

Alison and Steve

The Other Side of the Fence: Brooklyn to Woodstock



In and around Woodstock, Vermont, affordable housing isn't just hard to find—it's slipping further out of reach for the very people who keep this place running. Carpenters, teachers, servers, and care workers are too often priced out of the communities they serve. Local Deeds was created to change that, offering down payment support and housing stability for local workers in a market increasingly dominated by out-of-state buyers.

A Family Relocates

Allison and Steve represent the hard working Vermonters who are nearly forced to move out with increasing housing costs. Moving from New York City in search of a quieter life, the Woodstock community seemed ideal for raising kids and teaching at a local elementary school. But buying a home proved to be difficult. *Local Deeds* is here to change that. Our mission is to help those who serve this place stay rooted in it.

The Search for Space

Over eight years ago, Allison, Steve, and their son Robbie lived in a one-bedroom apartment in Brooklyn. Life in the city was full of energy and excitement, but as their family grew, Allison and Steve began craving more space—both inside and out. They wanted a quieter, more open environment where their children could enjoy the outdoors, run in the yard, and have space to explore beyond the confines of apartment living. They needed a place that offered not only more physical space, but also the kind of community where Robbie, and their future daughter Becky, could truly thrive.

Allison, an elementary school teacher, was confident she could find a job in more rural areas where teachers are always needed, and Steve, working as the media director for Lymphatic Educational Research Network, a NYC-based organization, could transition his work fully online.

When Allison's aunt sent them a Craigslist link to a three-bedroom duplex in Woodstock, they jumped on it—sight unseen. "We didn't even visit the place!" Steve laughs. "We knew how quickly the properties in the center of town get snapped up, and we took a chance."

The family acted fast, securing the rental, packing up their belongings, and waving goodbye to city life. Within a week the moving truck ferried their life north.

Nearly Forced to Move Out

When after many years of renting the duplex, the landlord mentioned plans to sell the property, the family couldn't bear to think of leaving the home and community they had grown to love. Fortunately, their landlord suggested they consult *Local Deeds* for assistance in buying the home.

They, again, jumped at an opportunity right away. Not only was the village a five minute walk away and Vail Field right across the street, but Robbie and Becky split a yard with children they developed a close bond with after sharing a pod during the pandemic. Staying in their home was non-negotiable, and *Local Deeds* made sure it would happen.

"On Thursday we emailed Jill and on Saturday she was sitting down with us answering the questions we had, and we had a lot," says Allison.

"Then I literally filled out the application in, like, fifteen minutes. It all moved very quickly," adds Steve.

When it came to closing on the house itself, the process was smoother than they expected. "It was a relief. The money got transferred, and that was it!" says Steve.

Keeping a House and a Home

For Allison who currently teaches fifth grade at the Prosper Valley School, living and working in the same community is essential. "It's wonderful for teachers to get to know the community," she says. "If I didn't live here, I would probably go teach somewhere else."

Location is everything for their family, and the couple speaks glowingly of raising their kids in the village. "It's like they're having a childhood of the past," says Allison. "They get to be outside all day and come in for dinner. The level of freedom for kids is special in this neighborhood."

Now, as homeowners, they look forward to making long considered changes. They plan to paint, add an office, and transition from oil to a wood stove—alterations that the city-dwellers of eight years ago could only dream of.

"The biggest thing I miss about the city is Grubhub," jokes Steve, reflecting on their move. "Everything else can stay."



Help More Families Find Their Home

Allison and Steve's story is one of many housing success stories made possible in 2024 by Local Deeds supporting local workers and their children through this housing assistance initiative.

When you support Local Deeds, you make more stories like theirs possible.

- [**Donate Here**](#) to support nonprofit housing programs in the Woodstock area, VT
- **Volunteer** to expand local housing options for families
- **Share** to spread the word about the urgent need for affordable housing in the Woodstock area.

Together, we're not just creating homes—we're building a stronger, more inclusive Vermont where families can stay, work, and thrive.

Local Deeds is an innovative program to protect housing for families and individuals who live and work, or will work, here year-round serving the local community.

Local Deeds is a Project of Woodstock Community Trust