing voucher eligibility
- Assistance with life skills provided
- Case management outreach
- Walking distance to additional activities and supports
- Emergency services
- Project success will be tracked through outcome measures

Presenters:

Alison Friedkin, Director of Real Estate Development  
Downstreet Housing & Community Development

Jeff Rothenberg, Director of Community Living Program  
Washington County Mental Health Services