



## Melrose Terrace Flood Mitigation Project And Redevelopment

- In 2011, Tropical Storm Irene caused substantial damage to the Brattleboro Housing Partnerships (BHP) development at Melrose Terrace along the Whetstone Brook in West Brattleboro.
- Melrose Terrace, built in 1965, comprised 80 units found in 16 buildings across an 8 acre parcel. Sixty of the apartments were damaged in the storm.
- The Board of Commissioners and ED pledge to repair Melrose so the residents would have a place to live while BHP went about the long process of creating replacement housing. The Board and ED were 100% committed to finding new housing for Melrose residents so they never would be flooded out again.
- While BHP and its developer partner, Evernorth, worked on replacement housing, BHP also had to address what to do with the Melrose Terrace property. The first tentative plan was to demolish all the buildings when all the residents were relocated and allow the area to become a passive park. BHP applied for and received HUD approval for the demolition and disposal of Melrose Terrace. This approval included that BHP could dispose of the entire 8 acre site for \$1.00.
- In 2015 the Vermont Community Development Office awarded a \$200,000 grant to BHP for the demolition of 4 buildings.
- In 2016, The Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) Office contacted BHP about being included in a State-wide FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation Award. The idea was that the State would make one application with many different projects in it. The VEM Office wanted Melrose included because it knew it would score very high given its location and propensity to flood. In 2016, BHP began to work on the Award application while it continued to build a new 55 unit building for Melrose residents outside of any potential flooding.
- While the FEMA application was underway, the 4 buildings funded by Community Development had to be put on hold.
- Extensive engineering and project history work was done for the FEMA application. The State submitted its application in October of 2016 with Melrose included. As thought, Melrose scored very high on the FEMA PDMA metrics.
- In 2016 Red Clover Commons replacement housing was opened with 55 apartments.
- In 2017 FEMA had a on site scoping visit to Melrose.
- Following the scoping process, BHP and its engineers had to present to FEMA and the Town a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) which demonstrated the affect the project would have on the flood lines in the area.
- BHP had an Archeology study done in 2018.
- In 2018 the Town gave DRB approval to the proposed Flood Restoration and Mitigation Plan.
- FEMA conducted an extensive Environmental Assessment of the proposal.
- Federal Historic Preservation did their review and BHP came to an agreement with them on an appropriate way to capture and display the history of Melrose Terrace.
- In June of 2019 the Melrose PDMA was formally approved by FEMA. BHP's engineers began working on final design and the many tasks necessary to prepare the proposal for bid and contracting.



- In 2020 the four buildings funded by Vermont Community Development were demolished and the other seven were taken down in 2021.
- In August of 2020 the construction of Red Clover Commons Two with 18 units began.
- September of 2021 the remaining residents at Melrose were relocated to Red Clover Commons 2 or other comparable housing. For the first time in 55 years Melrose Terrace no longer housed residents. Final cost for Red Clover Commons was \$15.9 million and Red Clover Commons Two was \$6.1 million.
- In September of 2021 the Flood Mitigation work began. The work included removing building foundations and infrastructure from the floodplain, removal of fill, and increasing capacity of the roadway connection at George F. Miller Drive by adding an overflow culvert and lowering the road surface. Necessary infrastructure including water, sewer and electric was rerouted. During the project 30,000 cubic yards of soil was removed.
- The project completed in 2022 converted approximately 5 acres for flood water storage was a partnership between FEMA, BHP, Vermont Community Development and the Town of Brattleboro, final cost \$3 million dollars. BHP committed capital fund money allocated to Melrose Terrace specifically.
- The five remaining buildings are at the ground base level that existed when the storm occurred but are now safe from flooding because the area around them is two to three feet lower.
- The flood plain has held water 4 times since it was completed in the fall of 2022. In July of 2023 it held 4 + acres of flood water.
- BHP is currently in the beginning stages of redeveloping the remaining land to be used for future housing.

