

HUD Consolidated Plan Outreach Meeting 2020
Milton – 1.23.2020

Staff: Julia Connell, Shaun Gilpin, Josh Hanford, Ann K. Kroll

Public Guests: Ernest (Buster) Caswell – Pathstone, Jasmine – supporting Buster, Jen Hollar – VHCB, Allison Harte – AHS, Miranda Lescaze – Cathedral Square, Emily Grimes – ESWD, Shayla Zammato – Let’s Grow Kids, Blythe Basquett – Let’s Grow Kids, (sign-up sheet went around)

Meeting Minutes

- Ernest arrived early to discuss workforce development housings for farmers and agriculture
- *Introductions around the room*
- Opening from Shaun – ConPlan is drafted and submitted by DHCD, but other organizations are involved with the funding, CDBG Funds – goes through the municipality. Typically, the municipality would then pass the funds on to another organization, like Let’s grow kids or CHT. HTF funds are administered by Jen’s organization, VHCB. And HOPWA is a competitive application process
- Major goals of all of these programs are (see slide)
- We’ve been focusing on (see Goals and Priorities slide 1-4)
- Every year after the department of Housing and Community Development updates this 5 year plan, we have to do annual action plans. Those are created and tweaked each year but this 5 year update allows for more significant changes and shift in priorities
- About \$7Million for CDBG, \$3Million for HOME, about \$650K for ESG, \$3M for HTF
- Shaun explains the difference of Burlington being an Entitlement community with its separate application to HUD for these funds and our pot of money goes outside of Burlington
- Public Housing Authorities are encouraged to certify that their plans are in conform with the Consolidated Plan goals.
- Online survey running simultaneous through these meetings (March 13th) to give us comments and thoughts on priorities. ConPlan advisory board come to listen to this information as well. We are also working on a Housing Needs Assessment. CDBG funds go toward housing developments as we know that’s a huge need.
- We need to submit a draft plan by mid-March but then there will be more opportunity for comment. Our final plan needs to be sent to the Federal Government mid May for approval by July.
- 211 participants so far on the survey. Shaun will share PPT and links. Almost half of the participants from General Public and Chittenden County.
- We helped the Town of Essex to work on a project to collect data – housingdata.org
- Community Profiles page allows one to find a whole lot of information and data on housing around the State. There’s general household income by county, housing wage and what it costs to afford 1BR or 2BR or 3BR and what the hourly rate needed to make. There’s sometimes startling data. There’s affordability calculators as well -- \$250K home shows what the cash on hand cost is needed etc..
- End of slideshow, Shaun opens up the discussion for Public participation to know what brought folks here and what they’re looking for from this
- Shayla – Childcare as an economic driver. Three childcare centers were just announced to close with about 90 kids being displaced. Always a lot of talking of bringing young families to the State

but if you can't find childcare, you can't live here. Looking to revitalize communities and bring people to the workforce – childcare is a big need. Public grant program support is highly desired.

- What communities does Let's Grow Kids cover?
- Shayla – it's Statewide. Tasked to raise quality, raise wages for childcare providers – who don't typically make a liveable wage and end up closing, raising the number of slots of childcare
- Grant program – make way for kids, that childcare providers can apply too. We're focusing on capacity right now and expanding the number of slots. They're closing at a quick rate because they're not making enough money. Problem has been going on for 30 years and is not getting any better.
- Blythe – Childcare provider, was a public school teacher and ended up staying home with her daughter. Had a qualified pre-school program in the home for 10 hours a week for three year. Lives in Fairfax. Daycares are closing, pressure from the State for providers to meet expectations that they can't meet. Highschool degree and associate degree are required and people don't have it. She struggles with accessibility with her parents – she drives the kids. Parents can't get kids to the public schools, they're all working.
- Shayla – Women disproportionately stay home.
- Blythe – And to start a preschool is tough but people do it. To buy a building is \$70K and its in disrepair and then a vehicle for transportation. It's a 50 hours a week job and you only get paid \$50 a kid and you only have 6 kids. You don't make enough.
- Shaun – You talked about needing more slots. How much of that is actually getting infrastructure? Or licensing? Or providers
- Shayla – Yeah it's hard. You have to go through regulatory process to do it. Zoning to make a building up to code is difficult.
- Blythe – in addition of infrastructure, the pressure of classes and trying to get providers is a financial barrier.
- Shayla – it's a huge problem in every single county of Vermont, not just Chittenden County
- Jasmine – I was able to stay home, and my kids turned out great. Catered on the side and it was a blessing.
- Josh – CDBG program has funded childcare in the past. Great projects, but unfortunately zoning can cause barriers. Neighbor's shut it down. Can't understand why it wouldn't be a bad neighbor. Sounds like bricks & mortar and programing funds would be beneficial – whole spectrum
- Ann – Tuition help sounds like it's an issue to bring back. Important for children to be supported properly. If providers must reach certain level, tuition could be helpful.
- Shayla – Tuition Assistance Program, star rating for reimburse on quality. Underfunded for years and years. Infant and toddler reimbursement rates are aligned with 2017 Market Rate Survey Findings, Preschool and afterschool reimbursement rates are aligned with 2014 Market Rate Survey Findings. Wonderful but only helps a small segment.
- Jen – Project coming in for Housing on top and Childcare on bottom floor. They don't yet have a provider, but would your organization be able to help with that?
- Shayla – Yes, LGK can certainly help by discussing the project with our programs team who works with child care providers (number of slots to be opened, number of child care providers needed, etc.) and getting a conversation started about where to go from there. (Jen will reach out after meeting)
- Shaun – touch back on accessibility. Is that transportation?
- Blythe – Yes. It's only 10 hours a week but parents can usually only do either drop off or pick up

- Emily – lived through childcare nightmare with children. They've experienced seven different childcare providers; we need after school care for the kids now. There's only one provider in Georgia. Here to listen and learn.
- Ernest – Here to bring awareness to the need of Farmworker Housing. Not often talked about, but other states like Oregon, New Mexico, New York, New Jersey, etc.. States have in their budget resources for rehabilitation or creation of farmworker housing. Sometimes on the farm. Farmworker hasn't really been done off the farm at all. Been talking to Migrant Farmer Justice, Foundation through Ben & Jerry's and there are no resources on the State level. Some programs on the Federal Level but are virtually impossible for a Farmer to reach. Some require State contribution to access. Franklin and Addison county need these housing – virtually everywhere. Is a 20 home development needed in Vermont? Yes. Some dairy and vegetable farms are growing, and the workers are in need of affordable housing which is very hard to find in this State. Sometimes more than half their income is going to their Housing. Farm Workforce Housing is very needed. Pathstone does not construct housing in Vermont – works a lot in Puerto Rico.
- Fourteen farmers living in a two bedroom trailer in Franklin County. There's not housing or affordable housing for them.
- Jasmine – And then we have documented farmer workers vs. undocumented
- Ernest – Other states have used the same funding you've laid out. Oregon has a coalition similar to our Housing Needs Coalition that's specific for Farm Workforce Housing. They're a bigger state, but it's the same need. Daycare for farmers is extremely difficult. Workers in Addison county with three families living in a double-wide. Housing organization needs to step up and fill the need, State resources should be utilized on these projects. Every project often needs a variety of sources and they should be available for these challenges.
- Shaun – Projects for Farmworker housing, you talked about on or off the farm. Is there a priority for either?
- Ernest – They sort of have to be equal. Rehabilitation of fixing current farm housing is a need. H2A program with out of country workers may require farmers to provide housing, which might be off farm. CHT may want to do an off the farm project. Most of the on the farm housing is for H2A or dairy farm workers that built the housing. It's a combination. Knowing the housing law, there's a law that targets farms – might be a bit off. There was a slight change two years ago, but it basically says if you work and live as a dairy farm and if you lose your job and the farm closes, if you lose your job you also lose your housing with no timeline – you're immediately homeless. There's a need for off the farm housing because if you lose your job then you have to look for another farming job – which could be in a different community. Thinking about 75% need off the Farm housing, and 25% on the farm housing. Other organizations are working on these statistics. Pathstone works with Farmers here in VT for training and opportunities -- housing needs are often heard at meetings. Connecting these folks to resources is hard because of the jobs they work. Resources need to step up and be available for these kinds of projects. Immigration is not something we like to talk about, with about 1200 folks with immigration issues.
- Jasmine – Ernest was able to bring a lot of organizations together to see what's out there and connect at a meeting in November.
- Ernest – We all need to come together.
- Shayla – We talk a lot about how times have changed and how it often takes two working parents to finance. It's not always a choice if you can stay home with kids.

- Miranda – I work for Cathedral Square. We've been fortunate to receive funds from these programs. Here to talk about continued need for affordable Senior Housing. Wants to keep affordable housing and permanent affordability priorities in the ConPlan. Our current waitlist takes 2-5 year for folks to get in our apartments. The 65-74 age cohort is the largest growing in the State and there was a recent study out of UMass showing that Vermont ranks first in the nation for the highest rate of economic insecurity for seniors. SASH services enable people to live at home rather than go to institutional care. Other thought is Financial assistance for rural communities with water and sewer upgrade. It's a real barrier to economic growth in those communities.
- Jen – it's impactful to hear from people directly, so thank you for coming out.
- Shayla – When is the survey open to?
- March 9th is the last outreach meeting. Josh and Ann explain the comment compilation.