

To Housing Action New Hampshire:

We could talk at length about Ellen Groh's impressive educational and experience based background. But what we really want to talk about are the amazing accomplishments achieved under her leadership of the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness since her arrival in February of 2014.

When Ellen arrived she fully embraced the CCEH mission and vision. The City of Concord adopted *Concord's Plan to End Homelessness* in April of 2014, so Ellen also had a game plan for moving forward. And with a quiet, strong voice, thoughtful and purposeful actions, moving forward is exactly what Ellen Groh and CCEH did on multiple fronts.

Ellen, along with Tom Fredenberg and the CCEH Board, led the charge to move and expand the Resource Center. And Ellen has encouraged collaboration in working with other providers to make sure the daily needed services and supports are there for those experiencing homelessness in Concord.

Taking the CCEH mission to heart, Ellen has often been heard talking about exactly what those initials stand for, ending homelessness, and after researching how to most effectively do that, Ellen and CCEH arrived at *Housing First Concord* as perhaps their most important effort. *Housing First Concord* is a permanent supportive housing program and to date, under Ellen's leadership, 15 individuals struggling with chronic homelessness have found a home!

Even as finding permanent housing became a primary goal, Ellen and the CCEH Board accepted the fact that there would always be someone on the street and in winter, a low barrier shelter would be necessary. With the support of the Mayor and the community, the CCEH Board under Ellen's strong leadership ran a *Safe Spaces Campaign*. This 3 year campaign was intended to not only provide funding to build and run the shelter, but to provide support for all of the programs of CCEH and move it from being grant dependent to having sustaining private supporters. In *one year* the goal was met and on May 23rd of this year, the community celebrated a ribbon cutting for the new 40 bed Emergency Winter Shelter behind the Resource Center.

Even as she guides the programs of the CCEH and their daily impact on the lives of people experiencing homelessness, Ellen has continued to stay abreast of new efforts nationwide to end homelessness, and to bring Concord and NH into the forefront. She is a part of the Built for Zero program and is working with the NH Department of Housing Supports to coordinate the housing of chronically homeless individuals. Also, as CCEH serves as the Local Service Delivery Area for the Balance of State Continuum of Care, Ellen has convened monthly meetings of all the service providers in the area.

CCEH has a strong Board. The Mayor, City Council, other area providers and the Concord Community have all been supportive of the above efforts to respectfully and thoughtfully find solutions to the issue of homelessness in Concord. It is our opinion, however, that beyond the obvious need and broad support, it has been the gentle and genuine, smart, strong and thoughtful leadership of Ellen Groh that has added a key ingredient to making things happen. Ellen has worked tirelessly since her arrival in 2014, accomplished much in those 4 years (please see included Stories of Success as well as Concord Monitor articles), and is a very worthy recipient of the **2018 Home Matters in New Hampshire Advocate Award**.