

Martha's Vineyard Commission 2004 Annual Report



Review of the activities of the Martha's Vineyard Commission
From January 1 to December 31, 2004

The Martha's Vineyard Commission is the Regional Planning Agency for Duke's County, Massachusetts, comprising the six towns on Martha's Vineyard – Aquinnah, Chilmark, Edgartown, Oak Bluffs, Tisbury and West Tisbury – as well as the Town of Gosnold on the Elizabeth Islands. The MVC is not only a planning body but, on the Vineyard, it has regulatory authority to establish Districts of Critical Planning Concern and to review Developments of Regional Impact.

April 14, 2005

Cover photo: Mark London

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Executive Director's Report
2. Community Development
3. Water Resources
4. Coastal Management and Harbor Planning
5. Economic Development and Affordable Housing
6. Transportation
7. Developments of Regional Impact
8. Districts of Critical Planning Concern
9. Geographic Information Systems
10. Assistance to Towns
11. Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements
12. Commissioners and Staff

1. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The year 2004, the 30th Anniversary of the Martha's Vineyard Commission, was an important one for the Commission.

On the planning front, the Commission worked with the towns on a major effort: the preparation of Community Development Plans for each Island town. This program, financed by the Commonwealth under Executive Order 418, identified the suitability of presently undeveloped land for open space preservation, or for housing and commercial development. Many Island boards, groups and individuals were involved in the compilation and updating of data that the MVC converted into computerized maps integrated with towns' property information that will serve the towns in the short term and will contribute to future planning efforts.

Also in 2004, the Commission organized a very popular series of public forums dealing with a variety of topics: smart growth, roadside views, the Vineyard economy, and water quality.

Both the Community Development Plans and the forums will serve as the basis for a three-year, Island-wide, community-based planning effort that the Commission decided to facilitate, starting in 2005.

At the request of the towns of Oak Bluffs and Tisbury, the Commission facilitated a steering committee to represent the Vineyard Community with respect to MassHighway's proposal to replace the Lagoon Pond Drawbridge. The Commission is also analyzing the traffic impacts of a proposal by the Tisbury Planning Board to restructure the road network between Upper State Road and the Park-and-Ride, and is working with the Edgartown Planning Board on various options for dealing with traffic problems there. It also carried out extensive traffic counts all across the Island as well as an in-depth survey of Vineyarders distributed through Island newspapers.

The Commission continues its ongoing work in various other planning fields. It worked with the towns to help them renew their affordable housing certification. It carried out extensive water testing of Island coastal ponds and was an active participant of the newly formed Martha's Vineyard Water Alliance, coordinating action to maintain the quality of our surface and ground waters.

The Commission coordinates regular meetings of all Island Planning Boards, Conservation Commissions and GIS users, promoting the exchange of issues and ideas across town boundaries and providing informational opportunities with the use of guest speakers.

The Commission launched its website on July 27. This site provides access to the current calendar of Commission activities, to staff reports and drawings of upcoming Developments of Regional Impacts (DRI), and allows downloading dozens of studies and other documents.

The Commission has installed Pictometry in each Island town hall. This collection of scalable, oblique aerial photographs is an invaluable aid for town boards.

On the regulatory side, the longstanding dispute over the Southern Woodlands in Oak Bluffs was finally settled when the Commission approved a compromise proposal on April 8. A new application made by the applicant, CK Associates, that respected principles previously outlined by the Commission. The proposal preserves and provides public access to 190 acres of this vast

unfragmented woodland habitat. The owner will realize a reasonable return on his investment through development of a 26-lot clustered subdivision on 93 acres. An exchange of land with the Town of Oak Bluffs will facilitate construction of affordable housing.

The MVC joined with its counterparts on the Cape and Nantucket to create the Cape and Islands Regional Planning Alliance to facilitate mutual consultation, information-sharing and exploration of opportunities in order to formulate common positions on matters of mutual interest and concern.

The Commission prevailed in several court cases including an appeal of its decision in approving the Bridge Housing project and an upholding of its powers with respect to the Wampanoag Tribe.

The year ended with 135 people attending a very enjoyable dinner and evening's entertainment celebrating the Commission's 30th anniversary, held in the Agricultural Hall.

2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development covers a range of general planning activities the MVC conducts that are usually broader in scope than the several other categories of activities cited in the Annual Report.

Community Development Planning Program

Much of MVC staff time in the first half of 2004 went towards completing Community Development Plans (a.k.a. EO418 Plans) for each of the six Vineyard towns. The Commission carried out this intensive planning exercise as a consultant to each town – synthesizing the towns' previous planning and visioning efforts and creating a computerized atlas of town information that can easily be used and updated. In addition, completion of these plans retains the towns' eligibility for some two dozen grant programs.

Sustainability Indicators

Several years ago, the Commission participated in an effort to prepare a series of indicators to measure how sustainable Vineyard practices and activities are. In the fall, the Commission facilitated a series of committee meetings with a view to finalizing an initial set of indicators in the first half of 2005.

Trail Planning

The Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission contracts with the MVC on an ongoing, annual basis to assist it with the development and protection of trails across the Island. MVC staff's work on more than a dozen trail projects involved meeting with Town officials and landowners, and preparing legal instruments for recording in the Registry of Deeds.

All-Island Planning Boards Sessions

The MVC continued to facilitate regular meetings of members of planning boards from the six Island towns. These meetings provide opportunities for boards to share with one another their respective challenges and solutions and promote the discussion of multi-town issues and potential approaches. The Commission also benefits from these sessions by gaining better understanding of town planning issues and by "bouncing off" from the group planning ideas.

Energy

The MVC participated in the creation and ongoing work of "Vineyard Unplugged", a group working to promote energy independence through conservation and production from renewable energy sources such as solar and wind. Commission staff also continued to keep abreast of the Cape Wind electricity generating proposal and to keep the towns apprised of opportunities to comment on the initial environmental review.

3. WATER RESOURCES

During 2004 the MVC water resource focus was on continuing to gather the water quality data that is a pre-requisite for proposing coastal ponds for the Massachusetts Estuaries Project. All ponds entering this program must have three years of high-quality water column chemistry data before they qualify. Edgartown Great Pond entered the program in 2002 and a final report is expected the summer of 2005. In 2004, the Commission's Water Resource Planner worked with the Oak Bluffs and Tisbury Shellfish wardens to get the local funding for Lagoon Pond to enter the program. We began to lay the groundwork to get Tashmoo, Tisbury Great and Sengekontacket into the program.

Summer Coastal Pond Monitoring

In the summer of 2004, a DEP 604(b) grant funded the MVC Water Resource Planner to collect water samples from Cape Pogue, Poucha, Sengekontacket, Farm, Oak Bluffs Harbor, Lagoon, Chilmark and Tashmoo ponds. A total of 168 samples were collected, processed and sent to the lab for analysis. In addition, samples were also collected from Edgartown Great Pond and Tisbury Great Pond funded by, respectively, the MEP and the Riparian Owners Association. A total of 75 samples were collected, processed and sent to the lab for analysis. The Water Resource Planner helped coordinate the collection of bottom sediment samples from Trapp's and Sengekontacket ponds by Estuaries Project personnel to measure the nutrient release from the sediments.

Watershed Land Use Databases

The MVC received a grant from the Coastal Zone Management Non-Point Source Grant program to update the land use databases for the watersheds of Tashmoo and Lagoon and to create such a database for Sengekontacket Pond. The land use databases are used by the Estuaries Project to estimate the nitrogen contribution to the ponds from wastewater and fertilizer application to farm fields and landscapes. The Water Resource Planner used the output from a computer groundwater model updated by the MEP to revise the watershed boundaries for these ponds.

Fresh Pond Sampling Project

The Edey Foundation provided funding to allow us to conduct a water quality survey of many of the fresh ponds on the Vineyard. Ponds sampled include Jernegan's, Fresh, Crystal, Upper Lagoon, Upper Tashmoo, Seth's, Old House, Mill, Priestler's, Harlock's, Bliss and Black ponds. A total of 40 samples were collected. In addition to water chemistry data, we collected dissolved oxygen, temperature and water column transparency information. This project was intended to follow up on and expand a one-day survey carried out by National Park Service personnel in 2001. Analyses for mercury were also run on both the water column and on sediment samples collected from the bottom of Crystal, Upper Lagoon, Harlock's and Fresh ponds.

Edgartown Nitrate Evaluation

The MVC Water Resource Planner assisted the Edgartown Board of Health with an on-going attempt to identify the source of nitrate contamination in private wells in the Edgartown Meadows area. Samples were collected for analysis of nitrate content as well as to identify the ratio of nitrogen isotopes in the drinking water that can be used to identify sources such as wastewater or fertilizer.

Eelgrass Restoration in Sengekontacket Pond:

With funding assistance from the Friends of Sengekontacket, the Water Resource Planner continued to refine methodology to restore eelgrass to the Pond. This year, to reduce the labor requirement, Staff collected eelgrass seed stalks and created five seeding stations in the pond where the seeds could ripen and drop to the bottom. Our hope is to find a simple, effective means to reestablish eelgrass beds in Sengekontacket Pond.

Martha's Vineyard Water Alliance

The MVC Executive Director and Water Resource Planner are active members of the Martha's Vineyard Water Alliance, an ad hoc committee consisting of members of organizations that have an interest in preserving and restoring the water quality of the Island's ground and surface waters.

4. COASTAL MANAGEMENT AND HARBOR PLANNING

The Martha's Vineyard Commission and staff are frequently called upon to provide regulatory and planning assistance to the towns regarding issues of coastal management and harbor planning. The Commission also initiates its own coastal management projects to investigate and protect coastal resources.

Environmental Review

Commission staff reviewed and provided comments to MEPA and DEP for numerous projects around the Island, including the Pennywise Path Affordable Housing Project, the proposed SSA terminal in Oak Bluffs, and the proposed improvements at the Martha's Vineyard Airport. The MVC is invited to participate in such reviews because it is the designated Regional Planning Agency for the area.

Forum on Pond Management

The MVC, in partnership with the Martha's Vineyard Water Alliance, produced a forum on management of water quality of coastal ponds and their watersheds. This highly successful forum was part of a series produced with a grant from the Edey Foundation.

All-Island Conservation Commission Sessions

The Commission coordinated the third season of regular gatherings of the Conservation Commissions on the Island. These sessions have been highly successful, often involving guest speakers on topics of concern to all towns. In 2004, guest speakers included Dr. Brian Howes on nitrogen loading and Jessica Weaver on Phragmites. Those sessions were taped and broadcast on MVTV.

5. DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL IMPACT

The Martha's Vineyard Commission annually reviews projects meeting established thresholds designating them as Developments of Regional Impact (DRI). In an average year, the Commission receives between fifteen and twenty referrals and 2004 saw twenty-five projects referred. Of those, seven were modifications that were approved, four were modifications remanded back to the towns (the Commissioners finding that the proposed modifications did not involve regional issues that needed its review), four were new proposals that were approved with conditions, and one new proposal was denied. Nine additional DRIs were as yet unresolved by the end of the calendar year, three of which have been on hold at the applicants' request for an extended time.

The DRI process begins with a meeting between the applicant and the Land Use Planning Committee (LUPC). The meeting is a less formal way for the applicant to present the project and for Commissioners to identify what they see as the primary issues that will arise during the public hearing. It is also the time when the Commissioners determine if they feel that the applicant is ready to proceed to public hearing. Once that determination is made, the public hearing is scheduled and advertised. The public hearing is held over one or more nights, allowing for the applicant's presentation, staff reports, town input, public comment and Commissioner questions. Once the public hearing is closed, the project goes back to the LUPC for discussion and recommendation prior to a vote by the full Commission.

This year the MVC dealt with a range of projects, but as can be expected, with diminishing available land, many were more complicated than in years past and required a tremendous amount of staff, Commissioner and applicant time to develop the best possible project for both the Island and the applicant.

List of Developments of Regional Impact Referred to the MVC in 2004

Aquinnah		
None		
Chilmark		
Coleman	Subdivision	Approved with conditions on 3/22/04
Edgartown		
Colonial Inn	Inn Expansion	Non-concurrence on 4/21/04
Swan Neck Trust	Subdivision	Modification approved on 5/13/04
Tarkiln, Inc.	Modification of subdivision	On hold at applicant's request
Vineyard Golf Club (LSV Realty Trust)	Modification – construction of member housing	Application not completed in 2004
Pennywise Path	Affordable housing project	Approved with conditions on 7/22/04
Tropical Deli	Restaurant expansion	Non-concurrence on 4/29/04
Oak Bluffs		
Martha's Vineyard Hotel	Inn expansion	Withdrawn on 4/29/04. New proposal denied on 7/15/04
Vineyard Youth Tennis	Modification of conditions	Application not completed in 2004
The Preserve at the Woodlands (Corey Kupersmith)	Subdivision – residential development and open space preservation	Approved with conditions 4/8/4
ADV Realty Trust	Residential development	Application not completed in 2004
Woodside Village IV, V and VI, Aidylberg II	Modification – handicapped amenities/air conditioning	Approved 4/1/4
Tisbury		
Vineyard Home Center	Commercial expansion	Non-concurrence on 9/9/04
Carroll Realty Trust	Subdivision	Non-concurrence on 12/02/04
UPS at Carroll's Trucking	Commercial expansion	Application not completed in 2004
Bridge Housing	Affordable housing project	Modification approved on 3/10/04
4 Causeway Road	Construction of office/residential	Approved with conditions 12/2/4
1986 Evelyn Way Trust	Commercial construction	On hold at applicant's request

Dukes County Savings Bank	New bank building	Approved with conditions on 10/20/04
PacifiCotton	Demolition and construction – commercial and residential	Approved with conditions on 12/27/04
Vineyard House	Housing complex	Application not completed in 2004
Hillside Village III	Modification – handicapped amenities/air conditioning	Approved on 4/1/4
West Tisbury		
Island Children’s School	Modification – construction - expansion	Approved 4/8/4
Options in Education (M.V. Charter School)	Modification - construction – expansion	Approved 4/15/4
Vineyard Tennis Center	Modification - restaurant/expansion	Non-concurrence 5/13/4 (no public hearing needed)
South Mountain Company	Modification - expansion – concurrence	Concurrence 12/16/4 (public hearing in 2005)
Vineyard Gardens	Commercial expansion	Application not completed in 2004

6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Economic Development

Economic Development encompasses many regional issues affecting Dukes County such as housing, transportation, infrastructure, and the environment. Each of these play a role in the island's ability to attract and sustain businesses, an adequate workforce, year-round and seasonal residents, tourists, and impact the cultural continuity of our community. In 2004, the MVC did the following in keeping with its mandate to promote a sound local economy.

Survey - Data Collection

The Martha's Vineyard Commission initiated and carried out a series of surveys in the summer and fall of 2003 to gather information related to transportation and economic development. Preliminary results reflecting the travel, spending habits, and opinions of seasonal residents and tourists from the ferries, buses, and the airport were published in 2004. In October of 2004, the MVC also released results from a survey of island businesses. In the summer of 2004, the MVC conducted a Resident Survey for year-round and seasonal residents to provide data on the average number of people staying in a home, spending, travel, and recreational habits. Results of this extensive survey should be published in the spring of 2005.

CD Plans – Economic Profiles

As part of the efforts begun this past fall of working with each town on their Community Development Plans, the Commission created economic profiles for each community that will help serve the towns as they begin to consider future economic development needs of the community. In completing the Community Development Plans, the MVC also created economic development suitability maps.

Economic and Demographic Data

Each year the Commission responds to close to 200 requests, mainly phone calls, for demographic and economic information. More than forty percent of the calls, many of which were referred by the Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce, were business-related inquiries for economic data. Almost thirty percent were inquiries from town boards, schools, libraries, non-profits, and other island organizations. The remaining questions regarding demographic information were from members of the general public. The MVC continues to serve as a repository for collecting information and conducting data analyses. The MVC has posted on its website new, user-friendly analyses of demographic, economic, housing, and transportation information from various federal, state, and local resources.

Entrepreneurial Workshops

The MVC, in cooperation with the South Eastern Economic Development Corporation (SEED), sponsored two free entrepreneurial workshops in April. The workshop themes were on the "Fundamentals of Starting Your Own Business" and on "The Importance of Understanding

Financial Statements.” The Commission will continue to work with SEED to organize future workshops.

Forum

The MVC hosted a forum “Trends in the Trades” that focused on several aspects of the Vineyard economy, including the gradual shift from a predominantly seasonal and tourist economy to a growing year-round economy.

Affordable Housing

The rising cost of housing on a statewide level has posed serious challenges to state and local government to address the issue of affordable housing more aggressively, particularly as it threatens the retention of an adequate workforce. For the past five years there has been a strong grass roots effort within the Island’s private and religious sectors to address affordable housing on the Vineyard.

The Martha’s Vineyard Commission continues to provide town boards with technical assistance regarding affordable housing issues. The Commission informs the town boards of grant opportunities and other possible funding sources. This past year the Commission has been responsible for the following activities.

Subsidized and Affordable Housing Inventories

The Martha’s Vineyard Commission, in cooperation with the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority, worked with town appointed liaisons to update each town’s Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory. In addition to this inventory, the MVC and DCRHA have created a database of affordable housing projects. The Commission converted the database into a GIS map to illustrate where affordable housing units are located throughout the island. The affordable housing maps were useful tools for completing the affordable housing elements of the Community Development Plans.

CD Plans – Affordable Housing Component:

The Commission created housing profiles for each town as a starting point for the Community Development Plans. The MVC mapped the inventory of town, county, and state owned lands that might be possible sites for future affordable housing and created affordable housing suitability maps identifying lands that have the most characteristics desirable for the siting of affordable housing. Using this new information, the MVC worked with town appointed housing committee members and resident homesite committees to develop Affordable Housing Strategies, all of which were included as part of the Community Development Plans. .

Executive Order 418 Housing Certification

The Affordable Housing Strategies developed for the Community Development Plans were also designed to meet the submittal requirements of the Executive Order 418 Housing Certification program administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development. The Boards of Selectmen in each of the six Vineyard towns endorsed their respective Affordable Housing

Strategies, and the MVC facilitated the towns in submitting their applications. All six towns received their annual certification. The EO418 Housing Certification Program offers incentives to increase the supply of affordable housing by awarding certified communities bonus points for certain competitive discretionary grants as well as for non-competitive grant programs.

Joint Meetings of Island Affordable Housing Groups

In the spring of 2004, the MVC invited the various affordable housing groups – from town housing committees to public and private non-profit housing groups – to meet on a quarterly basis. The purpose of these joint meetings is twofold. The first is to foster greater communication and working relations between these groups. The second is to provide an opportunity to exchange information and utilize the MVC as a resource.

DRI Review of Chapter 40B Proposal

The Martha's Vineyard Commission reviewed one comprehensive permit proposal during 2004, the Pennywise Path project in Edgartown.

7. TRANSPORTATION

As the regional planning agency for Dukes County, the Martha's Vineyard Commission is responsible for the overall transportation planning of the region, in association with the Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority, MassHighway and the Executive Office of Transportation. The annual Unified Planning Work Program outlines the transportation planning to be carried out by the Martha's Vineyard Commission with Mass Highway funding.

Management and Support of the Planning Process

Chaired by Bill Weibrecht, the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) met periodically during the year in order to oversee the development of the Unified Planning Work Program and the Transportation Improvement Program by the Commission's planners. The JTC is made up of representatives of Island towns as well as individuals actively interested in transportation planning.

Transportation Improvement Program

The TIP is the Island's five-year allocation of federal and state transportation funds. Upcoming projects include the Herring Creek Bike Path in Edgartown, the redesign of the intersection of Old County Road and State Road in West Tisbury, William Street Historic district enhancements, West Tisbury walking way enhancements, and operating assistance to the Vineyard Transportation Authority. The TIP is updated annually.

Transportation Planning Support Activities

The Commission's planners continue to collect data used by many groups and individuals for defining needs, measuring trends, reviewing development of regional impact proposals, and funding improvement projects.

Traffic counts

Traffic counts were recorded throughout the year at 37 locations. MVC has set up two permanent traffic count locations to monitor the seasonal traffic variation. Specialized equipment and computer software were acquired which enabled the Commission to collect and analyze traffic data. The Commission also bought new state-of-the-art bike and trail counters, which will allow collecting counts on bike paths and walking trails beginning in 2005.

Other Data Collection

Commission staff collected turning movement counts in various locations. Also, the MVC conducted an origin-destination survey at the intersection of State Road and the Edgartown – Vineyard Haven Road in Tisbury to study the travel behavior of motorists using the intersection. This information was used to study the feasibility of the Tisbury Planning Board's connector road proposal.

Travel Demand Model

A winter travel computer model was created with special funding from MassHighway as part of an overall statewide traffic model whose purpose is primarily to monitor air quality. The Commission is in the process of transforming the travel model for the summer situation.

Transportation and GIS

Integrating land use and transportation information is progressing as the Commission's planners enhance GIS databases and mapping.

DRIs

Many Development of Regional Impact proposals required review of traffic impact and access studies. The Commission staff also assisted DRI applicants in preparing their Traffic Impact Analysis studies

Lagoon Pond Drawbridge

At the request of the Tisbury and Oak Bluffs Boards of Selectmen, the MVC facilitated the work of the Lagoon Pond Drawbridge Committee, created to deal with the proposal by MassHighway to replace the drawbridge over the inlet to Lagoon Pond. After analyzing various options, the committee "reluctantly" supported the proposal to first build a temporary bridge next to the existing bridge, then to build a permanent bridge in the alignment of the existing bridge. Both Boards of Selectmen endorsed this position. The Committee also prepared comments on the preliminary plans for the temporary drawbridge.

Tisbury Connector Road Study

MVC staff studied the feasibility of the Tisbury System of Connector Roads proposed by the Tisbury Planning Board. Based on the results of the origin-destination survey carried out at the intersection of State Road and the Edgartown – Vineyard Haven road, the Commission analyzed the potential impact of various alternative proposals.

Edgartown Master Plan Update:

MVC staff participated in various transportation sub-committees established as part of efforts to update the Town's Master Plan.

Trails Planning

Underwritten by the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank, MVC staff continues to work on the protection of existing trails and the creation of new links to expand the network of Island trails.

8. DISTRICTS OF CRITICAL PLANNING CONCERN

A District of Critical Planning Concern is a special area on Martha's Vineyard. It is an area that is important to more than one Island town or to the Island as a whole. Because of the importance of these areas, they require special regulations to guide the type and manner of development that may occur. The Commission's special legislation provides for creation of special districts to properly regulate development in these areas.

In 2004, the MVC dealt with several amendments to existing Districts. The Commission votes amendments to District boundaries in a like manner to new nominations, including a moratorium and a public hearing. Adoption of regulations is the end of the line for Commission involvement in the new districts, unless amendments are proposed. Should the towns find that amendments are needed, such amendments must be presented to the Commission for review. The Commission must hold a public hearing to consider conformance with the guidelines defined in the designation. Conformance with the designation is the strength of the regulations, allowing the towns to piggyback on the special powers of the Commission's legislation.

Town of Aquinnah DCPC

The Town of Aquinnah proposed amendments restricting permanent outdoor generators and regarding enforcement of site clearing regulations. The Commission held its public hearing and voted conformance. The Town Meeting subsequently accepted the amendments.

Copeland Plan DCPC

The Town of Oak Bluffs proposed a boundary amendment to the Copeland Plan District to include the North Bluff area. The Commission voted conformance and the Town Meeting voted to make the amendment.

Edgartown Amendment Proposals

The Edgartown Planning Board proposed a number of amendments to expand the Island Road District and to amend the regulations for the Island Road, Special Places, Cape Poge, and Coastal Districts. The Commission held a public hearing, voted the amendment and voted conformance of the proposed regulations, with some comments. The only amendment to achieve two-thirds vote at Town Meeting was an amendment to the Island Road District, Special Ways, to allow crossing by special permit. The remaining proposals were not adopted.

Overhaul of Coastal District and Island Road District

Commission staff continued to perform an assessment of the Commission's original Districts created in 1975, the Island Roads District and the Coastal District. Between them, the two cover most of the important viewsheds on the Island. This project includes reporting on the current state of the Districts, reviewing boundaries and guidelines, town regulations, and the impact of recent development including viewshed analysis. The bulk of this project will be conducted in 2005.

9. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The Martha's Vineyard Commission continued to grow its Geographic Information System (GIS) digital data library in the year 2004 and continued to upgrade its GIS technology. Diverse planning projects have been supported that have utilized GIS technology to analyze and display spatial data. GIS services have been provided to local municipalities and boards, non-profit organizations and for state and federally funded projects.

Community Development Planning

The Community Development Planning (CDP) process, started in 2003, continued to be a major focus of the MVC in 2004. The CDP is the compilation of information in GIS format to help planners identify those areas that are potentially most suitable for future open space, housing development, or economic development. The MVC staff worked with town steering committees to check existing data layers and identify those data layers that are most important to open space, housing, and economics.

Zoning and Zoning Overlay GIS Data Development Grant

Funding received from EOE – MassGIS was received in 2003 to update all Town's digital zoning data. The MVC staff continued this work in 2004 by verifying the boundaries of the zoning districts and overlay districts with each Town's current zoning bylaw document. In addition, data verification included reviewing the attribute information associated with each district such as dimension specifications and setbacks. The final revised zoning and overlay district zoning digital GIS files were delivered to MassGIS in 2004.

Pictometry

In 2004, MassHighways assigned the state's Regional Planning Agencies the responsibility of distributing the Pictometry images and software to the Towns within their region. Pictometry is oblique aerial photography of the towns that is linked to assessor databases and from which distances and areas can be measured. It has the potential for transforming the way towns conduct their work in many different functions. The MVC held four training sessions for town employees interested in learning the software and provided software installation at the County office and three Town Halls. The four remaining Towns will receive the program in 2005.

GIS Data Collection CD

Over the last year the MVC's GIS digital data library has grown and MVC wanted to share this data, free of charge, with the Island towns and non-profit organizations. Therefore, the MVC compiled a CD that contains about 600mb worth of Island related GIS map data layers. The CD also contains documentation for each data layer explaining how and when it was created. The maps on the CD are viewable using a free software program, ArcReader, which is easy to install off of the Internet.

11. ASSISTANCE TO TOWNS

This section highlights some of the main examples of specific planning or technical assistance in each town.

Aquinnah

Community Development

- **Community Development Planning (EO418):** The MVC acted as consultant to the Town in completing the Aquinnah Community Development Plan to examine open space and natural resource protection, affordable housing, and economic development. The Commission compiled GIS maps of natural data, affordable housing, current zoning and open space and provided maps of Aquinnah. Completion of this plan retains the Town's eligibility for some two dozen grant programs.
- **GIS Support:** In addition to extensive work as part of the Community Development Plans, the MVC updated the zoning and zoning overlay maps of the town and installed a GIS data collection CD in Town Hall.

Water Resources

- **Water Quality and Coastal Ponds:** Sampled water quality in Black Pond.
- **Committees:** MVC Staff participate in the Squibnocket Pond District Advisory Committee

Affordable Housing

- **EO418 Housing Certification:** MVC staff assisted the town in completing and receiving housing certification for FY2005 from the Department of Housing and Community Development, which makes Aquinnah eligible for competitive and non-competitive state grants.
- **Inventory:** The MVC updated the town's Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory and the Island-wide Affordable Housing Inventory
- **Community Development Plans:** Affordable Housing Strategies and Economic Development Profiles

Chilmark

Community Development

- **Community Development Planning (EO418):** The MVC acted as consultant to the Town in completing the Chilmark Community Development Plan to examine open space and natural resource protection, affordable housing, and economic development. The Commission compiled GIS maps of natural data, affordable housing, current zoning and open space and provided maps of Chilmark. Completion of this plan retains the Town's eligibility for some two dozen grant programs. As part of this planning process, the Commission prepared a GIS map of the community water system and other utilities in Menemsha that is linked to the assessor's information.
- **GIS Support:** In addition to extensive work as part of the Community Development Plans and Pictometry described above, the MVC updated the zoning and zoning overlay maps of the town and installed a GIS data collection CD in Town Hall.

Water Resources

- **Water Quality and Coastal Ponds:** Commission staff monitored the water table levels in 2 wells on a monthly basis and also sampled Chilmark Pond, Harlock's Pond and Bliss Pond.
- **Committees:** MVC staff participates in the Squibnocket Pond District Advisory Committee

Transportation

- **Trails Planning:** A long sought trail connection was secured that will link the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's Middle Road Sanctuary with Meeting House Road.

Affordable Housing

- **EO418 Housing Certification:** MVC staff assisted the town in completing and receiving housing certification for FY2005 from the Department of Housing and Community Development, which makes Chilmark eligible for competitive and non-competitive state grants.
- **Inventory:** The MVC updated the town's Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory and the Island-wide Affordable Housing Inventory
- **Community Development Plans:** Staff prepared affordable housing strategies and economic development profiles

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI Review:** One Development of Regional Impact in Chilmark was referred to the Commission in 2004 and was approved.

Edgartown

Community Development

- **Community Development Planning (EO418):** The MVC acted as consultant to the Town in completing the Edgartown Community Development Plan to examine open space and natural resource protection, affordable housing, and economic development. The Commission compiled GIS maps of natural data, affordable housing, current zoning and open space and provided maps of Edgartown. Completion of this plan retains the Town's eligibility for some two dozen grant programs.
- **Edgartown Master Plan:** Following up the Community Development Plan, staff continued to provide data, graphics and technical assistance to the Planning Board and plan committees
- **GIS Support:** In addition to extensive work as part of the Community Development Plans and Pictometry described above, the MVC updated the zoning and zoning overlay maps of the town and installed a GIS data collection CD in Town Hall.

Water Resources

- **Water Quality and Coastal Ponds:** Commission staff sampled Edgartown Great, Cape Pogue, Poucha and Sengekontacket ponds. They also monitored water table levels in four wells on a monthly basis and collected elevation data from Water Department observation wells to identify the relationship between the elevations of the water table in the two

sets of wells. MVC staff also ran a trial eelgrass-seeding project in two locations in Sengekontacket Pond to determine the feasibility of seeding stations to restore eelgrass beds.

- **Committees:** The MVC Water Resource Planner participates in the meetings of the Friends of Sengekontacket, the Edgartown Ponds Advisory Committee and the Vineyard Golf Club Review Committee

Coastal Management / Harbor Planning

- **Beach Management** MVC staff participated in discussions of development of a management plan for Joseph Sylvia State Beach.
- **Edgartown Harbor Plan:** MVC staff participated in review of proposed construction on the former Coal Wharf property (presently home of Mad Max).

Transportation

- **Traffic Data Collection:** MVC staff collected traffic counts at 9 different locations in Edgartown.
- **Edgartown Master Plan Update:** Staff participated in the various transportation sub-committees that are involved in the update of the Edgartown Master Plan.
- **Airport Master Plan:** MVC staff reviewed and provided comments to MEPA regarding proposed improvements to the Martha's Vineyard Airport, as proposed in an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) and a Notice of Project Change (NOPC).

- **Sengekontacket Pond Bridges:** MVC staff helped coordinate discussion of the proposal by MassHighway to replace the bridges over the inlets to Sengekontacket Pond, seeking designs consistent with local needs and desires.

Affordable Housing

- **EO418 Housing Certification:** MVC staff assisted the town in completing and receiving housing certification for FY2005 from the Department of Housing and Community Development, which makes Edgartown eligible for competitive and non-competitive state grants.
- **Inventory:** The MVC updated the town's Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory and the Island-wide Affordable Housing Inventory
- **Community Development Plans:** Affordable Housing Strategies and Economic Development Profiles

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI Review:** 7 Developments of Regional Impact in Edgartown were referred to the Commission in 2004; 5 were approved and 2 are outstanding. Pennywise Path, a major affordable housing project with 60 new affordable dwelling units, was reviewed and approved in 2004.
- **DCPC Review:** The Edgartown Planning Board proposed a number of amendments to expand the Island Road District and to amend the regulations for the Island Road, Special Places, Cape Poge, and Coastal Districts. The Commission held a public hearing, voted the amendment and voted conformance of the proposed regulations, with some comments. The only amendment to achieve two-thirds vote at Town Meeting was an amendment to the *Island Road District: Special Ways*, to allow crossing by special permit. The remainder were not adopted.

Oak Bluffs

Community Development

- **Community Development Planning (EO418):** The MVC acted as consultant to the Town in completing the Oak Bluffs Community Development Plan to examine open space and natural resource protection, affordable housing, and economic development. The Commission compiled GIS maps of natural data, affordable housing, current zoning and open space and provided maps of Oak Bluffs. Completion of this plan retains the Town's eligibility for some two dozen grant programs.
- **Open Space and Recreation Plan:** Following up from the Community Development Plan, staff provided data, graphics, and technical review to the Conservation Commission in completing its update of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- **GIS Support:** In addition to extensive work as part of the Community Development Plans and Pictometry described above, the MVC updated the zoning and zoning overlay maps of the town and installed a GIS data collection CD in Town Hall.

Water Resources

- **Water Quality and Coastal Ponds:** MVC staff conducted water sampling in Farm Pond, Sengekontacket Pond, Oak Bluffs Harbor, Upper Lagoon and Fresh Ponds. Staff assisted the Oak Bluffs Conservation Commission with the water resource section of the Open Space Plan. Staff ran a trial eelgrass-seeding project in

two locations in Sengekontacket Pond to determine the feasibility of seeding stations to restore eelgrass beds. Staff helped coordinate an 18-month assessment of the fresh water discharge flow from the Upper Lagoon Pond; when combined with test data this information will determine the amount of nutrients added to the Lagoon from the Upper pond. Staff monitored water table levels in two wells on a monthly basis.

- **Grant Assistance:** The MVC Water Resources Planner assisted the Oak Bluffs Shellfish Department with the preparation of two grant proposals to Coastal Zone Management. The first would evaluate the nitrogen isotope ratio in marine plants and animals to assess sources (acid rain, wastewater or fertilizer) of nitrogen in Sengekontacket, Lagoon and Tashmoo ponds. The second grant proposal would survey the extent of phragmites reed in Farm Pond as a first step toward restoring high water quality to that pond.

Coastal Management / Harbor Planning

- **Environmental Review:** Commission staff reviewed and provided comments to MEPA and DEP for numerous projects, including the proposed SSA terminal in Oak Bluffs.
- **Beach Management** MVC staff participated in discussions of development of a management plan for Joseph Sylvia State Beach.

Transportation

- **Traffic Data Collection:** MVC staff collected traffic counts at 13 different locations in Oak Bluffs
- **Sengekontacket Pond Bridges:** MVC staff helped coordinate discussion of the proposal by MassHighway to replace the bridges over the inlets to Sengekontacket Pond, inviting interested parties to a roundtable discussion of how to proceed with the project in a manner that would result in bridges consistent with local needs and desires.
- **Drawbridge Reconstruction:** Worked with towns of Tisbury and Oak Bluffs, as well as other groups and individuals, to formulate the Island's concerns and to coordinate with MassHighway.
- **Roundabout at Blinker:** Participated in the Town's effort and analysis to proceed with the roundabout.

Affordable Housing

- **EO418 Housing Certification:** MVC staff assisted the town in completing and receiving housing certification for FY2005 from the Department of Housing and

Community Development, which makes Oak Bluffs eligible for competitive and non-competitive state grants.

- **Inventory:** The MVC updated the town's Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory and the Island-wide Affordable Housing Inventory
- **Community Development Plans:** Affordable Housing Strategies and Economic Development Profiles

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI Review:** The Commission reviewed 4 Developments of Regional Impact in Oak Bluffs in 2004; 1 was approved, 1 denied and 2 are still in process.
- **DCPC Review:** The Town of Oak Bluffs proposed amendment to the Copeland Plan District to include the North Bluff area. The Commission and the Town Meeting voted to make the amendment.

Tisbury

Community Development

- **Community Development Planning (EO418):** The MVC acted as consultant to the Town in completing the Tisbury Community Development Plan to examine open space and natural resource protection, affordable housing, and economic development. The Commission compiled GIS maps of natural data, affordable housing, current zoning and open space and provided maps of Tisbury. Completion of this plan retains the Town's eligibility for some two dozen grant programs. .
- **Tisbury Master Plan:** staff provided technical assistance with land use and transportation planning as part of the Planning Board's effort to develop the Town's first Master Plan.
- **GIS Support:** In addition to extensive work as part of the Community Development Plans and Pictometry described above, the MVC updated the zoning and zoning overlay maps of the town and installed a GIS data collection CD in Town Hall.

Water Resources

- **Water Quality and Coastal Ponds:** Commission staff sampled Lagoon and Tashmoo Ponds, and Upper Tashmoo Pond and helped coordinate an 18-month assessment of the discharge flow from the Upper Tashmoo and Upper Lagoon Pond. When combined with test data, this information will determine the amount of nutrients added to Tashmoo and Lagoon

from these fresh water resources. Staff also monitored water table levels in one well on a monthly basis.

- **Committees:** The Water Resource Planner assisted the Oak Bluffs Shellfish Department with the preparation of grant proposals to Coastal Zone Management to evaluate the nitrogen isotope ratio to assess sources of nitrogen in Sengekontacket, Lagoon and Tashmoo ponds.

Transportation

- **Drawbridge Reconstruction:** The Commission staff worked with the towns of Tisbury and Oak Bluffs, as well as other groups and individuals, to formulate the Island's concerns and to coordinate with MassHighway.
- **Traffic Counts:** MVC Staff collected traffic counts at 9 different locations in town
- **Tisbury Connector Road Study:** MVC staff studied the feasibility of the Planning Board's proposal to build a system of connector roads connecting Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road with State Road. Staff conducted a major traffic destination survey during August at the Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road and State Road intersection, which provided valuable data to assess alternative traffic plans.

Affordable Housing

- **EO418 Housing Certification:** MVC staff assisted the town in completing and receiving housing certification for FY2005 from the Department of Housing and Community Development, which makes

Tisbury eligible for competitive and non-competitive state grants.

- **Inventory:** The MVC updated the town's Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory and the Island-wide Affordable Housing Inventory
- **Community Development Plans:** Staff prepared Affordable Housing Strategies and Economic Development Profiles of Tisbury.

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI Review:** 11 Developments of Regional Impact in Tisbury were referred to the Commission in 2004; 8 were approved and 3 are outstanding.

West Tisbury

Community Development

- **Community Development Planning (EO418):** The MVC acted as consultant to the Town in completing the West Tisbury Community Development Plan to examine open space and natural resource protection, affordable housing, and economic development. The Commission compiled GIS maps of natural data, affordable housing, current zoning and open space and provided maps of West Tisbury. Completion of this plan retains the Town's eligibility for some two dozen grant programs.
- **Flatlands:** Staff facilitated discussions by town officials exploring the potential aggregation of land for affordable housing and other possible uses. Assistance included providing mapping of the area and information on available funding sources for conducting feasibility studies.
- **GIS Support:** In addition to extensive work as part of the Community Development Plans and Pictometry described above, the MVC updated the zoning and zoning overlay maps of the town and installed a GIS data collection CD in Town Hall.

Water Resources

- **Water Quality and Coastal Ponds:** The MVC monitored the water table levels in 3 wells on a monthly basis. The MVC also sampled Tisbury Great Pond, Mill Pond, Seth's Pond, Old House and Priester's ponds
- **Committees:** The MVC Water Resources Planner participated in the Tisbury Great Pond Riparian Owners

Association meetings to discuss ongoing water sampling and the Mass. Estuaries Project.

Coastal Management / Harbor Planning

- **Environmental Review:** Commission staff reviewed and provided comments to MEPA regarding the proposed improvements at the Martha's Vineyard Airport

Transportation

- **Traffic Data Collection:** MVC staff Collected traffic counts at 6 different locations in West Tisbury

Affordable Housing

- **EO418 Housing Certification:** MVC staff assisted the town in completing and receiving housing certification for FY2005 from the Department of Housing and Community Development, which makes West Tisbury eligible for competitive and non-competitive state grants.
- **Inventory:** The MVC updated the town's Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory and the Island-wide Affordable Housing Inventory

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI Review:** Four Developments of Regional Impact in West Tisbury were reviewed by the Commission in 2004 and all were approved.

12. TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Fiscal 2004 was a solid year in terms of revenue and containment of expenses. On a very positive note, we received relief from our growing legal expenses with the resolution of the Southern Woodlands and its related four lawsuits. This has allowed us to greatly reduce our legal liabilities and strengthened our financial position. We were awarded a significant Community Development grant from the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and the Department of Housing and Community Development, which provided beneficial operational funding.

The Commission also received grants/contracts from other Massachusetts and local agencies including the Massachusetts Highway Department, Coastal Zone Management Department, Department of Environmental Protection, the Edey Foundation and the MV Shellfish Group.

In addition, the Martha's Vineyard Commission annual audit by an independent auditor showed fiscal soundness with no negative findings.

Jane A. Greene
Clerk/Treasurer

Summary Financial Statements FY2003 and 2004

	Fiscal Year 2003	Fiscal Year 2004
Revenue		
Federal, State, Contracts	\$ 254,775.00	\$496,894.00
Local Assessments	\$ 513,268.00	\$602,023.00
Other Income	\$ 85,259.00	\$ 86,870.00
Total Revenue	\$ 853,302.00	\$1,185,787.00
Expenses		
	\$ 905,665.00	\$1,205,543.00
Balance		
	\$ (52,353.00)	\$ (19,756.00)

Financial Statements
July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004

Income	
Contract Income	496,894.00
<hr/>	
MVC Local	
Aerials/Prints/Copies/Tapes/Adv	4,980.00
Assessments	602,023.00
DCPC Fees	0.00
DRI Fees	34,406.00
Interest	2,067.00
Map Donations	18,001.00
Miscellaneous Income	15,980.00
Salary Reimbursement - BV	11,436.00
<hr/>	
Total MVC Local	
Total Income	\$1,185,787.00

Expenses	
Advertising/Communications	16,195.00
Audit Expenses	6,600.00
Contractual	55,472.00
DCRS Accrual Match	75,413.00
Depreciation	9,318.00
DET	932.00
Dues/Subscriptions, Publications	8,779.00
Equipment	32,553.00
Insurance	10,425.00
Interest Expense	25,956.00
Legal Fees	327,515.00
Maintenance	4,455.00
Payroll Expenses	568,820.00
Postage	4,436.00
Printing	7,710.00
Registry Fees	1,275.00
Rent	3,360.00
Supplies	18,450.00
Travel/Conference	9,397.00
Utilities	10,269.00
Total Expenses	\$1,205,543.00
Balance	\$ (19,756.00)

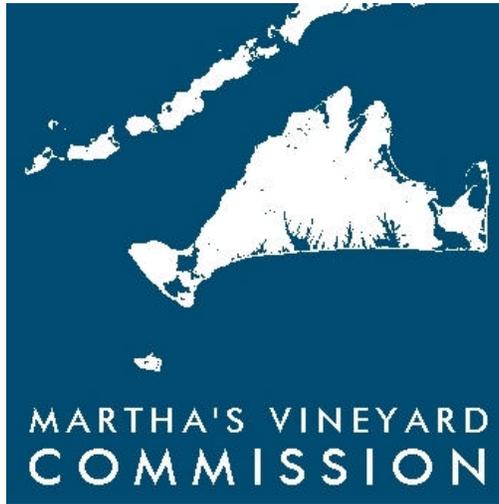
12. COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF 2004

Commission Members

Aquinnah Elected	Megan Ottens-Sargent,
Aquinnah Appointed	Katherine Newman
Chilmark Elected	Douglas E. Sederholm
Chilmark Appointed	Jane A. Greene, <i>Clerk-Treasurer</i>
Edgartown Elected	James Athearn, <i>Chairman</i>
	Christina Brown
Edgartown Appointed	Linda Dewitt
Oak Bluffs Elected	Richard J. Toole
Oak Bluffs Appointed	John Breckenridge
Tisbury Elected	John Best
Tisbury Appointed	Nathaniel J. Orleans
West Tisbury Elected	Linda Sibley, <i>Vice-Chair</i>
	Andrew Woodruff
West Tisbury Appointed	Robert E. Schwartz
County Commission Appointed	Paul A. Strauss
Governor's Appointees	vacant

Staff

Executive Director	Mark London
Administrator	Jeffrey C. Wooden
Secretary	Jackie Campbell (Jan-Oct)
Senior Planner	William Veno
Affordable Housing, Economic Development	Christine Flynn
DRI Coordinator, Planner	Paul H. Foley
GIS Specialist	Christine Seidel
Transportation Planner	Srinivas Sattoor
Coastal Planner, DCPC Coordinator	Jo-Ann Taylor
Water Resources Planner	William Wilcox



MARTHA'S VINEYARD COMMISSION

BOX 1447, OAK BLUFFS, MASSACHUSETTS, 02557

508-693-3453, FAX 508-693-7894

INFO@MVCOMMISSION.ORG WWW.MVCOMMISSION.ORG