

—Slug:.....COMM-0856.opin.view.bennett
—Contributor.....Libby Bennett
—Contributor email.....lbennett@groundworksvt.org
—For section.....Voices/Viewpoint
—Format.....Opinions
—Dateline.....
—Article Number:.....43271



Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 A 'difficult but necessary decision'

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2 Great River Terrace looked to create permanent
3 supportive housing in Brattleboro in 2018. Today, funding for that
4 vision is not sustainable, and the complex will revert to general
5 occupancy.

####END SUBHED####

6 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

7 WE ARE SHARING an important transition in programming
8 at Great River Terrace — one shaped by deep reflection, shared
9 learning, and an ongoing commitment to resident stability.
10 When our organizations — Windham & Windsor
11 Housing Trust and Groundworks — first came together to launch

12 Great River Terrace in 2018, we shared a bold and deeply
13 hopeful vision: to create a permanent supportive housing (PSH)
14 community where individuals could find stability, dignity, and a
15 foundation for long-term well-being.

16 We were inspired by what was possible when housing
17 and services are thoughtfully integrated, and we were honored to
18 partner in bringing that vision to life. That vision remains
19 meaningful to us today.

20 Since opening, this work has been shaped by dedication,
21 collaboration, and ongoing learning.

22 Together, we have gained a clearer understanding of the
23 conditions required for a permanent supportive housing model to
24 succeed over the long term. We have learned that this model
25 depends on a level of sustained, robust services and financial
26 stability, both for the service partner and for the property owners.

27 Unfortunately, the current funding model at Great River
28 Terrace does not provide this stability.

29 As a result, Windham & Windsor Housing Trust has made
30 the difficult but necessary decision to transition the property, over
31 time, to a general occupancy property. As part of this transition,
32 Groundworks has identified Friday, March 27 as the day that
33 onsite services will conclude at Great River Terrace.

34 * * *

35 THESE DIFFICULT DECISIONS reflect stark structural realities
36 — including the absence of a comprehensive funding model
37 capable of supporting the full continuum of care that many
38 individuals need to thrive in permanent housing.

39 We remain deeply proud of our original vision, and the
40 successes we have witnessed and nurtured. For many residents,
41 housing paired with support has led to meaningful and lasting
42 positive change. Those outcomes affirm the core belief that
43 guided this partnership: that with the right resources, people's
44 lives can and do change.

45 As this transition unfolds, our focus is on our residents —
46 their stability, their well-being, and their future. We are

47 committed to transparent communication, individualized
48 support, and thoughtful planning.

49 Services will continue to be available to individuals, and
50 both organizations will work closely with residents and
51 community partners to support next steps and maintain
52 continuity wherever possible.

53 * * *

54 WE ALSO WANT to reaffirm our enduring commitment to
55 people exiting homelessness. This commitment continues across
56 our broader housing and service systems, and it will continue to
57 guide how we respond to community needs moving forward.
58 While the structure of support may evolve, our dedication
59 remains steadfast.

60 This decision has been made with great care, reflection,
61 and respect for everyone involved. We are profoundly grateful to
62 the staff, partners, and community members who have invested
63 their time, expertise, and compassion in this work. Their efforts —
64 and the courage and resilience of residents — have shaped an
65 experience that will continue to inform and strengthen what
66 comes next.

67 What we have learned will help us move toward new
68 approaches that are both compassionate and sustainable. We
69 know this transition will bring questions, and we remain
70 committed to honesty, openness, and care as we move forward
71 together.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

72 **ELIZABETH BRIDGEWATER** and **LIBBY BENNETT** —
73 executive director of the Windham-Windsor Housing Trust, and
74 executive director of Groundworks Collaborative, respectively —
75 issued this joint statement on March 4 about the transition of
76 programming at Great River Terrace, a complex intended to

77 provide permanent supportive housing on Putney Road in
78 Brattleboro.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

79 0

####END MAXISSUE####

LINKS:

####BEGIN LINKS####

80

####END LINKS####

VIDEO:

####BEGIN VIDEO####

81

####END VIDEO####

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

####BEGIN LOGLINE####

82

####END LOGLINE####