

voices from the mountains

GAY VILLAGE, BURLINGTON: 2000

by Kathleen Kalina

What would a planned community for the gay population look like? First we should consider the errors of the past. We know that living together in communes where there is no private space doesn't work for most of people; the 70's proved that out. We also know that some gay neighborhood/villages in big cities converted old neighborhoods. That is problematic in Burlington. Most Burlington neighborhoods are dominated with single family housing, have old structures and are crowded. Provincetown is quaint, but who would want to ever copy that mess.

Then let's consider a whole new approach. What would be the best of commercial street in Provincetown and a gay village to live in where you have single and multiple housing free to have yards, dogs, cats and room? Planned communities has historically considered condo or single family. We could go a step further meeting our special needs.

Lets try a free fall vision. Here it is:

A subdivision of 50/100 acres is purchased as our own land development company. We could all buy shares in this company, plus set the rate of leased land fees and build the homes we want, plus set aside space for multi apartment like for singles or condos. That's one part of the vision. Now what would it look like spatially? As an individual you would lease a piece of land and build whatever you like.

You sell the house and lease when you want to move. This reduces the cost of individuals buying land. The trust company that we all own, holds the land ownership of the entire area. The main street into the community would be (perhaps near Tafts corners for example). The commercial street of our subdivision has a street that ends in a rotary to return traffic either to an underground garage or out. The commercial street has shops, cafes, hotels, business and nightclubs that is zoned to be artistically quaint. If we keep a zoning board that requires interesting quaint architecture it will be an attraction for shoppers to come to our community and spend money.

We will also have our own nightclubs to draw in gays from all over, the same as Provincetown, Ogunquit. Our hotels will put visitors up for the stay. A safe place to be what we are. Remember that

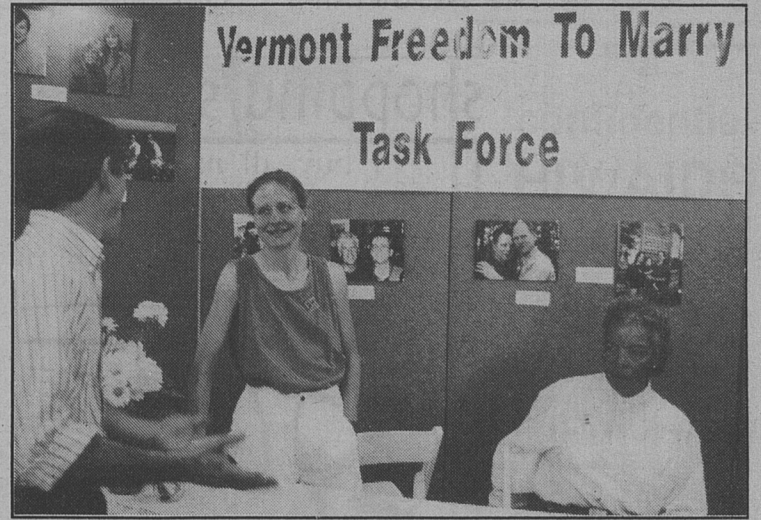
Provincetown draws a lot of shoppers that are non gay too, but its a town made safe to be gay. That's what we want, since we couldn't rely on purely gay money to sustain it. The shops would pay a tax to our land corporation and be a source of income to also keep our community financially solvent. (Our homes would be for gays only to the extent we can without prejudice).

This would be the first only new millennium, planned community for gays/lesbians. Streets leading out of the community would be planned to avoid commercial street for residents. We will have learned from the traffic mess in Ptown. Parking for shoppers would be in underground garages and not be a clog like it is in downtown Burlington. Alleys and employee parking with a loading dock behind shops would be neatly designed for trucks loading more efficiently instead of what you see on Church street.

Our private streets should be designed so that we are close to a community cen-

ter that has gatherings/ movies/ lectures. The vision of what people build whether its a single, double or multi is basically planned to accommodate all of our lifestyles. Without having to buy the land under the house, your cost is low. You could build a nice small house for \$45,000. Just like subdivisions, sewer lines and electric/gas is put in to each lot ahead of the house. Multi dwellings are merely double large lots.

We can even consider elder gay housing in an accessible spot so we can all care for elders, something that we will not have if we have no relatives/children. It will take many years for the tree and water gardens to mature, but that's the fun and creativity of it. A large swimming pool/tennis area would add to our community center pleasure. When the news gets out across the country, the people will come. And if gay marriage becomes legal, we will have a bonanza of hotels supporting weddings. Now you can see the economics of the plan.



Beth Robinson and Mary Liggett answer questions about same-gender marriage at the Champlain Valley Fair.

Marriage Task Force Stress!

BY JOY D. GRIFFITH

I have spent the past three years writing articles and letters of rebuttal for equal rights, taking notes, participating and encouraging my peers in the g/l/b/t/q community not only in Vermont, but (through GOLDEN THREADS) across the nation. Yet, I had not felt the full force of my beliefs until spending 12 hours sitting behind the Marriage Task Force Table at the Champlain Valley Fair. It was there that my body experienced the immediate pain and sadness from verbal attack and misunderstanding.

Naturally, my table partner and I had prepared ourselves for an approach of non-confrontational dialogue with people sharing the same questions and uncertainties about family roles, schools, and the government defending everyone's basic rights. These human concerns were the footings of our structural approach while we awaited possible personal onslaught right along with our interested supporters.

A young woman approached our table and stated, "I have a question. Do any of 'you people' believe in God...or...or something like that?" I experienced a little electric shock zinging throughout my body alerting me to take care, and then I saw the

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Steve Howard

ONE OF US.

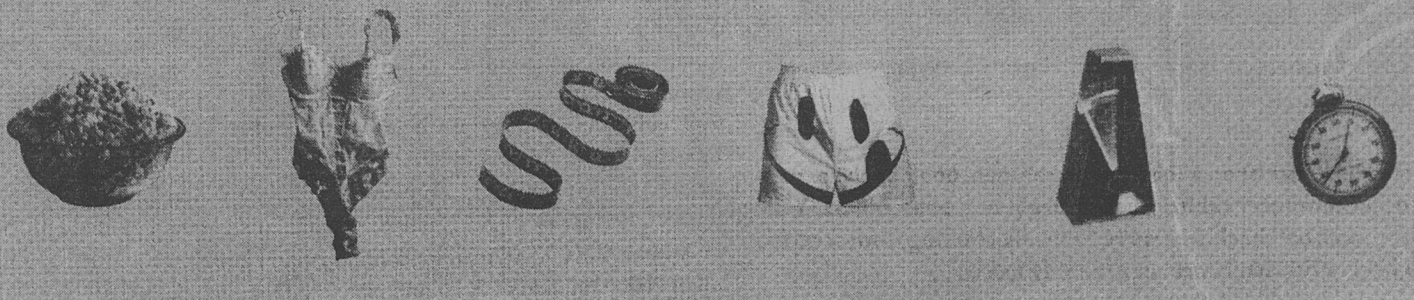
To Volunteer Call: 773-VOTE

To Make a Financial Contribution
Send Check to:

The Committee to Elect Steve Howard
20 Countryside Drive
Rutland, Vermont 05701

Paid for by The Committee to Elect Steve Howard, Patty Smith, Treasurer

What do you take to bed?



Whatever you take along for pleasure, consider this:
We may feel safe in Vermont, but we're not immune
to AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Don't take a chance...
take a condom

