



Andy and Laurie

A New Chapter on Oak Chapel Road



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.

Community Roots and Shared Values

Andy and Laurie Smith have spent decades teaching young Vermonters, offering emotional support and building bridges in the classroom and beyond. Their story is one of dedication, community connection, and now, finding home just down the road from where they give so much. *Local Deeds* helps people like Andy and Laurie—those who educate our youth and build brighter futures—make sure they can afford to live where they work.

Meet the Smiths

Most people in Woodstock know Andy as Mr. Smith, the AP Computer Science teacher at Woodstock Union High School. A student favorite, he had that rare mix of humor, patience, and clarity that made tough subjects feel easier to grasp.

Andy and Laurie first met at Middlebury College. After graduation, marriage, and travel, they returned to Vermont to raise their growing family. In 2004, they settled in South Royalton with their three sons—Ryan, Sean, and Danny. For years, their cozy home was the backdrop to family life. But as time passed, their professional and personal lives became more centered in Woodstock.

Andy began teaching at Woodstock Union High School in 2016. By 2021, Laurie had joined him there as a social-emotional specialist, and Danny was attending as a student. Still, the Smiths were commuting more than 30 minutes each way from South Royalton—sometimes back and forth multiple times a day for concerts, work, and school events.

A Growing Commute and Limited Housing Options

The shift brought new challenges. One evening it was Danny's concert in Woodstock; the next, Sean had something in Royalton. With nearly every part of their lives based in Woodstock, they began to look for a home closer to work. But the local housing market offered few viable options, especially for middle-income educators hoping to stay in Vermont long-term.

The idea of moving out of state never crossed their minds—this is where their roots are. What they needed wasn't just a house. It was a sustainable, local solution. That's where *Local Deeds* came in.

A Vermont Story, Built on Relationships

In early 2024, the superintendent of Woodstock Union High School shared information with staff about *Local Deeds*. Around the same time, family friends Wendy and Greg Jenne mentioned they were planning to sell their home in Bridgewater, just 15 minutes from the school.

The Jennes weren't looking to maximize profit. "It felt greedy to just sell it for however much to people we didn't know," Wendy said. Instead, they invited the Smiths to dinner—homemade soup, Laurie's rolls, and a conversation about the land's history, having been in Greg's family since 1945, and its future. That night, driving home, the Smiths knew they had found the right place.



With help from *Local Deeds* and the Jennes, they made it happen. By the summer of 2024, the Smiths had settled into their new hilltop home on Oak Chapel Road—a warm, light-filled house with high ceilings, room for their sons (when home from college), their pets (Moxie the labradoodle and cats Linus and Bizzy), and plenty of guests.

What Home Makes Possible

Today, Andy and Laurie are 15 minutes from the school where they teach, mentor, and connect with students. Their commute is manageable, their energy renewed, and their connection to the Woodstock community stronger than ever.

Since moving in, they've hosted friends, tended the garden, and shared many more meals with the Jennes—who still live just down the road. The house has already become a gathering place, a refuge, and a foundation for this next chapter of their lives.

Help More Families Find Their Home

Andy and Laurie'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 building 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.