

**From:** Michael Chamness <mchamness@uscrimail.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 20, 2022 1:17 PM  
**To:** Scott Gustin <SGustin@burlingtonvt.gov>  
**Cc:** Marcella Gange <mgange@burlingtonvt.gov>; Brian Pine <bpine@burlingtonvt.gov>  
**Subject:** Public Comment Support of 51 Elmwood Ave Shelter Project

[ WARNING ]: This email was sent from someone outside of the City of Burlington.

Dear Scott Gustin,

As a resident of 48 Elmwood Ave, I'd like to offer my full support for the 51 Elmwood Ave Shelter Project planned for the lot located across the street. I have attended a few of the public information events and came away from the sessions with both a greater understanding of the value and need for the pod village plan and confidence that the city will provide the necessary oversight and management to ensure the project is successful and responsive to the Elmwood Ave community. With an anticipated fall implementation date, it's critical that the project be approved by the Development Review Committee as soon as possible in order to shelter residents in time for the colder fall and winter months. I have had a number of conversations with Brian Pine about the infrastructure details, intended services to be offered, various public outreach approaches, site management plan, and overall expectations and limitations of the pod village project and feel confident the plan is feasible, appropriate for the location, and will meet a dramatic need for temporary shelters and safe short-term housing for our growing population of unhoused and homeless neighbors.

Over the last three years I've been volunteering with a few regional community service organizations and mutual aid groups that are dedicated to helping our local unhoused and homeless neighbors secure hot meals, camp gear, clothing, cellphones, personal care items, and other essentials year-round and can attest that the pod village concept is at the top of the wish list for the unhoused (or precariously housed) people we serve. So I again strongly endorse the need for the project and hope you and the Development Review Committee can approve the project as soon as possible.

I am also including a copy of a report issued by the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness in 2020 from the Town of Hartford that outlines a series of recommendations for addressing homelessness in various need areas, including temporary housing, resident storage, and dedicated sheltering areas within a community to help meet immediate needs and alleviate displacement. A number of conclusions and recommendations listed in the report reinforce policy choices and the pod village concept in many ways. Over the last 25 years I've been active with various activist groups, mutual aid programs, and faith-based organizations that serve the unhoused and homeless in AZ, CA, CO, and VT and was a founding co-coordinator of Upper Valley Giving Emergency Aid and Resources (UVGEAR) in 2018 in Hartford, VT ([www.uvgear.org](http://www.uvgear.org)). In spring 2019, I had the honor of being chosen by the Hartford Selectboard to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness and again would like to highlight that the report issued by that committee supports the overall intent, strategy, and approach of the pod

village proposal.

Thank you for your consideration and feel free to reach out anytime for any additional information and details on the projects referenced above.

*Please note that I'm forwarding this email from my work email address and that my opinions and statements are my own and not those of USCRI Vermont.*

Thank you,

Mike Chamness