



Sunset Advisory Commission

December 10, 2020



Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Statutory Purpose



“the dual goals of creating affordable housing for Vermonters, and conserving and protecting Vermont’s agricultural land, forestland, historic properties, important natural areas, and recreational lands of primary importance to the economic vitality and quality of life of the State.”

10 V.S.A.15 §302

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board



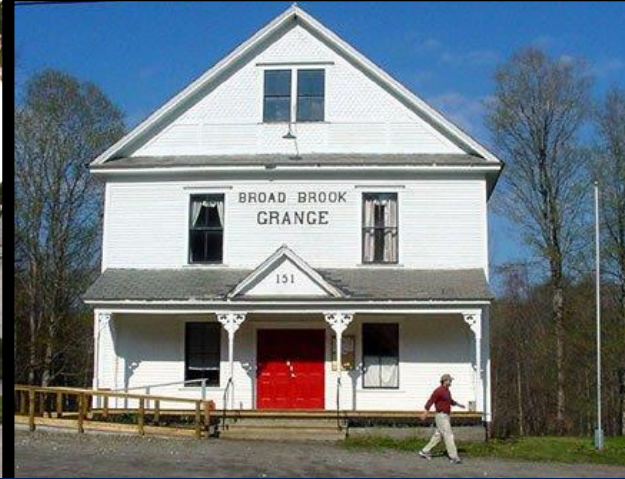
Appointed by the Legislature and the Governor, the 11 member board holds meetings around the state to consider applications. Here it is visiting the Brandon Falls Park, funded by VHCB in 1993.



33 Years of Housing & Conservation

Since 1987, VHCB funding has helped protect, conserve and create:

- 269,423 acres of working forests, natural areas & recreational lands
- 13,773 affordable homes – rental and homeownership
- 167,000 acres of farmland on 758 farms
- 72 historic buildings have been restored for community use
- 900 businesses served by our Farm & Forest Viability Program



Revitalizing a Rural Community through Housing, Conservation and Historic Preservation



Local leadership in Guilford has used VHCB funding to leverage many millions in other sources to bring the Country Store back to life and build much needed affordable homes. VHCB has awarded capital bill funds for the restoration and conservation of high priority floodplain and public access along the Green River. Work is underway now on a grant to transform the historic Broad Brook Grange into a community center.

VHCB PROGRAMS

- Multi-Family Housing Development and Preservation
- Recreational Lands, Forests, and Natural Area Conservation
- Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI)
- Farmland Access
- Farmland Conservation
- Water Quality Grants
- Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program
- Home Ownership
- Healthy & Lead-Safe Homes
- AmeriCorps
- Historic Preservation
- Home Access
- Housing Opportunities for Persons living with HIV/AIDS



VHCB Results: FY 2019 and FY 2020

State Investment: \$31M
Leverage: \$162M

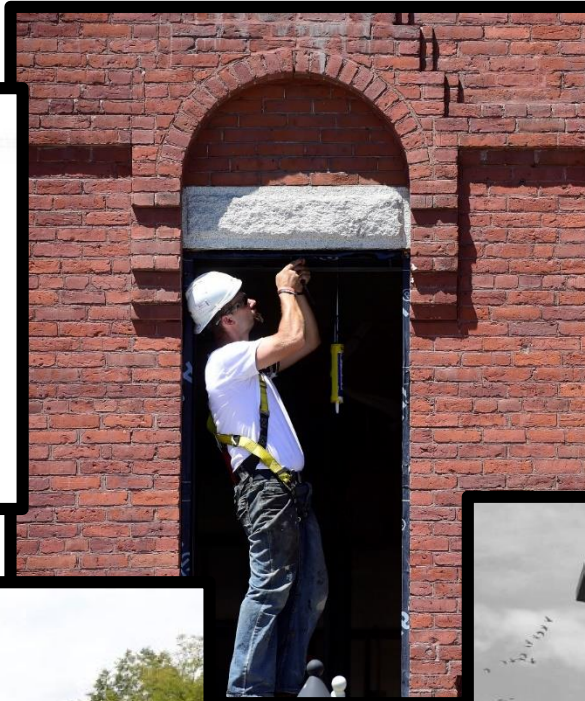
- 875 homes and apartments
- 45 farms; 5,765 acres conserved
- 25 natural areas; forests; parks and trails: 7,908 acres conserved
- 2 historic preservation projects
- 317 farm and forest enterprises served with business planning and technical assistance.

VHCB Program Impacts

- Homes for Workers
- Downtown/Village Revitalization
- Outdoor Recreation
- Rural Economic Development
- Water Quality
- Housing the Homeless
- Farm and Forest next generation transfers
- Historic Community Buildings

Downtowns Revitalized

Brattleboro, Montpelier, Bennington, St. Johnsbury and St. Albans funded by the Housing Revenue Bond. Also Bennington and Springfield.





Homeownership

Capital Bill funds for housing help new owners access home ownership. In Rutland, Hussam and Hazar Alhallak-Mansour moved their family into a new Habitat home on Crescent Street. In East Montpelier, the local Habitat chapter built a net-zero energy home.

Providing affordable housing is one of the best ways to make our communities inclusive.

Farmland Succession: Intergenerational Transfers



Land conservation and business planning support to farm and forest businesses helps new farmers afford farmland and diversifies agriculture.

Helping Young Vermonters onto the Land

Bear Roots Farm in South Barre and Williamstown



Clean Water Initiative

Water Quality Farm Improvement and Retirement Projects



WQ Grant to Stonebroke Farm, Pawlet



Farm Retirement, Colchester

Land Conservation and Water Quality

Boissoneault Farm, St. Albans - \$230,500 in capital bill funds leveraged \$356,500 in federal and private funding to conserve 264 acres on Lake Champlain including 140 acres of wetlands with multiple rare and uncommon natural communities.



VHCB's Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program

- 16 years of in-depth advising
- Served over 800 businesses
- 30% of enrollees are on conserved farms

2018 Viability Program Participants:

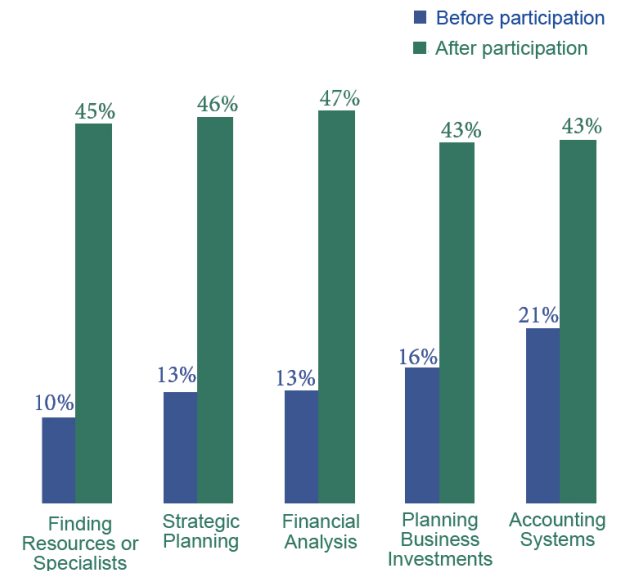


Gross sales by **21%**



Profits by **\$32,500**
per business

*Percent of farmers who report
high skills in:*



- **Towhead LCC, Danville**
- **Isaac Pearl**

Isaac Pearl benefited from business planning, working with an advisor through the VHCB's Farm & Forest Viability Program. His advisor helped him refine his book keeping systems and analyze his business strategy and equipment needs. He can now easily track income and expenses, and is keeping information up to date, speeding up his tax preparation and informing decision making.



Good Earth Farm



The owner of this small, diversified vegetable & fruit operation in Brandon worked with a Viability program advisor for several years on a business plan and land access.





Jenna's Promise
Recovery Residence, Johnson



Recreation Bridge, Newport



Sweet Rowen Farm, Glover



Town of Jeffersonville

Rural Economic Development Initiative

- From FY18 to FY20, \$225,000 in special appropriations for grant writing helped 24 rural enterprises and small towns win **\$4.1 million** in federal, state, and philanthropic funding.
- An additional \$2.3 million in federal, state, and philanthropic funds are pending.
- Projects span the state from Pownal to Newport, and have helped with outdoor recreation infrastructure, agricultural and forest industry projects, downtown revitalization, and developing rural childcare centers.



J. Henke



VHCB Statute: 10 VSA Chapter 15, Section 322

(a)(2) The need for a timely response to **unpredictable circumstances or special opportunities** . . .

Using CRF \$s and our organizational capacity and networks to:

- Improve safety of crowded emergency facilities to protect health of those experiencing homelessness
- Secure permanent housing for Vermonters temporarily in motels or shelters
- Help farm and food businesses adapt to shutdowns and loss of markets including accessing relief programs.

COVID Response and Recovery

Housing for the Homeless; Business Support for the Farm, Food & Forestry Sectors



Managing \$34.25 M in CRF for 26 projects securing **247 new homes and beds for those experiencing homelessness as well as improvements to 12 shelters** around the state for health and safety during COVID.

VHCB's Farm & Forest Viability Program has used \$192,000 in CRF funding to provide rapid-response **business coaching for more than 500 enterprises**, helping them apply for state and federal relief programs, work on financial planning, re-orient to new markets, connecting to health and wellness resources and manage human resource challenges.



Fairbanks Museum, St.
Johnsbury



Lamoille River Access,
Cambridge



Wentworth Housing II,
Hartford

18-Month Pipeline

Housing, Conservation & Historic Preservation

- \$37 million for 54 rental housing developments, homeownership and accessibility
- \$10.5 million for 35 farmland conservation projects
- \$5.7 million for 63 natural resources and recreational areas projects
- \$1.2 million for 22 historic community buildings



Willoughby Peaks Westmore

Jen Hollar

Director of Policy and Special
Projects

Vermont Housing &



Conservation Board