

DUKES COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

ANNUAL REPORT to Chilmark - 2005

The Dukes County Regional Housing Authority serves individuals and families on Martha's Vineyard by providing affordable year-round rentals, assisting with homebuyer opportunities, participating in Town, regional and state advocacy efforts and collaborating with Town committees, Island organizations, local businesses and concerned individuals to create the housing options needed to maintain our Island community.

On the rental front this past year the Housing Authority: completed the purchase of the **Lake St.** apartments from the Town of Tisbury, reduced rents at the **Lagoon Pond** apartments through refinancing and neared completion of the purchase and preservation of a 9-apartment property also in Tisbury; continued renovation and began landscaping at the **Fisher Rd.** apartments in Edgartown; completed boiler replacements at the **Lagoon Heights** apartments in Oak Bluffs; contracted with the Town of West Tisbury to certify 23 **Affordable Accessory Apartments** created by a zoning by-law; assisted Aquinnah in preparing its own Accessory Apartment proposal; and managed the **Rental Conversion Program**, funded by the Island Affordable Housing Fund with support from the Chilmark Community Preservation Committee, providing tenant certification services and subsidy to landlords renting year-round to 60 families, bringing to 140 the number of rental situations facilitated by the Housing Authority. We also maintain a **Rental Housing Waitlist** and partner with other organizations that offer assistance with rent, utilities and apartment rehabilitation to Island renters and their landlords.

There was significant **Affordable Homebuyer** activity with lotteries for 8 homes in Tisbury, 4 home sites in West Tisbury and 1 home site in Edgartown. The Housing Authority supported Town Affordable Housing Committees, the Island Housing Trust and a private developer to establish lottery criteria, certify participants and assist in the preparation and execution of the lotteries. Additionally, the Housing Authority offered two **Homebuyer Education** trainings with presentations by Marcia Cini, Esq., Jeanne Ogden of Sovereign Bank and Philippe Jordi of the Island Housing Trust to 140 individuals interested in better understanding the home buying process. We maintain the **Island Affordable Homebuyer Clearinghouse** to publicize homebuyer opportunities and the **Martha's Vineyard Subsidized Housing Inventory** to assist in assuring future protection of affordability restrictions.

This past year, the Housing Authority assisted with **Community Preservation Act** and **Housing Bank** efforts as well as passage of the public law known as the **Martha's Vineyard Affordable Housing Covenants**. This law affirms the strain placed on our community by exorbitant home prices and allows for perpetual resale restrictions on housing for families making up to 150 % of our median income or almost twice the family income levels utilized elsewhere in Massachusetts. Originally voted into existence as a proposal to the State Legislature by all six Towns in 2002, the covenants will return to Town meetings this next year where approval will allow each Town another tool to be

used at their discretion in the preservation of homebuyer opportunities for generations of working Island families to come.

The **Vineyard Housing Office** on State Road in Vineyard Haven continues to grow as a clearinghouse for rental and homeownership opportunities and as a locus for Islanders working together on housing issues. The VHO is currently home to the Housing Authority, the Island Housing Trust, the Island Affordable Housing Fund, Habitat for Humanity of Martha's Vineyard, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Martha's Vineyard and offers a website, www.vineyardhousing.org as a comprehensive resource for affordable housing on Martha's Vineyard.

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