

As a building owner, I recognize the issues raised by [“Roaches and Broken Locks,” November 3]. Are we perfect? No. But we are a family with deep roots and an overwhelming commitment to this community. Affordable housing comes with major struggles for everyone, and we must have uncomfortable conversations about them. We have read the criticisms in Seven Days and will make changes to address them.

I urge everyone to understand the broader context. There are always two sides to every story and to address every single one would only lead to a back-and-forth where nothing productive would happen. Some positive measures we have recently undertaken include:

- hiring translators to help bridge the language barriers with some tenants who need help with general living practices;
- education regarding garbage and food handling, recycling, and composting;
- signage to promote general understanding of safety and health; and
- more safety audits with city inspectors.

We as a family believe that housing is a right for everyone. We believe that affordable housing should be safe and clean. There are some individuals who can certainly make it difficult for a property owner. But we can only try.

To call out the efforts of a family that has lived and worked in this community for nearly a century is troubling to us. We continue to try to work with city officials. We have never given up on our community, nor do we intend to take all of this lying down — I would ask for patience. The changes we will pursue will not happen overnight.

Many in Vermont are aware that our family has always believed in working hard and providing a good-quality product or service for a fair price. Whether it’s pasta sauce or providing a safe and reliable place for someone to live, that belief has not wavered. That’s exactly what we are going to do. We are committed to conducting our business in a manner that Vermonters are proud of. We will work hard for your trust and approval.

Mark Bove

Colchester

Mark Bove is president of Bove Brothers Milton.