

Ashfield MVP Community Resilience Day

Summary

Overview -

On May 4, 2025 from 1:00 - 4:00pm, community members from Ashfield and the broader Hilltowns region gathered for a day of festivities at Double Edge Theatre. Double Edge hosts a Community Day every year; this year's event included an additional focus on community resilience, as part of the [Ashfield Rural Climate Resilience and Living Culture Project](#).

What took place?

Community members joined in activities across the Double Edge campus – singing and creating music together, listening to stories, flying on bungees, walking on stilts, getting a tour of the farm, circle dancing, and talking together over coffee and tea. The many different spaces and activities invited people to connect with each other, learn about initiatives at Double Edge and in the community and region, cross-pollinate ideas, and to have fun. Tables were set up with materials from the Ashfield Rural Climate Resilience and Living Culture Project, including findings from 72 [student interviews](#) on visions for a resilient Ashfield and Hilltowns. Community members – both those who have been working on the project and those who were just learning about it – connected over these ideas of what would support a resilient community, from supporting local agriculture, to affordable housing, to emergency resources, to renewable energy solutions.

Who came to Community Resilience Day?

Community Resilience Day was free and open to everyone. Over 120 individuals attended, including middle schoolers and high schoolers who had led the project's community interviews, families with young children, as well as individuals from arts and cultural organizations including project partners Ohketeau Cultural Center, farms, local businesses, municipal committees, regional planning organizations, and State government. The vision was to bring together people from all sorts of backgrounds and interests to connect with each other, share ideas, and continue to build community – the foundation for community resilience.

Background on the Rural Climate Resilience and Living Culture Project -

The goal of the project is to address the question: ***What does climate resilience look like for Ashfield?*** Between December 2024 and June 2025 the project includes

community dinners and dialogues at different Ashfield locations, site tours, and the community resilience day. Collectively, through these activities the project aims to:

- Create new opportunities for local organizations, community members, and Town staff to discuss goals and ideas related to three key resilience topics in Ashfield: clean energy, nature-based resilience solutions, and affordable housing;
- Identify avenues for community partners and the Town to collaborate on future projects and grant proposals to achieve community goals related to the project focus areas;
- Grow Ashfield's potential for creative collaboration and leadership on rural climate and community resilience in the region.

The project is funded by the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program, and led by the Town of Ashfield in partnership with Double Edge Theatre, Ohketeau Cultural Center, climate and cultural strategists Lauren de la Parra and Holly Jacobson, and the Arts Extension Service at UMass Amherst.