

Stakeholder Working Group for Facility Planning for Justice-Involved Youth Meeting Minutes – September 2, 2026

Waterbury State Office Complex, Ash Room, Waterbury, VT (In-person)

Meeting called to order at 2:03pm

Public:

Emily Kisiki, Nellie Marvel, Erin Sigrist

Attendees:

Attendees

- Justin Davis, Agency of Human Services, Facilitator
- Melanie D’Amico, Department for Children & Families
- Charlie Parker Gliserman; Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Marshall Pahl, Office of the Defender General
- John Bouchard, lived experience; parent of a youth at Red Clover
- Laura Carter, Office of Racial Equity
- Jenn Garabedian, Department of Ageing and Independent Living
- Matthew Bernstien, Office of Child and Family Youth Advocate
- Jennifer Benedict, Stand in for Dana Robson
- Kim McManus, Department of State’s Attorneys & Sheriffs
- Karen Vastine, Chair, Council for Equitable Youth Justice
- Tabrena Karish, Department of Buildings & General Services

Members of the Public Present: Emily Kisicki, Nellie Marvel, Erin Sigrist

Agenda:

Welcome & Introductions

Approval of Minutes: July 15, 2026

Review of Group Agreements

DCF Presentation: Project Overview/Orientation

Stakeholder Discussion & Feedback: Green Mountain Youth Center Oversight

Public Comment

Future Meeting Scheduling

Themes Heard & Next Steps

Closing

After introductions, group discusses meeting minutes from July 15, 2026 meeting. Laura Carter recommends an edit to July's minutes – mention of "Racial Justice/Racial Equity" should be changed to reflect the Office's name – Office of Racial Equity. D'Amico offers motion to approve minutes as edited. Motion passes with Bernstein and Karish abstaining. Minutes are approved.

Davis provides an overview of the day's proposed agenda and turns the meeting over to D'Amico to provide an overview of Vermont's High End System of Care and full continuum of care, including available placements for youth within in-state residential settings.

Members request the list of programs and their descriptions be written and shared. Bernstein requests a copy of the contracts for these programs and associated costs. D'Amico agrees to provide program list and descriptions – request for contract copies will be addressed outside of the meeting. Discussion and clarifying questions follow regarding available programming, their role within the system of care, and funding mechanisms.

D'Amico identifies places within the High End System of Care that need further expansion or development, including current gap from a lack of high-end secure placements.

The Working Group is provided an update on Green Mountain Youth Center; where development currently stands, what populations DCF is proposing to serve, and the methodology for determining the number of beds. Group asks clarifying questions around the number of beds proposed to be developed. D'Amico clarifies.

Discussion around whether or not to include 18 year olds in GMYC, given July implementation of Raise the Age. Group would like to revisit this topic in a future meeting, and would like to invite experts in the field to present to the group. Members volunteer specific names, including Lael Chester, Hunter Hurst, and Cecily Reardon. Members are invited to share additional names with DCF outside of the meeting.

Bernstein makes motion to include this item on a future agenda. Bouchard seconds. Motion passes with none opposing.

D'Amico discusses next several proposed meeting topics. Including facility design, restorative justice, and HESOC consultant recommendations.

Discussion follows about order and topics for future meetings. DCF proposed meeting order includes dedicated conversation relating to facility design prior to discussion of other topics, such as clinical and educational programming. Multiple members express preference to discuss programming prior to facility design. Discussion follows. Group decides to spend the next meeting discussing both programming and facility design. Proposal includes a quick overview of educational and clinical programming, followed by facility overview. DCF will provide that overview, and the group will compare the two aspects and discuss any perceived issues.

D'Amico asks the group to share any ideas for clinical or educational programming prior to the next meeting.

Bernstein makes a motion for DCF to bring data to the next meeting on how many youth have had IEPs at Red Clover, and how the number compares to the total number of youth that have gone through Red Clover. Garabedian seconds. Motion passes.

Discussion of oversight of GMYC. Members express worry that a similar oversight structure for GMYC will lead to similar issues that arose at Woodside. Discussion follows about public/private oversight structure and roles, and the potential to create channels within OGD that give the same access to youth that Prisoner's Rights are granted to Incarcerated Individuals under the supervision of Department of Corrections. [Citation for ODG duty to investigate with DOC.](#)

September 30th is offered as a potential date for the Working Group's next meeting. Time is yet to be determined. Meeting will be in-person only, but the architects for GMYC may potentially be remote to allow for their attendance and presentation.