



BF Community Bike Project
30 Henry St.
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bfbike.org

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“Home for the Bike Project”

A Campaign to Provide a Stable Base for the Bellows Falls Community Bike Project

The case for purchasing 30 Henry Street as a permanent home

As the Bike Project celebrates 10 years of service to the community, we look forward to continuing this important work for decades to come!

The Bike Project is so much more than a place to get bikes. We provide a safe and welcoming space for the whole community to access affordable transportation and recreation. Youth and adults work side by side, giving new life to old bikes and salvaging thousands of parts and accessories, making us a valuable resource in the region. Many youth have grown up with the Bike Project, learning bike maintenance, repair, and riding skills and gaining self-confidence.

In 2023, we launched a Capital Campaign to buy our building at 30 Henry Street, seeking public participation to raise funds for the building purchase, repairs and improvements. We believe this project will maximize our sustainability and potential for serving the community and are ready to take this very important step for the future of the organization.

Our total campaign goal is \$156,875, and the first stage is to raise \$80,000 to buy the building outright. Through the commitment and generosity of our board, staff, donors and grantors, we've met and exceeded our first goal. As of August 28, we've raised \$80,454 in donations and grants, as well as \$9,450 in pro-bono services.

The closing on the building purchase will happen in the Fall of 2024 and repairs and renovations will follow as soon as possible.

We are very excited about this next chapter of the Bike Project - our permanent home.

Here are a few words from a youth who has experienced the impact of our work.

“The Bike Shop has pretty much always been in my life. When I was 6, our family moved to Bellows Falls, and my mom volunteered at the old bike shop on Canal Street. She would take me with her, and I always looked forward to working together on bikes and other tasks. I love going to the bike shop because I love bicycles and always loved working on them. A few years later my brother earned me my first bike from the bike shop.

When I was 10, I got leukemia and was in the hospital for almost a year. After I got out and recovered to the point of remission, I didn't have good balance, so the Bike Project gave me a medium size trike for free, which made it possible for me to ride every day to school. I am now 16 and now have a blue cruiser bicycle from there that I restored. Thank you to the bike shop crew for everything you do to make sure everyone has a ride and everything you've done for me.” ~ Joaquin Martinez

Background

Since 2016, the Bike Project has been renting the historic building on the corner of Henry and Atkinson Streets. The landlord is now ready to sell. After much consideration, we've decided to buy it, and have signed a purchase and sale agreement.

Before deciding to purchase the building, we checked out other properties and even considered constructing a new building. 30 Henry St. was the clear winner- being the least expensive option and the least disruptive to our operations.

Why is 30 Henry Street Such a Great Location?

Our residential location has been important in developing ties and relationships in the community. We offer a safe and welcoming space, and many residents have expressed appreciation for having the positive energy of the Bike Project in the neighborhood.

Situated close to the schools, we are easily reachable by bike or by foot, a convenient spot where youth convene to pump up their tires, meet up for bike rides, or hang out and share the latest feats of daring on their bikes. The shop sits on a prominent corner, with off-street parking for several cars - a rare commodity in the village, allowing easy drop off and pick up of bikes. The parking area doubles as a safe, off-street test-ride space for children.

Reasons for Owning the Building

Financial Stability:

The sale of the property to an investor would likely result in a significant rent increase and possible eviction, posing great financial and relocation challenges to the organization. With ownership, estimated expenses for insurance and taxes will be lower than the current rent, and future increases are generally stable and predictable.

Control Over Maintenance and Upgrades:

Owning the building will allow the Bike Project to make structural and efficiency improvements to decrease expenses. We will be able to undertake weatherization as recommended by Efficiency Vermont and construct an extension of the roof overhang to provide a protected outdoor work area. Overall, these improvements will greatly improve the building and our working spaces.

Preservation of the Neighborhood:

The historic exterior character of the building will be preserved and in keeping with the historic homes nearby. We aim to enhance the neighborhood, proactively maintaining the property in a visually pleasing way for the whole community.

Once we own and improve the building, we can better focus on serving the community by providing affordable access to bicycles and repairs, empowering youth through bike repair skills, keeping bikes out of the trash, and getting them into the hands of riders again.

Please consider helping the Bike Project meet our capital campaign goal, purchase 30 Henry St., and keep the project growing for the Greater Falls community.

The Community Bike Project Rests on the Wheels of Community Compassion and Support. THANK YOU for Helping Create a Special Place for All!

PROJECT BUDGET

Campaign Goal: \$156,875

Acquisition Project Costs: Stage One	
Building Purchase Price	\$80,000
Closing Costs, Legal Review	\$9,500
Environmental Assessment	\$2,000
Community engagement, communications	\$1,200
Project management, staff time	\$6,200
Fundraising Deadline for Stage One: April 30, 2024 - Stage One Project Cost	\$98,900
Improvement and Renovation Costs: Stage Two	
Energy efficiency upgrades, environmental remediation (See Addendum)	\$8,500
Exterior siding, trim repairs	\$15,000
Overhang extension, lower roof repairs	\$30,000
Community engagement, communications	\$1,250
Project management, staff time	\$3,225
Fundraising Deadline for Stage Two: December 31, 2024, Stage Two Project Cost	\$57,975
Total Project Costs (Stage One and Two)	\$156,875

Project Income: Fundraising Status	
Contributions received	\$80,454
Pledged contributions (individuals)	\$700
Pro Bono services to date, including legal work & environmental assessment (Stage One):	\$9,450
Total Funds Received/Pledged or In-Kind as of August 28, 2024	\$90,604
<i>Pending: Lining of basement for weatherization - we were going to contract this work, but it will be covered by the remediation, saving us \$8000 (Stage Two)</i>	\$8,000
<i>Pending Grants and In-Kind Donations</i>	\$20,000
Remaining Funds Needed - Stage One	\$8,296
Remaining Funds Needed - Stage Two	\$49,975
Total Funds Needed to Complete Acquisition and Renovations	\$58,271

Addendum: Brownfields Work

Due to the fact that 30 Henry St. was previously a laundromat with a coin-op dry cleaner and also a gas station in the 1940's, environmental site testing has been underway since the Summer of 2022, entirely approved and funded by the Windham Regional Commission and the State of Vermont Brownfields program.

The Bike Project is proud to carry out our due diligence to be sure the property we are purchasing is safe for all who use the premises and for our neighbors.

Stone Environmental, Inc. has completed Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments. They are now in the process of remedial planning and will be carrying out the remediation work as well. They have identified multiple funding sources to support the costs.

The Phase I Study, which is not typically covered by the State, was completed *pro bono* by Stone Environmental, saving the Bike Project \$2000.

The BF Community Bike Project is enrolled in the BRELLEA Program (Brownfields Reuse and Environmental Liability Limitation Program), which releases the organization from any liability due to any groundwater or soil contamination.

Brownfields remediation will begin after we close on the building purchase in early 2024.

"It is with both great pride and pleasure that I take this opportunity to make you aware of what a treasure the village of Bellows Falls has in the BF Community Bike Project.

As a neighbor of the bike project and a fifth grade teacher at the Bellows Falls Middle School, I am thrilled that the children (and adults) of our small community have this location to come to so that they can purchase a bicycle, have a bike repaired, learn the ins and outs of bicycle repair and perhaps even more importantly, have another safe space to spend time.

On any given day, whether it be summer, spring, fall or winter, children can be seen creating lasting memories and relationships as they tinker away on bikes, or stop by to have their bike checked out. What a gift we have with Bonnie and Daniel and all of the volunteers who work so hard for our community."

~ Cathy Chamberlin, 27 Henry St., Bellows Falls

"As neighbors of the Bike Project and Officers of the Bellows Falls Historical Society we have seen the Bike Project become an integral part of this Community. From its projects of repairing bikes toward ownership to the fabulous touring of seniors through the Village on a tri-cycle the Bike Project has become an essential and welcoming service to Bellows Falls and the surrounding areas."

~ Cathy Bergmann, President Bellows Falls Historical Society

~ Margery Ladd, Secretary Bellows Falls Historical Society