

Project Name UCU Affordable Housing Project
Physical Location of Project - Please include Street Number, Street Address, City, State and Zip 16 Harvest Run, Underhill, VT 05489

Project Description

The United Church of Underhill (UCU) is collaborating with the Town of Underhill on an affordable housing project to purchase and subdivide a nine acre parcel of property that abuts land currently owned by the United Church of Underhill. Utilities including water, electricity, natural gas, telephone and cable/internet are nearby with multiple access points to this parcel. Realistically, this subject parcel of land is one of the few remaining parcels within this zoning district that could easily support multiple affordable housing units in Underhill.

In January 2020, the UCU voted to form a committee to consider the feasibility of purchasing the property. A scenario of purchasing the entire nine acres and subdividing some of it for affordable housing emerged as a possible endeavor. If the UCU could sell housing lots, even at affordable prices, the revenue from those sales could offset at least a portion of the property purchase cost.

As part of the investigation of the property purchase and development plan, the UCU reached out to Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity (Habitat).

Habitat for Humanity brings many important elements to the project:

1. They have expertise in this type of development in similar settings;
2. Habitat has a system in place to keep property and homes perpetually affordable;
3. Habitat has income parameters established for eligibility in order to purchase and own the homes;
4. Habitat has sensitivity for the design and architecture of homes they build, which allows for a desirable fit with the surrounding neighborhood; and
5. From a financial perspective, Habitat has the ability to support the purchase of building lots, thus enabling the UCU to offset its purchasing costs, in this case, the purchasing of land from Phil Jacobs.

At a special meeting of the UCU in October 2020, the church congregation voted to move forward with purchasing the property for the purpose of creating affordable housing on approximately seven acres of land, while the UCU will retain two acres, directly behind the church for orchards, community gardens, recreation and to host a fall community event called Harvest Market. The UCU immediately began fundraising, and prior to the end of the year was able to raise over \$60,000. A \$50,000 down payment has been provided to Mr. Jacobs. The remaining balance is available to cover other costs, which includes the match requirements of this grant. The current concept (subject to engineering and other investigation hopefully supported by this grant) is to construct ten affordable homes: four of the structures would be single family units while the other three structures would be duplexes.

On February 2, 2021 representatives from the UCU met with the Underhill Selectboard to present an overview of the project and ask for their cooperation in applying for this grant. The Selectboard voted in favor of supporting this application and filling the role as the fiscal agent if

funding is awarded.

If awarded, this Planning Grant will provide funding to support research on the feasibility of this affordable housing goal; a map developed by the engineers with road, septic locations and design standards, and other needed infrastructure; title search and legal documentation supporting the land purchase; a Phase I environmental assessment and evidence of the need or not of any Phase II environmental assessments; Town permits and public hearings supporting the site design; and other reports and documents deemed important to future implementation of the affordable housing goals.

If an application has been created for this project please provide the VCDP Application Identifier.

07110-PG-2020-Underhill-19

Level of Environmental Review*
(select only one)

✓ Exempt
Categorically Excluded
Assessment

Funding Information:

Please Note: Only HUD Funding Sources need to be individually listed in the below table. Other, non-HUD resources should NOT be listed. The Estimated Total HUD Funding Amount will auto calculate. The Estimated Total Project Cost requires a manual input.

HUD Funding (ONLY)	No	Yes	If yes, how much (estimated)?
CDBG	✓		
HOME	✓		
National Housing Trust Fund (HTF)	✓		
HUD Risk Share Program (Section 542(c))	✓		
Section 8 Project Based Vouchers	✓		
Other:			
Other:			
Estimated Total HUD Funding Amount			\$0
Estimated Total Project Cost			\$60,000

The Chief Executive Officer or Designee must certify to the information.

A finding of Exemption, as authorized by 24 CFR 58.34(a) has been made for the following approved activities:

The following activities apply to the project:

Exempt Activities

- ✓ Environmental and other studies, resource identification and the development of plans and strategies
Information and financial services
- ✓ Administrative and management activities
Public services that will not have a physical impact or result in any physical changes, including but not limited to services concerned with employment, crime prevention, child care, health, drug abuse, education, counseling, energy conservation and welfare or recreational needs
Inspections and testing of properties for hazards or defects
Purchase of Insurance
Purchase of tools
- ✓ Engineering or design costs
- ✓ Technical assistance and training
Assistance for temporary or permanent improvements that do not alter environmental conditions and are limited to protection, repair, or restoration activities necessary only to control or arrest the effects from disasters or imminent threats to public safety including those resulting from physical deterioration
Payment of principal and interest on loans made or obligations guaranteed by HUD

Categorically Excluded Activities not subject to Section 58.5.

Tenant-based rental assistance

Supportive services including, but not limited to, health care, housing services, permanent housing placement, day care, nutritional services, short-term payments for rent/mortgage/utility costs, and assistance in gaining access to local, State, and Federal government benefits and services

Operating costs including maintenance, security, operation, utilities, furnishings, equipment, supplies, staff training and recruitment and other incidental costs

Economic development activities, including but not limited to, equipment purchase, inventory financing, interest subsidy, operating expenses and similar costs not associated with construction or expansion of existing operations

Activities to assist homebuyers to purchase existing dwelling units or dwelling units under construction, including closing costs and down payment assistance, interest buy-downs, and similar activities that result in the transfer of title.

- ✓ Affordable housing pre-development costs including legal, consulting, developer and other costs related to obtaining site options, project financing, administrative costs and fees for loan commitments, zoning approvals, and other related activities which do not have a physical impact.
Approval of supplemental assistance (including insurance or guarantee) to a project previously approved under this part, if the approval is made by the same responsible entity that conducted the environmental review on the original project and reevaluation of the environmental findings is not required.

Please download, complete and upload the [Environmental Review Compliance Exempt Checklist](https://egrants.vermont.gov/_Upload/251590_8047218-CD-VCDP-ER-ExemptChecklist-Complete.pdf). Please upload completed checklist here

https://egrants.vermont.gov/_Upload/251590_8047218-CD-VCDP-ER-ExemptChecklist-Complete.pdf

Please upload a map showing the projects location's distance from the two Part 139 airports in Vermont:

Burlington International Airport and Rutland Regional Airport. Please upload completed map here

Does your project involve or potentially involve planning or implementation activities for a building that is 50 years or older, listed on the national register, located in an historic district/designated downtown OR ground disturbance? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please upload the signed Historic Preservation Preliminary Review Form by Historic Preservation.

Does your project involve future renovations, rehabilitation or construction? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please upload a FIRMette including an outline of the project area.

Does your project involve future acquisition, new construction, change of land use, major rehabilitation, demolition, reconstruction/development or new infrastructure expansion? ☒ Yes ☐ No If yes, please upload a map supporting the project's location distance from Vermont designated river portions.

https://egrants.vermont.gov/_Upload/251590_8047228-UnitedChurchofUnderhillPreliminarySitePlan.pdf

SECTION 1

Date *

Name of Certifying Officer *

(The Certifying Officer for a municipal applicant is the Municipal or Authorizing Official.)

Title of Certifying Officer *

Project Name UCU Affordable Housing Project

A finding of Exemption, as authorized by 24 CFR 58.34(a), has been made for the following approved activities.

Please check all of the program areas that apply to the project:

Economic Development

Housing

☒ Planning

Public Facility

Public Service

Physical Location of Project 16 Harvest Run, Underhill, VT 05489

SECTION 2

I, as the Responsible Entity, certify that each activity or project is exempt and meets the conditions specified for such exemption under section 24 CFR 58.34(a) and will maintain a copy of this determination in the Environmental Review Record. *