Awarded Project Summaries

Barre, 51 Church Street - $20,000

Originally built in 1878 as a schoolhouse, this prominent Italianate-style building was expanded in 1884 and converted for office use around 1920. The Barre Granite Association occupied the building by 1951, adding a Moderne-style entry. More recently the building became the home of the People's Health and Wellness Clinic, a nonprofit providing free and low-cost care, to residents of Washington County. Grant funds will support work to replace the historic slate roof and restore the original tower windows.

Bellows Falls Opera House - $20,000

The 1926 Bellows Falls Opera House, dressed in the Classical Revival style, is marked by a distinctive six-story clock tower. It serves as the municipal offices for the Town of Rockingham and houses a regional Opera House and movie theater with 553 fixed seats and one of the largest movie screens in Vermont. A matching grant will provide funding to repair the clock and complete plaster restoration in several areas of the building damaged by roof leaks.

Brownington, Old Stone House Museum - $15,000

Athenian Hall was built between 1833 and 1836 to serve as a dormitory for the Orleans County Grammar School. In 1918 the building was put up for auction and threatened with demolition. It was saved in 1925 by the Orleans County Historical Society, which operates the hall as part of the Old Stone House Museum. The historical society was awarded a matching grant to complete restoration of the building's historic wood windows.

Burlington, First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington - $20,000

The 1816 Meeting House of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington is an iconic landmark that stands at the head of Church Street, reflecting the Federal style of architecture. It remains home to an active congregation and is also used by a diverse group of service and cultural organizations. FUUSB will use matching grant funds to begin a campaign of window restoration, prioritizing the historic sash on the east and west sides of the main sanctuary.

Charlotte, Grange Hall - $5,000

The Grange Hall, built in 1870 and known formerly as the Lyceum School, has been owned by the Charlotte Grange #398 since 1958. The Grange hosts a variety of programs and community events, including monthly poetry readings, 4H events, clothing and food drives, as well as educational classes and musical programs. A matching grant will support work to restore and rehang the building's historic entry doors to meet modern fire code requirements.

For more information, please contact:
Caitlin Corkins: caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov
802.828.3047

— Page 1 —

VERMONT
AGENCY OF COMMERCE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
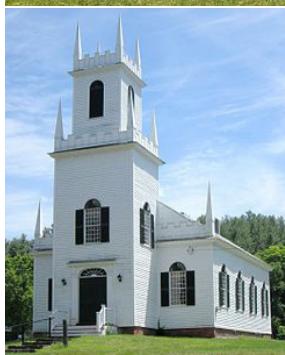
Awarded Project Summaries

Fair Haven, First Congregational Church - $20,000

Fair Haven's prominent Congregational Church was originally constructed in 1804 and then enlarged with Queen Anne and Gothic Revival stylistic elements in 1904. It is still used as a house of worship, open for civic and support group meetings as well as community meals. The congregation will receive matching grant funds to complete several needed repairs, including foundation and drainage work, repairs of the slate roof, and maintenance of exterior carpentry and painting.

Ferrisburgh, Union Meeting Hall - $9,000

The Union Meeting Hall, built in 1840, was originally shared by five different religious denominations. In 1898 the town of Ferrisburgh purchased the property and, for nearly 70 years, leased the building to various community organizations. Yet, from 2014 to 2019, it was vacant. A non-profit group, Friends of the Union Meeting Hall, was formed with the mission to rehabilitate the building to host year-round programming and events for the benefit of the community. The group has successfully completed several projects and state grant funds will now support masonry restoration of the building's brick façade and replacement of a deteriorated window lintel to match the original stone.

Guilford, Episcopal Church at East Guilford - $20,000

In 1817, the village of Algiers erected the first Episcopal church in Vermont. Christ Church's last rector left in 1876. With the building's future threatened, community members formed the Society for the Preservation of Christ's Church in 1951. The building now continues to offer Episcopal and other church services, and hosts weddings, funerals, concerts, and community events. The Society is working to expand events focused on education and social and racial justice. The matching grant will be used to complete restoration of the plaster ceiling.

Manchester, Bennington County Courthouse - $20,000

The Bennington County Courthouse was erected in 1822 when Manchester served as one of two county seats. Then, in 1849, it was expanded and remodeled in the Greek Revival style. It continued to operate the Courthouse until 2010 with ownership of the building then transferred to the Town of Manchester. Today, the lower level is used by the village of Manchester, and the town is working to expand use of the former courtroom space for meetings, events, and cultural programming with the support of a new local non-profit group. Grant funding will support work to repair the slate roof.

VERMONT
AGENCY OF COMMERCE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Awarded Project Summaries

Middlebury, Ilsley Public Library - $20,000

Built as a library through the generous donations of Colonel Silas and Mary Ilsley, this active public library is open six days a week, attracting roughly 150,000 visitors annually. The library is undertaking an expansion project, which involves removal of non-historic additions to the library and construction of a new, sensitively designed addition. Matching grant funds will support work to repair the structure and replace the slate roof of the original 1923 library.

Newbury, Old Village Church - $20,000

The Old Village Church was built for use as a Methodist church in 1829 and was associated with the neighboring Newbury Seminary from 1832 to 1868. In the early 1960s the Newbury Woman's Club preserved it for community use; recently the Newbury School of Weaving moved into the building. This non-profit craft school teaches historic weaving techniques, using the former church for its educational programs. A matching grant will be used to restore the building's historic wood windows.

Newfane, First Congregational Church - $20,000

Newfane's Greek Revival-style First Congregational Church was constructed in 1839. Gothic Revival-style features, notably the pointed-arch windows and a multi-tiered steeple, were added later in the 19th century. Since 1839, the building has served continually as a church and occasionally as a courtroom; the Fellowship Hall is used for numerous community functions, including a monthly Senior Luncheon, weekly community sewing and quilting groups, music lessons, and a variety of meetings for local non-profits. A matching grant will support work to repair the iconic steeple.

Randolph, Chandler Center for the Arts - $20,000

The Chandler Center for the Arts was constructed in 1907 through the local philanthropy of Colonel Albert B. Chandler. It was owned and operated by Bethany Church for the first 25 years. In 1947, the building was deeded to the town, which eventually considered demolishing it; a local group spearheaded an ambitious rehabilitation project beginning in 1972. Today the Chandler attracts about 20,000 visitors annually, with musical events, children and youth programming, and art exhibitions. The Chandler was awarded grant assistance to complete repairs to the slate roof and replacement of metal flashing.

VERMONT
AGENCY OF COMMERCE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Awarded Project Summaries

St. Johnsbury, Merrill Octagon House - $20,000

George A. Merrill built this octagonal brick house in 1855 after moving to St. Johnsbury as the newly appointed railroad superintendent. The building later became a funeral home and more recently has been used for commercial offices. Catamount Arts, a regional arts organization, recently acquired the property, which is next door to their main theater. The restoration plan for the octagon house, annex, and former carriage barn, will result in a "Creative Campus," filling the buildings with creative sector tenants. State grant funds will support masonry restoration efforts.

St. Johnsbury, St. Andrew's Church - $20,000

Construction began in 1877 on St. Andrew's wooden English Gothic-style church, designed by W.P. Wentworth. In 1941, a full basement was constructed below the church to house a guildhall known as Jones Hall. Still serving as a church, the building is also used five days a week by the NKHS Community Skills Center. Grant funds will help improve drainage around the church, which was impacted by a severe weather event in 2024 that caused sinkholes to emerge.

Swanton, Swanton Railroad Depot - $3,911

The Swanton Railroad Depot was constructed c. 1875 to serve the passengers of the Vermont Central Railroad. In the 1980s it became a Community Center and Tribal Headquarters for the Abenaki. When the building was threatened with demolition, the Town of Swanton and the Swanton Historical Society worked together to acquire the building, relocating it to a former railyard a half mile south. It is now used as the Ronald F. Kilburn Railroad Museum. Matching grant funds will support work to repair the depot's siding and decorate wood trim features.

Vergennes, St. Paul's Episcopal Church - $17,300

St. Paul's Episcopal Church is located next to the city green in Vergennes. Constructed in 1834, the Gothic Revival-style building was designed by John Henry Hopkins, Vermont's first Episcopal bishop. The congregation, recognizing this important community gathering place, has a multi-phase plan to increase public use of the church, including investing in accessibility improvements. Historic Preservation Grant funds will help restore the prominent Gothic arch triple-hung window on the church's front gable.

VERMONT
AGENCY OF COMMERCE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Awarded Project Summaries

West Fairlee, Bean Hall - $20,000

Bean Hall was constructed in ca. 1900 to replace the town hall destroyed by fire. The new town hall was named after Alvah Bean, a prominent 19th-century resident who served as town clerk, legislator, judge, merchant, and miller. In addition to its use for municipal activities, the building was a local gathering place for entertainment and meetings. It has been vacant since the town closed the building in 2008. Now the newly formed community trust is working to revitalize Bean Hall, providing a commercial kitchen, second-floor theater, and space for the historical society. State grant funds will support replacement of the gambrel roof with wooden shingles.

Wolcott Schoolhouse - $20,000

The Wolcott Schoolhouse, constructed ca. 1855, served as a local public school until 1988. In 2007 the town renovated the newer wing of the schoolhouse (built 1964) to provide town offices and disconnected the historic schoolhouse from this newer wing. It has been largely unused since. A newly formed community trust is now working to rehabilitate the building to house the library and historical society with flexible spaces for community groups and gatherings. The building will undergo complete rehabilitation with the state preservation grant funding restoration of the historic wood windows.

Newfane — First Congregational Church (background), Windham Co. Superior Courthouse (foreground)

For more information, please contact:
Caitlin Corkins: caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov
802.828.3047

VERMONT
AGENCY OF COMMERCE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT