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To: Martha's Vineyard Boards of Selectmen, Affordable Housing Committees, and Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committees  
From: Christine Flynn, Economic Development & Affordable Housing Planner  
Date: September 1, 2011  
**Subject: Island-Wide Housing Needs Assessment Status Report and Request for Direction**

This memo is to advise town boards of the status of the Island Housing Needs Assessment and the MVC's participation in supporting this initiative of the Joint Affordable Housing Group (JAHG). The MVC funding is no longer available for 2011 and it appears that it will not be possible to hire a consultant this year. Action from the towns is needed in order to clarify how they wish to proceed.

About a year ago, members of the JAHG – made up of Island affordable housing entities including town committees and non-profit organizations – discussed the importance of hiring a consultant to prepare an island-wide housing needs assessment. The aim is to better direct their efforts and to support future state and federal grant applications. Since no single entity had the funds to pay for the study, it was agreed that the JAHG would draft a Scope of Services with a view to having the towns and MVC share the cost of the study. Originally, each town's share was \$4,000, which was later reduced to \$2,700. Town committees, non-profits, and the MVC would also supply data and participate in the project's Study Committee. The MVC agreed to contribute \$7,800 for a consultant, from a DHCD grant, as well as to facilitate the process and administer the funds (without an administrative fee). Subsequently, the Martha's Vineyard Affordable Housing Fund agreed to contribute \$6,000.

The current status is that Oak Bluffs, Tisbury, and West Tisbury have approved funding the project. Aquinnah and Chilmark Affordable Housing Committees, Chilmark Board of Selectmen, and CPC committees recommended appropriation of the funds at town meetings in September. The Edgartown Affordable Housing Committee and the Affordable Housing Trust recommended approval but the Board of Selectmen voted against approving the funds. (See details on the next page.)

Note that the approvals and warrant articles of Aquinnah, Chilmark, Oak Bluffs, and West Tisbury, stipulate that all six towns must participate and fund the project equally. After the Edgartown Board of Selectmen voted not to support the project in June, the Edgartown affordable housing committee representatives explored alternative sources to cover the town's \$2,700 share. Last week, the committee indicated that it did not want to seek any alternative sources without the support of the Selectmen.

With respect to the MVC's participation, the MVC's \$7,800 contribution is from a DHCD District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant that must be expended by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Given the time needed to set up the Study Committee and to solicit and select a consultant, the MVC has concluded that it is not feasible to complete even a first phase of work by the end of 2011. Therefore, the MVC's DLTA funds are being reallocated to other eligible regional projects. DLTA funds might be available in 2012 but there is a risk that the funds could be eliminated from the state's budget.

It would be helpful if Aquinnah and Chilmark proceed with their town meeting votes in September. The MVC is prepared to continue to help facilitate the study process once there is clear direction from the towns to resolve the dilemma of four towns stipulating all six towns participate while it would appear that only five towns are on track to do so.

cc: Joint Affordable Housing Group; MVC Commissioners

## **Housing Needs Assessment - Current Status of Funding Approvals - August 31, 2011**

### Aquinnah:

- Recommended by the Affordable Housing Committee and the CPC Committee.
- A CPC article to appropriate \$4,000 funds is on the warrant at the Special Town Meeting on September 25<sup>th</sup>.

### Chilmark:

- Recommended by the Affordable Housing Committee, the CPC Committee, and the Board of Selectmen.
- A CPC article to appropriate \$2,700 funds is on the warrant at the Special Town Meeting on September 26<sup>th</sup>.

### Edgartown:

- Recommended by the Affordable Housing Committee and the Affordable Housing Trust to allocate \$4,000.
- The Board of Selectmen voted on June 20<sup>th</sup> against approving the then-reduced share of \$2,700.

### Oak Bluffs:

- Approved by the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee on August 30<sup>th</sup>.
- No further approvals are needed.

### Tisbury:

- Approved by the Board of Selectmen to allocate \$2,700 on July 12<sup>th</sup>.
- No further approvals are needed.

### West Tisbury:

- Approved by the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee to allocate \$4,000 on April 26<sup>th</sup>.
- No further approvals are needed.