

# ISLAND PLAN

CHARTING THE FUTURE OF THE VINEYARD



**Housing Forum  
June 27, 2007**

**Proceedings**

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Please consult the separate Appendix that includes the poster, the agenda, the discussion paper, and the presentation.

The Island Plan Housing Forum was held in the Tisbury Senior Center on June 27, 2007 from 7:30 to 9:00 pm.

### Attendance

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A total of 48 people participated in this forum including members of the Steering Committee, the Housing Work Group, the Network of Planning Advisors, Island housing organizations, town boards, MVC staff, and members of the general public.

<u>Moderator</u>	Ann Floyd, Steering Committee member
<u>Guest Speaker</u>	Ron DiOrio, Oak Bluffs Selectman
<u>Housing Work Group Core members</u>	Harvey Beth, Christina Brown, Candace DaRosa, Philippe Jordi, Rob Kendall, Jim Westervelt
<u>MVC Staff</u>	Christine Brissette, Christine Flynn, Mark London, Ed O'Connell, Sarah Raposa, Donna Stewart
<u>Others</u>	Bill Bennett, John Best, Prentice Bowsher, Polly Brown, Mary Brissette, Dennis DaRosa, Ron DiOrio, Marie Doubleday, Rev. Bob Edmonds, Deb Edmonds, Jean Entine, Dave Ferraguzzi, Art Flathers, Doreen Kinsman, Mary Ellen Larsen, Pat Manning, Nora Nevin, Tony Nevin, Ned Orleans, Ellen Orleans, Jordan Ronson, Doug Ruskin, Susan Shea, Mike Shepard, Evan Smith, Paul Strauss, David Vigneault, Rick Whitten-Stovall, Nora Wilcox

## 1. Introduction

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Ann Floyd opened the Forum by introducing herself as the moderator and by welcoming members of the public. Ms. Floyd gave an overview of the Island Plan in addition to the planning process. She pointed out that Discussion Papers are a summary of all of the work that has been done by the Housing Work Group this past winter and spring. The Discussion Papers should not be viewed as final documents but rather as works in progress. The Housing Synthesis Document is a more detailed and comprehensive document, which will be modified over the summer and finalized by the end of the fall.

Ms. Floyd took a poll of the audience members by asking how many were affiliated with the following groups:

- Island Plan Steering Committee: 3
- Island Plan Housing Work Group: 12
- Island Plan Network of Planning Advisors: 18
- Island Housing Organizations: 16
- Members of Town Boards: 8
- Members of the MVC: 4
- Members of the General Public: 18

Ms. Floyd explained the format for the evening, namely a presentation of the emerging proposals by members of the Housing Work Group Core followed by an opportunity for feedback and discussion by participants.

Ms. Floyd introduced members of the Housing Work Group Core: Richard Toole (Chair, not present), Harvey Beth, Christina Brown, Candy DaRosa, Philippe Jordi, Rob Kendall, and Jim Westervelt. Ron DiOrio, Oak Bluffs Board of Selectman, gave introductory remarks about the importance of preserving and creating housing that is affordable to the year-round community.

## 2. Presentation

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Members of the Housing Work Group Core gave a PowerPoint presentation that summarized the issues, goals, emerging directions and promising initiatives as identified so far. The presentation was organized into the following categories:

- The Housing Situation Today
- Overall Goal
- Proposals
  - Zoning,
  - Planning and Management
  - Funding,
  - Special Needs.

Readers are referred to two documents:

- Housing Discussion Paper – Appendix 1;
- PowerPoint presentation – Appendix 2.

### 3. Discussion

The discussion took place in blocks of time, corresponding to each general topic in the presentation. At the beginning of each topic, the sense of the room was sought by asking for a show of hands for each of the Emerging Directions and Promising Initiatives, indicating whether people had the following preliminary opinion:

- **Blue:** Agree – High Priority
- **Green:** Agree
- **Orange:** Generally agree but have concerns (including wording)
- **Red:** Disagree

Then, audience members discussed the proposals. Note: Each comment represents the opinions of the speaker and these ideas were not necessarily shared by other participants or by the Work Group.)

#### ZONING

<i>Informal Level of Support</i>	Agree High Priority (Blue)	Agree (Green)	Generally Agree With Concerns (Orange)	Disagree (Red)
<i>Emerging Directions</i>				
H1. Increase the number of community housing units on the Vineyard, prioritizing those residents with the greatest need and emphasizing the creation of rental units.	20	5	0	1
H2. Allow additional density for new community housing in appropriate locations.	12	10	2	1
H3. Prioritize the use of existing buildings for affordable housing	40	0	1	2
<i>Promising Initiatives</i>				
P8. Allow an additional accessory affordable housing unit on any property.	12	10	10	2
P9. Allow multi-unit community housing in certain areas.	15	5	10	0
P10. Adopt demolition delay bylaws to encourage house preservation or reuse.	14	10	2	3

#### H2. - Additional Density for Community Housing - Comments

- The term “appropriate” is too vague.
- “Appropriate” must include design as well as environmental concerns.
- There is great disparity of zoning regulations between Island towns; when terms such as “appropriate” are used, it generally means that housing should be concentrated Down-Island.
- Cluster housing should be promoted more aggressively particularly within the Up-Island towns where open space and land conservation are high priority issues. Also the community should consider existing VTA bus routes when considering sites for housing development.

P8. – Accessory Housing

- It was suggested that some areas, especially some Down-Island neighborhoods that are zoned for smaller lots, are currently over-populated. There was concern that allowing a second residential unit to many properties could lead to certain areas becoming over-developed, and then becoming economically and socially dilapidated.
- The term “any property” was too vague. Note: It was pointed out that under the strategies for P8 accessory units would only be allowed provided that all Board of Health regulations and other state or local regulations had been met.
- It was suggested that groundwater issues should be factored into this by-law.
- This would be a way to house adult children returning home after college, helping to prevent a brain drain. It would also encourage a multi-generational environment for families.
- There was a concern that this could lead to considerably increased density, especially for lots on town water and sewer.
- How can we regulate density? Will it affect rural appeal?
- Appropriate design for neighborhood character is essential in ensuring community support.
- Consider the quality of life - not just density, sometimes its too crowded.

General Comments

- There was a general question regarding affordable housing program criteria; how is an individual’s personal finances factored into program eligibility? It was noted that all local, state, and federal programs are based on earned income. Homeownership programs do consider other financial information such as assets, whereas other financial matters are not considered for rental programs.
- It was suggested that there be a housing initiative specifically for municipal employees.
- It was suggested that year-round community housing should really be termed year-round workforce housing. It was noted that year-round workforce housing has been implied but not specifically mentioned. It was suggested the economic impact due to the lack of year-round workforce housing needs more to be emphasized more.

PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Emerging Directions:

H4. Streamline the planning and management of affordable housing efforts on the Island

There was general agreement with H4.

FUNDING

Emerging Directions:

H5. Increase funding for community housing.

P11. Seek Island-wide cost sharing methods for infrastructure and services

Promising Initiatives:

Informal Level of Support of specific funding initiatives	Agree High Priority (Blue)	Agree (Green)	Generally Agree With Concerns (Orange)	Disagree (Red)
Martha's Vineyard Housing Bank	17	2	3	1
Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund	10	10	0	3
Linkage Programs	14	1	1	0

Property Tax Incentives	15	3	1	1
Tax/Registration Fee on Weekly Home Rentals	7	3	10	2

Tax/Registration Fee for Weekly Home Rentals

- This sounds like a great idea but implementing and enforcing a program like this could be difficult if not impossible. How can every home that is rented on a weekly basis be tracked? Would it lead to people avoiding renting through agents so rental agreements could not be traced? Could the issuance of beach stickers be used as a means of enforcement?
- The administration cost to implement such a program could be more costly than the revenue that is generated.
- It was suggested that the political support for such an initiative is not there. It was noted that it would be highly unlikely that any town meeting would adopt such a measure
- It was noted that revenue from weekly rentals are sometimes used to supplement a year-round resident’s property taxes in addition to the other living costs. Taxing weekly rentals would be another burden for those year-round residents.

General Comments

- It was suggested that there is too much emphasis on the shelter aspect of the housing issue, not enough on the greater problem of land values.
- It was suggested that the Land Bank has amassed much land on the Island and perhaps now is the time to avoid having the Land Bank and Housing Bank compete for land. It was suggested that land conservation should be noted as contributing to the affordable housing problem.
- It was noted that the unintended costs of housing challenges to the greater community need to be mentioned, specifically the impact to the Island’s economy.
- It was suggested that Green Building Design was not specifically mentioned in the Housing Discussion Paper. It was pointed out that the deconstruction and recycling of materials is a green building practice.
- It was suggested that the waste burden from factory built homes vs. stick built homes be identified.
- It was asked if a regional approach could be encouraged regarding the adoption of the Municipal Affordable Housing Trusts. It was explained that an individual town could only establish Municipal Affordable Housing Trusts. Municipal Affordable Housing Trusts are specifically designed to allow individual towns to earmark town funds such as the CPA funds for affordable housing projects within that town.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Emerging Directions:

H6. Provide for seasonal workforce housing.

H7. Increase the supply of housing seniors and others needing assisted living housing.

Promising Initiatives:

P12. Build dormitory housing for seasonal workers.

P13. Create continuous-care communities for seniors.

Due to time constraints, there was no discussion of the initiatives or directions listed under Special Needs.

## 4. Final Evaluation of Proposals

Audience members were asked to participate in a dot-voting exercise after the meeting adjourned, in which they gave their final evaluation of the Emerging Directions and Promising Initiatives.

The following chart is a summary of the results. There were a few written comments, which have been integrated into the appropriate sections of the discussions above.

Final Evaluation of Proposals	Agree High Priority (Blue)	Agree (Green)	Generally Agree With Concerns (Orange)	Disagree (Red)
<i>Emerging Directions</i>				
H1. Increase the number of community housing units on the Vineyard, prioritizing those residents with the greatest need and emphasizing the creation of rental units.	15	0	1	0
H2. Allow additional density for new community housing in appropriate locations.	3	4	6	5
H3. Prioritize the use of existing buildings for affordable housing	17	0	0	0
H4. Streamline the planning and management of affordable housing efforts on the Island	15	2	0	0
H5. Increase funding for community housing.	14	0	0	1
H6. Provide for seasonal workforce housing.	7	7	0	0
H7. Increase the supply of housing seniors and others needing assisted living housing	6	10	0	0
<i>Promising Initiatives</i>				
P8. Allow an additional accessory affordable housing unit on any property.	3	1	8	2
P9. Allow multi-unit community housing in certain areas.	5	5	2	3
P10. Adopt demolition delay bylaws to encourage house preservation or reuse.	13	3	0	0
P11. Seek Island-wide cost sharing methods for infrastructure and services	9	3	1	3
P12. Build dormitory housing for seasonal workers.	8	5	1	0
P13. Create continuous-care communities for seniors.	12	4	0	0

Meeting notes were prepared by Sarah Raposa, Christine Flynn, and Mark London.



## **ISLAND PLAN**

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