Dear Friends,

The year 2021 dawned full of hope that we would soon have the COVID-19 pandemic under control, but by late summer those hopes had vanished. Staffing shortages, on- and off-mask mandates and shifting guidelines for group gatherings presented more challenges throughout the year than we could have imagined.

Boosted by friends and supporters near and far, however, our amazing staff met the pandemic head on. More than ever, we were reminded that we are in fact “in this together” and it truly does “take a village.” Board members, friends and staff at all levels stepped up to help whenever there was a need, volunteering countless hours heating and serving meals, cleaning kitchens and community spaces, shoveling snow and delivering essentials.

Through it all, we found much to celebrate. We hosted on-site vaccine clinics at 23 of our housing communities, and residents and staff turned out in force. The excellent turnout no doubt helped us keep coronavirus infections at a minimum. (While we experienced positive cases in nearly all of our communities, we had only one “outbreak” — so labeled because it involved seven connected cases — thanks to our strict infection-control measures.)

We also broke ground for Bayview Crossing in South Hero, launched a training initiative for licensed nurse assistants in partnership with the city of Burlington, significantly expanded our telehealth capacity, received a grant to make mobility improvements in the homes of rural Vermonters, and provided anti-racism training to staff and built on our work in this area. And we celebrated the 10th anniversary of SASH® with great fanfare (pandemic style) and laid the groundwork for new initiatives to come.

Every day I am inspired by our dedicated staff. They never fail to meet any challenge, and always with kindness, compassion and competence. So too I am inspired by the unwavering support of friends like you. This more than anything gives me reason for confidence that the future of Cathedral Square, and the continued well-being of residents and staff, is in good hands.

With hope that next year at this time we will be on the other side of the pandemic, thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Kim Fitzgerald
CEO

Cathedral Square is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization and an equal-opportunity employer and housing provider. Since 1977, we have worked to create a better Vermont by providing affordable, service-enriched homes to older Vermonters and people with diverse needs. Our organization and our communities are welcoming and inclusive, embracing and supporting diversity in all its forms.
**Juniper House Opens to Rave Reviews**

Opening delays caused by the pandemic did nothing to dampen the spirits of Juniper House residents who began settling into their sparkling new homes on March 22. Move-ins to the 70 apartments were staggered throughout the spring to ensure social distancing and keep everyone safe from COVID-19.

By summer, as restrictions eased and activities resumed outside, residents could be heard sharing stories and raving about their environment. As one resident posted on Facebook, “This is an amazing place!”

Juniper House offers one- and two-bedroom apartments at affordable to market-rate rents for adults ages 55+. It is part of the Cambrian Rise neighborhood under development off North Avenue in Burlington.

Like other Cathedral Square communities, it offers a variety of amenities, including free access to SASH® services, laundry and exercise facilities, community spaces and a broad mix of programming.

**Construction Begins on Bayview Crossing, Realizing A Longtime Island Dream**

Capping 15 years of tireless work to bring affordable senior housing to the Champlain Islands, Cathedral Square and CIDER (Champlain Islanders Developing Essential Resources) hosted a groundbreaking ceremony on a sunny September day for Bayview Crossing, which will bring 30 apartments to South Hero.

The project marks the first development of affordable housing in Grand Isle County in nearly 16 years.

It was a momentous occasion truly worthy of celebrating, and community members turned out in force to cheer on the project. Also on hand were state and local officials, media representatives, and staff from the offices of Sen. Patrick Leahy, Sen. Bernie Sanders and Rep. Peter Welch.

In addition to Kim Fitzgerald of Cathedral Square and Robin Way of CIDER, speakers included Gov. Phil Scott, Sen. Dick Mazza, South Hero Town Clerk and Treasurer Kim Julow, and Gus Seelig of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board.

The celebration was a testament to the numerous community members who came together to help make it a reality, raising over $450,000 in just six months to support it. The festive fall event concluded with refreshments of apple cider and cider donuts from nearby Hackett’s Orchard and cookies from adjacent Wally’s Place – Bagel & Deli.

Named for the view it affords of Keeler Bay and a railroad that used to cross nearby, Bayview Crossing will offer 30 mixed-income homes as well as office space for CIDER, which provides transportation, meals and home modifications for older Island residents.

The site is an ideal location, situated next to the health center, Worthen library, Wally’s Deli, and a soon-to-open dental office.

As Fitzgerald noted in her remarks, “Cathedral Square & CIDER share a mission of helping older Vermonters remain living in the place they call home, safely, with the supports they need. As Robin can attest, Islanders want to remain in the Islands — and now they can.”
2021 IN REVIEW

Anti-Racism Work Continues In Earnest

Now comprising nine staff and resident members, the Cathedral Square Anti-Racism Committee continued its twice-monthly meetings in 2021, making progress on a number of goals we laid out in signing on to the City of Burlington’s proclamation of racism as a public health emergency in 2019.

To date we have hosted an intensive, five-session training series for staff; updated our mission, policies and procedures to reflect our commitment to equity and anti-racism; and worked to grow the diversity of staff at all levels of our organization.

The committee distributes a monthly email update focusing on a specific topic related to racism and anti-racism, then hosts a monthly “Lunch and Learn” session to discuss the topic in depth via Zoom. Newsletters are archived and available for viewing at cathedralsquare.org/anti-racism-news.

In 2022 we will be expanding our work to include a speakers series and other activities to support our community.

New Position Helps at-Risk Residents Retain Their Housing

Cathedral Square Lead Team Leader Jen Hunter has an even longer job title these days: She’s also our first-ever “SHINES coach.” SHINES stands for Success in Housing/Identifying Needs/Enhanced Support.

In this capacity, Hunter provides intensive, one-on-one support to residents who are at risk of losing their housing due to a variety of issues, including failed inspections, non-payment of rent and mental health challenges.

At the heart of the program are person-centered problem solving; motivational interviewing; establishing trusting relationships; and understanding the individual’s situation, challenges, and strengths. “The COVID pandemic and the increasing prevalence of homelessness and mental health concerns have fueled the need to strengthen and individualize our services related to housing retention,” says Hunter.

“As always, our goal at Cathedral Square is to address the obstacles a resident faces so they can remain successfully housed,” she adds.

Whitney Hill Homestead Shines after Getting an Extreme Home Makeover

Major renovations at Williston’s 30-year-old Whitney Hill Homestead in Williston are in the home stretch. The Herculean effort has involved moving residents of the 44 apartments out in eight different phases so the work could be done. With their belongings in storage, groups of residents lived in area hotels for six weeks while construction was completed in their section of the complex.

Happy residents like Fran Hopkins, pictured above, returned to their apartments to find new windows, cabinets, flooring and bathroom upgrades. The community room also received an upgrade, and all major building systems were replaced as part of the $3.6 million project.

Greg Montgomery of Cathedral Square has managed the massive renovations, with SASH Coordinator Beth Alpert orchestrating the moves and lining up volunteers to help residents pack, move out and return. She also arranged for hand-drawn “welcome home” signs to be placed on residents’ doors upon their return, making their homecomings extra special.

A Renewed Focus on Policy Initiatives to Aid Older Adults

Adequate Medicaid reimbursements for assisted living, the ongoing need for affordable and age-specific housing, and the proven benefits of SASH® (Support and Services at Home) in saving health care costs: These are three priority issues Cathedral Square has been working with Vermont lawmakers to address since the start of the 2021 legislative session.

Leading the way is Cathedral Square Director of Policy & Strategic Initiatives Molly Dugan, former statewide director of SASH, who assumed her new role in January.

At a time when demand for affordable, long-term care is soaring in Vermont, nowhere is the state’s workforce shortage more evident than at long-term care facilities that accept people on Medicaid. At Cathedral Square, 90 percent of the residents in our two assisted-living communities are on Medicaid, and we had to reduce capacity by 23 percent due to the shortage of licensed professional nurses, licensed nursing assistants and resident assistants.

Cathedral Square and other providers have asked the legislature to increase the amount Medicaid pays for these services. “Current rates are well below the actual cost of care,” Dugan explains.

Meanwhile, the conversation about “workforce” housing needs to include a push for housing for older adults, Dugan says. “Many older Vermonters who want to move into senior housing are homeowners. Having housing to meet this demand frees up existing housing for younger workers,” she says.

Finally, Vermont should capitalize on SASH’s proven success in keeping people healthy and lowering health care costs by expanding the program to serve more Vermonters, says Dugan.

CATHEDRAL SQUARE BY THE NUMBERS

(December 2021 Snapshot)

- 26 Housing Communities
- 1,090 Homes
- 1,255 Residents
- 95% Receive rent subsidies or have another type of rent reduction
- 27% Are handicapped or disabled
- 15.7% Were homeless before coming to Cathedral Square
- 93% Are low income or very low income as defined by HUD
- 1,200+ Households are on the wait list for Cathedral Square housing
launched statewide in 2011, SASH® (Support and Services at Home) has been improving Vermonters’ health, enhancing their quality of life, and saving health care costs for 10 years! We had hoped to celebrate this milestone in person, but alas, due to COVID-19, it was not to be.

And so we did the next best thing: We invited some of Vermont’s strongest SASH advocates and those familiar with its impressive record of success to a virtual celebration that was live-streamed over the internet.

The event took place Friday afternoon, Nov. 12, at Allard Square in South Burlington. Among those with us in person were U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders and Rep. Peter Welch, Lt. Gov. Molly Gray, Pollaidh Major of U.S. Sen. Leahy’s office, Vermont Health Commissioner Dr. Mark Levine, SASH founder and former Cathedral Square CEO Nancy Eldridge, Allard Square resident and SASH participant Penny Pero, former Vermont Blueprint for Health Executive Director Craig Jones, and Rutland Housing Authority CEO Kevin Loso.

Lt. Gov. Gray read Gov. Phil Scott’s proclamation praising SASH for providing older Vermonters and those with disabilities “the autonomy and structure of support needed to remain at home throughout their lives” and designating Nov. 12, 2021, as “SASH Day” (see p. 10).

“In our dysfunctional and increasingly complicated health care system, SASH had the brilliant idea of bringing health care and services to the people…. SASH makes the system more human. It brings good people in contact with people in need. It saves taxpayers substantial sums of money. I have been very pleased to work with SASH over the years, and I am delighted to see it grow to a national concept. I think it should be an integral part of American health care.”

— Senator Bernie Sanders

“One thing that speaks to the value [the Vermont Health Department] places in SASH: Whenever we have carry-forward [funds] from grants, SASH is often the first partner we approach because we know they are effective in their work and provide services to Vermonter’s who are often most in need of this support. They are willing to get creative, to use data from evaluation to guide their work, and to work with us to develop expanded or pilot projects that go on to be incorporated into their work.

“SASH is one of our most valued partners.”

— Dr. Mark Levine, Vermont Health Commissioner

“SASH has proved both its effectiveness and its cost-effectiveness. It’s low tech, it’s person-based, and it really, really works. It works so well that others around the country are looking to do the same thing, saying ‘we want our communities to be that strong too.’”

— Congressman Peter Welch

“SASH gives us a sense of community. This year they made it possible for us to get the vaccines right here, without leaving home. I’m especially grateful for the kindness and caring I feel from being part of SASH. I often say I don’t know how they deal with us, but I’m so glad they do.”

— SASH participant Penny Pero

SASH® is “Support and Services at Home,” a nationally recognized, team-based program of care coordination for older adults and people with disabilities.

SASH uses the home as the platform to provide comprehensive care management and coordination to Medicare recipients right where they live.

Based out of 140 affordable-housing communities throughout Vermont, SASH has been shown to improve participants’ health, save Medicare dollars, and help people stay healthy and live safely at home as they age.

A home-based SASH care coordinator and a wellness nurse host activities and provide ongoing support to participants. They also meet regularly with the local SASH team — comprised of providers in home health, agencies on aging, developmental/mental health/addiction services, and primary care and hospitals — to help each participant meet their personal goals.

Participation in SASH is voluntary and free, with funding provided through OneCare Vermont as part of the state’s efforts to reform health care by focusing on prevention and the social determinants of health, including housing.

For more information, visit sashvt.org.
“From the get-go, SASH was about empowerment — empowering people to identify what they want. We set out to give everyone a voice in what they want in terms of their own health and how they want to live. We talk about the social determinants of health; what should determine our health is what we each want for ourselves.”

— Nancy Eldridge, SASH creator and former Cathedral Square CEO

“I now work on primary care transformation models in 26 states with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation. Every one of those models is trying in some way to build strong primary care and community linkages with primary care services. It’s no longer just about medical care, it’s about medical care and social services and support services. [SASH] figured that out 10 years ago.”

— Craig Jones MD, Privis Health Chief Medical Officer; former Executive Director, Vermont Blueprint for Health

“Over 11 years ago Nancy came to my office and laid out her vision for a program that built on the link between housing and health. Here we are 10 years later and we have a statewide model that is not only effective but is an inspiration for other states.”

— Kevin Loso, CEO, Rutland Housing Authority

“New England Federal Credit Union
Kathryn and Dan Titus
Judy and Stephen Walke

COMMUNITY BUILDERS
Gifts of $100-$499
Bonnie Acker and John Davis
Anonymous
Lynn Bates
Scott and Sharon Blakeslee
Mary Boiselle
Deborah Bouton
Jane and Howard Breslau
Jesse Bridges
Sarah Carpenter
Rose Cheesenman
Elizabeth Davis
Frank and Ducky Donath
Molly Dugan
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Cathy and Joseph Frank
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Sharon and Bert Moffatt
Polly Nichol and William Jordan
Bud and Genevieve Ockert
Joel Page
Cindy Reid
Shelley Richardson
Richard and Lillian Robinson
Karen Rouse
Lisa Schamberg and Pat Robins
Charles Smith and Amy Mellencamp

“We’ve all been through a lot, and we’re all exhausted from COVID. But this work is very fulfilling. Even if I am stressed at home, as soon as I get to work, I am in a good mood.”

— Ugyen Anak
Licensed Practical Nurse
with Cathedral Square resident Hope Lindsay
It is important that our records are accurate. If you notice an error, please accept our apologies and please do let us know.

CARING COMPANIONS
Gifts up to $99
Anonymous
Lorraine Ambrosini
Karen Behn
Robert Bolyard
Irene Bowman
Ken Bridges
Kathy Browne
Douglas Cardin
Catherine Cassano
Anne Clarke and Kevin Trainor
Karen and Gerald Davis
Leonora and William Dodge
Casey Doerner
Eric Ellicock
Christine Finley and Thomas Mendes
Paula Fitzpatrick
Joan and Ed Fitzpatrick
Elizabeth Genge
Margaret Gras
Francesca Hahn
Helen Head
Jane Helmstetter
Maggie Holt
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C. Sara Armstrong King Living Trust
Elaine and Howard Kirby
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Betsey Lord
Diane Mariano
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Sue McCormack
Robyn and Thomas McCormick
Peg Monley
Michele Morin
David Myette
Gertrude Myrick
Anne O’Brien
Cheryl O’Donnell
Pilar Paulsen
Raymond A. Pelletier
Jeanne and Anthony Pzuzi
Meg Pond
Linda Ready
Amy Rogers
Edith Rugg
Jennifer Schollmeyer
Tracy Schneider
Amy Schwartz
Emile Schweikert
Eileen Siminger
Willard Smith
Melissa Southwick
Wendi Stein
Beth Stern
Fran and Earl Taylor

TRIBUTE GIFTS
In Honor of...
Darlene Ryan
Ken Bridges
Dennis Dugan
Nancy Eldridge
Jeanne Finan
Kim Fitzgerald
Ann Livingston
Stephanie Miller Taylor

In Memory of...
Polly Beebe-Bove
Esther Kearney
Jackie Klein
Forrest Lander
James O’Donnell

MEMORY CARE AT ALLEN BROOK DONORS
Karen Behn
Sister Mary Bosseille
Robert Bolyard
Deborah Bouton
Jesse Bridges
Ken Bridges
Kathy Browne
Douglas Cardin
Catherine Cassano
Chris and Theri Davis
Leonora and William Dodge
Casey Doerner
Molly Dugan
Eric Ellicock
Kim Fitzgerald
Elizabeth Genge
Celeste Hahn
Francesca Hahn
Paul Hawkins
Jane Helmstetter
Holly and Bob Miller Charitable Fund
Maggie Holt
Megan Humphrey

Jennifer Wallace-Brodeur
and Ben Truman
Alan Weinstock
Maureen Wilpert
Brian Yarwood
Syndy Zook

MEMORY CARE
“I’ve worked at Memory Care at Allen Brook since the day it opened in 2017. Our ‘Best Friends’ philosophy of care and the family atmosphere here is amazing.... I love working with older people. I like being their support and making sure they’re safe and have their best quality of life.”

— Bethany LeBlanc
Licensed Nursing Assistant
with one of her Allen Brook friends

IN-KIND DONORS
Bonnie Acker
Phillane Armstrong
Al Belluche
Robert Blich
Kary Ann Bombardier
Rose Anne Doyle
Tom Fowler
Burlington Office of Community & Economic Development
Gardener’s Supply
Nancy Geiger
Greta Getlein
Colchester/Milton Rotary
Darlene and Steve Lamphier
Helping Hands Sewing Ministry
Anne Marie and Eddie Lowe
Ninety-Nine Restaurant & Pub
Patricia Pomerleau
Holly and Brian Reed
Alan Rubin
Zach Tong

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT
Burlington Housing Authority
Vermont State Housing Authority

GRANTS FOR PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT
Burlington Electric Department
Burlington Housing Trust Fund

continued ➤
“Working here is like one big family. We have a good team. Everyone goes above and beyond. We love the residents like our own families. Family is very important in our culture, as is respecting your elders. Our culture teaches about compassion. I apply that every day at work.”

— Tsering Chodon
Licensed Practical Nurse
with Cathedral Square resident
Shirley Bragg
CELEBRATING OUR FRONTLINE STAFF

“I like that they call us essential workers now.... I’m not a doctor or a nurse, so this is one way I can make a contribution during the pandemic. Plus, after years of working in restaurants, I’ve found that I really like working with this population.”

— Sean Drumm
Cathedral Square Cook
preparing his signature Philly cheesesteaks