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Notes from editor (not for publication):

I adjusted the lede because the place has been a public lightning rod for all of Brattleboro’s downtown ills. Fairly or unfairly, I’m following my gut instinct.

Saw pronoun guidance on Caitlin’s socials. They were one of the first writers I recruited in 2008 fresh out of college. Added a description of Skyberry House, which I have never encountered.



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 For a Brattleboro gallery-turned-community-center, a
2 new chapter

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

3 A primary organizer of 69A Elliot moves on, with new
4 leadership stepping in to create structure for a new entity — for
5 now called ‘70B’

####END SUBHED####

6 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

7 The entity once known as 69A Elliot St. — named for the
8 storefront where it originally came into being — will continue

9 down the street as the community resource it has become, under
10 different leadership and corporate structure.

11 “I want to thank everyone who has supported 69A and
12 everyone who came in and utilized our community art center,”
13 said Lisa Marie, adding that she dissolved its corporate entity,
14 69A LLC, on June 1.

15 “I did this with a heavy heart and I will miss working
16 with all the volunteers and everyone who utilized the space,” she
17 said.

18 While Marie has stepped away from the art center and
19 gathering place, co-worker Caitlin Baucom is taking the reins.

20 “We are still open,” the multidisciplinary artist and
21 community organizer said, adding that the hours remain the
22 same: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday, and until 9
23 p.m. every first Friday for Gallery Walk.

24 “Lisa Marie stepped away from 69A operations to work
25 on another project, for which we are all very excited and love
26 her,” Baucom said. “Dissolving it gives Lisa a clean break for new
27 business ventures, but doesn’t affect the permit or usage of the
28 space.”

29 And there’s already a new name of sorts.

30 “For the moment, everyone’s calling it ‘70B,’” Baucom
31 said. “We are going to sit down with our bookkeeper and an
32 advisor to go through the options and see what structure makes
33 the most sense for us; most likely it will be another LLC.”

34 **An artistic expression** 35 **transformed by community care**

36 In the winter of 2024-25, a Brattleboro couple, Kate
37 Bachler and Scott Berzofsky, tapped into their savings to rent the
38 storefront at 69A Elliot St. in the aftermath of the national election
39 and a contentious local debate over “acceptable community
40 conduct.”

41 Without knowing the exact contours of how the space
42 would actually be used, the former owners of Avenue Grocery
43 did know they wanted to restore a community gathering place in
44 the same spirit of the community convenience store that they
45 briefly ran on Western Avenue in 2017 and 2018.

46 Amid the final dismantling of the state's motel program in
47 July 2025 for those who were unsheltered, and the already acute
48 homelessness epidemic in the region, 69A Elliot St. became an
49 oasis for those in need, offering free coffee, tea, water, Wi-Fi
50 access, various gear and supplies (including tents, sleeping bags,
51 flashlights, and clothing), restrooms, music, and a social milieu.

52 After losing its lease last fall, the operation moved to 134
53 Elliot St. in December 2025.

54 "While I've been the other primary keyholder since last
55 year, and Lisa and I get the most attention as 69A representatives,
56 it's always been a collective effort," Baucom said of the
57 collaboration that is 69A.

58 "All of the work Lisa and many others put into real
59 community infrastructure, both at 69A and, for years, on the
60 streets, means that the space is able to do what a space like this
61 should," they added.

62 In her parting message, Marie noted that 69A started
63 with a question: What does Brattleboro need?

64 "The answer was that Brattleboro has an extremely large
65 population of people who need and still need assistance in many
66 ways," she said. "Help is still much needed not only in
67 Brattleboro, across the state, and in the nation, but also in the
68 world.

69 "We may not be able to help the most vulnerable
70 individuals around the world right now, but we can help out our
71 fellow Brattleboroians. We will need people to fill an invaluable
72 void in this town."

Much accomplished

Marie wrote that, since May 2025, folks at 69A helped obtain 30 jobs, found housing for 25, helped 19 overcome drug use, assisted 13 rape survivors get help and services, aided 11 people in reconnecting with family members, saved nine people from drug overdoses, assisted eight kidnapping victims to get help and seven to get home, stopped four suicides, helped three people get emergency medical help, and aided two people to stop using alcohol.

“Not to mention, no one died from cold exposure this winter with 69A’s support,” Marie said.

“We could not have done this without our amazing volunteers and the townspeople who pulled together to donate time, supplies, clothing, and money. [...] Your assistance and support have helped hundreds of people in need over the past year.”

And the work will continue in the new iteration.

“While anyone leaving, especially Lisa, changes things, other people have immediately stepped up and into roles and responsibilities that suit them,” Baucom said. “People feel such responsibility and care for the space, because it is our home.”

A transitional leadership team has formed, including Baucom and folks she “first met years ago in an encampment.”

“Back then, they were building collective structures and community agreements while living outside and have each since gotten themselves stabler living situations,” they said. “Witnessing them get a chance to apply lessons and ideas learned under duress to our space has been humbling and incredible.”

Judy and Britnie are co-managing daily operations and volunteer scheduling, with Tony and Patrick “as eyes and ears.”

“Everyone works well together and has complementary skills and interests,” Baucom said. “We have volunteers scheduled daily, a new bookkeeper, and more and more community collaborations.”

107 Baucom said Britnie — an artist — and her son are part
108 of the Winston Prouty community and they are working to bring
109 more families in. Judy “is a dedicated artist and makes sure
110 everyone has space and time to get creative.”

111 “Tony has so many ideas to bring more peer support and
112 direct resources into the space,” Baucom said. “Everyone is great
113 at communicating and de-escalating, both themselves and each
114 other.”

115 Skyberry House — a “home offering hospitality to local
116 unhoused children and families” in Brattleboro — and The
117 Workers Center remain two of the group’s longest collaborators.
118 The group is a staple at Gallery Walk.

119 The AIDS Project and HCRS bring resource vans to help
120 every other Friday. Food is coming in from The Putney School,
121 and outreach workers from Groundworks, Turning Point, and
122 HCRS regularly spend time here.

123 Judy and Baucom spoke at All Soul’s Church on June 7
124 “and heard some great ideas for offerings from their
125 congregation,” Baucom said.

126 They said regular meetings will start soon, and leadership
127 will expand “as we come to community agreements.”

128 “Everyone who comes in the door has ideas and needs
129 and something to offer,” said Baucom.

130 “This work is incredibly joyful and incredibly intense.
131 The more of us hold it together, the better off we all are,” they
132 said.

133 “We love you all. We love and will miss Lisa while she
134 works on other projects for now, and we appreciate all of our
135 community partners and supports so much,” Baucom added.
136 “I’ve never in my life been prouder or more impressed with
137 collective work — and have been organizing in this manner for
138 over a decade.”

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

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LINKS:

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VIDEO:

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LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

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