



## Martha's Vineyard Commission Federal Fiscal Year 2016 – Annual Report

The Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC or Commission) is the Regional Planning agency for Dukes County and offers planning services to the Island's six (6) towns and the county. The Commission's enabling legislation also allows the towns of Martha's Vineyard to adopt special regulations targeting Districts of Critical Planning Concern (DCPC) and requires the Commission to review Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) on the Vineyard. The year 2016 was a demanding one for The Martha's Vineyard Commission. Along with completing reviews and decisions on an increasing number of projects; large scale planning efforts were also at the forefront.

The Commission's major planning focus for 2016 centered on the control and removal of nitrogen from island great ponds and the provision of housing for island residents. The Commission also considered important planning issues such as the demolition of structures over 100-years old, review and update of the DRI checklist, the development of an island wide economic program, the programming of transportation projects, and the development of a comprehensive demographic data base.

The Martha's Vineyard Commission is made up of 21 Commissioners.

- Nine (9) are elected by Vineyard voters in Island-wide elections held every two years,
- Six (6) are appointed on an annual basis by the boards of selectmen of the towns on Martha's Vineyard,
- One (1) is appointed on an annual basis by the Dukes County Commission,
- Five (5) are appointed by the Governor or member of the cabinet, four of whom do not vote on DRIs or DCPCs. The Governor's alternate has full voting power on all MVC matters.

The Commission is supported with a professional staff of ten. More detail is provided below and is available on the Commission's website: [www.mvcommission.org](http://www.mvcommission.org).

## COMMISSION FOCUS 2016

The following items represent major focuses of the Commission during 2016.

### **DRI Checklist Review**

In 2016, the Commission completed its biennial evaluation of the standards and criteria for what developments should trigger review by the Commission as DRI's – commonly called the DRI Checklist. A background report was developed that reviewed historical DRI records and quantified DRI decisions by town and by type. Meetings were held with input from town officials as well as business people, non-government organizations, and residents. The final policy revision was consistent with recent adjustments to increase the thresholds before most commercial developments are considered as DRIs and provided a method for towns to handle development reviews in commercial areas as well as eliminating unclear references and providing more clarity in other areas. The Commission adopted the changes in August and is awaiting certification from the Commonwealth.

### **The Removal of Nitrogen from Island Ponds**

The health of island ponds was a continuing focus of the MVC throughout 2016. The following actions represent MVC actions in this area:

**Solutions Conference** – the Commission organized and sponsored a conference in May that focused on efforts to remove nitrogen to improve water quality. Presentations were made on several technologies with State leaders such as George Huefelder of the Massachusetts Alternative Septic System Testing Center, Dr. Brian Howes of the UMass School for Marine Science and Technology (SMAST) and, Robert Zimmerman of Kohler Inc., as well as other experts offering explanation of the strengths and status of the various nitrogen removal technologies.

**Testing** – Commission staff conducted testing in 14 ponds on the island in multiple locations in each pond. Samples were collected that demonstrated nitrogen content, pond visibility, temperature, and other indicators. This testing was conducted in the same locations and manner that the Massachusetts Estuaries Program utilized so that results could be compared. A comprehensive report was completed in early 2017 that detailed the results of the testing and evaluate the current trends for each pond.

**Water Quality Policy** - A wastewater subcommittee was established and began evaluating the MVC's ten-year-old DRI water quality policy. The committee evaluated data results, technologies, and recent DRI approvals. The subcommittee is in the process of developing their report to the full commission with recommendations for amendment of the policy.

### **Provision of Housing**

A second major focus of 2016 was the continuing effort to address the island's housing needs. The Commission working with the All Island Planning Boards, obtained funding to enable the towns to collectively hire consultants to assist them in individually developing Housing Production Plans, or HPP, that quantify types of housing units needed for each town and their potential general locations. A general scope of work was designed to permit each town to consider and complete a HPP that reflected their specific needs and focus. From September to December, each town held a series of workshops assessing town housing needs, developing housing goals and policies, and identifying implementation methods particular to each Town.

The HPP's are scheduled to be completed in early 2017. The project was funded by the Commission and the State Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Reports and background documents are found at [www.mvcommission.org/housing-production-plan](http://www.mvcommission.org/housing-production-plan).

### **Development of DRI Demolition Policy**

MVC Staff researched and produced a report to aid DRI review of proposed demolition of historical buildings. The guide establishes standards to determine whether a structure proposed for demolition merits protection based upon the structure's history, condition, architecture, location, and other factors. A Commission subcommittee on demolition reviewed the report, made adjustments and recommended approval to the full Commission. In early 2017 the Commission considered adopting a policy that establishes a process and standards for Commission review of proposed demolition to referred properties.

### **Development of an Island Statistical Profile**

Staff developed a statistical profile of the island with focus on population, housing growth, economic condition, jobs, and other metrics. The report not only considered current statistics but also evaluated trends and other analysis. An initial presentation was made in October to the Chamber of Commerce. The MVC will expand upon this profile annually.

### **Opening of the Lagoon Pond Drawbridge**

For more than a decade, the Commission has been involved in the planning and construction of the Lagoon Pond Drawbridge. In August 2016, the Bridge was completed and opened for passage. Early in the process, MVC staff, Vineyard public officials and stakeholder groups fashioned the Lagoon Pond Drawbridge Committee to provide a unified voice in working with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and its consultant engineers. Because of regular communications through the committee, the community could raise issues during the planning and engineering process that ultimately resulted the bridge including a Shared Use Path ("SUP") as part of a continuous SUP between Tisbury and Oak Bluffs, and in walkways around and underneath both ends of the bridge that expand public access to the water.

### **Representative Developments of Regional Impact (DRI)**

The following summaries represent illustrative applications that were decided by the Commission in 2016.

**Squibnocket Beach (Chilmark)** - Project involved two, interdependent applications to address an eroding shoreline that the Commission reviewed concurrently and approved. A subdivision association sought to relocate its sole access to a new causeway/bridge inland. The Town sought to relocate inland of the Squibnocket Town Beach parking lot, which the subdivision's existing access bisected. In addition to the projects retreating from an eroding beach, the fortification of the existing parking lot/access will be removed to return the shoreline to a natural state.

**OB Water Solar (Oak Bluffs)** -- The Oak Bluffs Water District proposed to allow Blue Wave Capital to construct a 1.46 MW solar farm on District property containing three public supply water wells between the State Forest and Goodales Construction. A portion of the electricity generated would go to reducing the District's energy costs. A 10.37-acre area between two wells would be cleared of trees. The Commission took extensive testimony regarding the merits of placing the facility on a natural forested area and ultimately denied the application finding that, although worthy in reducing taxpayer utility costs and generating clean energy, the project should be located in an alternative location where the land is

already disturbed.

**Dias Mixed Use (Tisbury)** - Dias Construction proposed construction of a 25,200 sf 3-story warehouse building with 2 studio apartments and a showroom on a steeply sloped parcel fronting High Point Lane. The building would house a wholesale lumber business and be two stories facing High Point Lane and the attached three-story tall (35') warehouse behind would extend downward to a lower level of the site. The major issue was access as the proposal initially included an access driveway that cut through the adjacent Island Miniature Golf site. The Commission was involved in negotiating a solution whereby a land swap between owners resulted in all traffic accessing the site from High Point Lane and the access affecting the mini golf course not being necessary.

**Wavelengths (Edgartown)** - The application requested approval of modifications to a building previously approved as a DRI but that had already been built in a manner differing from the MVC approval. The Commission heard testimony and determined that the applicant had acted without authorization and had subsequently accepted a dozen or so modifications suggested by the Edgartown Planning Board. Ultimately, the Commission found that while the unsanctioned changes to the building negatively affected the massing of the structure, the changes, as moderated by the Edgartown Planning Board, were not significant enough to require the applicant remove the modifications. However, in approving the application, the Commission left leeway for the Edgartown Planning Board to work out additional details with the applicant without necessitating the applicant return, again, to the Commission.

**Phillips Hardware and Lampost (Oak Bluffs)** -- The Commission considered two proposals for redevelopment on Circuit Avenue. Phillips Hardware proposed to demolish the existing one- and three-story building to be replaced by a mixed-use three-story building designed in the character of the 1800s Inn on that site. The hardware store and another retail space will remain on the first floor, with residential accommodations above. The Lampost proposed the conversion and expansion of upper floors from night club space to employee housing. The Commission approved both projects with conditions.

**Lagoon Ridge (Oak Bluffs)** -- The Commission considered a Form C Subdivision proposed for 24 lots. As the development was located within the impaired Lagoon Pond watershed, much of the discussion centered on how nitrogen from wastewater would be addressed. The developer proposed a community-based wastewater treatment system where all but four homes were connected. In the end, the MVC approved the application but required a bond to ensure that the proposed wastewater system can control the site generated wastewater.

### **Mapping and Graphics**

The MVC continues to be the place of record for maps and other geographic data. MVC staff provided zoning, property, natural resources, and other graphics to each town as well as non-profits and private entities in 2016. The Commission also provides maps and other data to law enforcement agencies when requested.

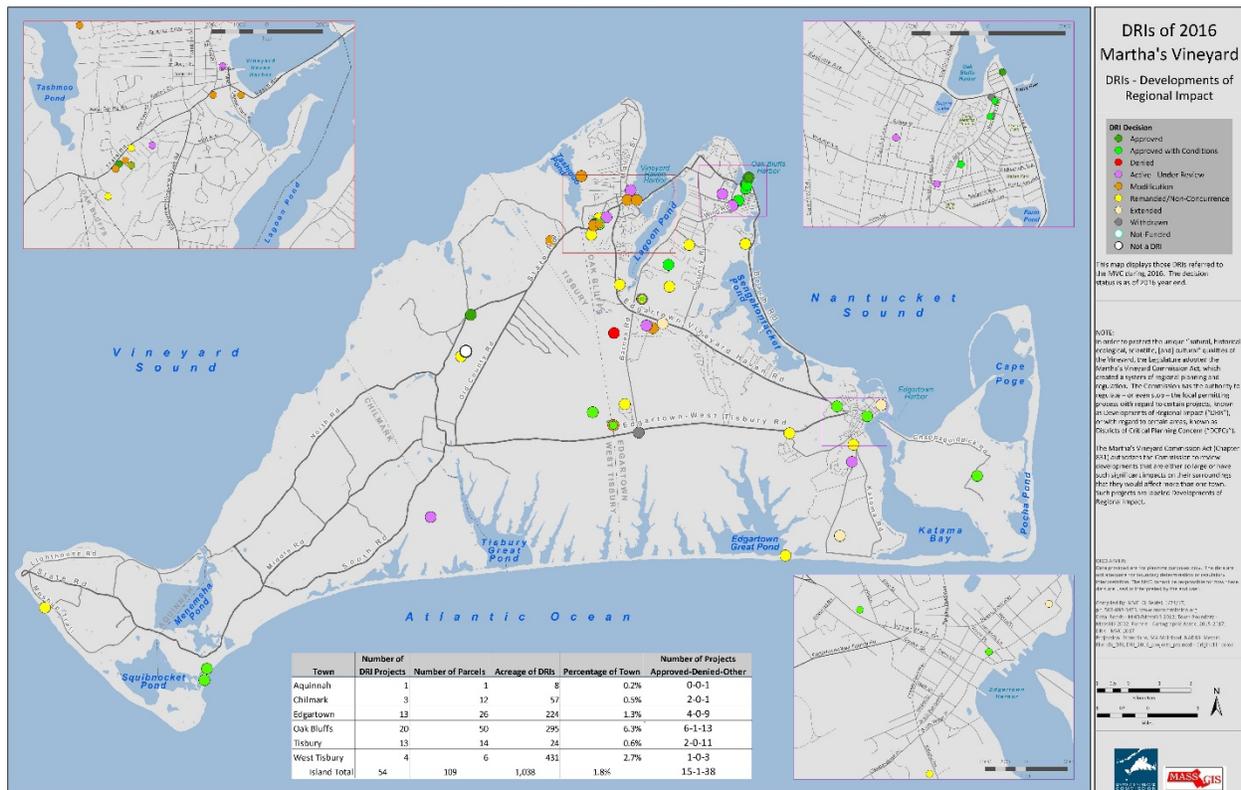
**Finances:** The Commission's FY2016 income was \$1,436,409, of which 70.5% came from town assessments, 26.6% from grants and contracts, and 2.9% from other sources. Expenses were \$1,504,182 of which 55.4% was for salaries, 22.4% for salary-related costs, 5.6% for legal fees, and 16.6% for other expenses. The annual audit by an independent auditor showed fiscal soundness. The budget and audited financial statements are on the Commission website.

## ALL ISLAND EFFORTS

The Commission reviews referred Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) applications to determine compliance with the Commission policies and the consideration of benefits and detriments as established in Chapter 831.

### Projects Reviewed:

In 2016, **54** projects were referred to the MVC for review through the DRI process. These projects can be classified as follows: **14** were full DRI's reviewed with public hearings that were approved with conditions; one (**1**) was a full DRI reviewed with public hearings that was denied; **14** were minor modifications of existing DRI's that were approved and remanded back to their towns without a DRI public hearing review; **9** were projects referred to the MVC for concurrence review that were sent back to their towns without DRI public hearing review; **2** were previously approved DRI's returning to LUPC for approval of their landscape plan; **3** projects were withdrawn before a decision was made; **7** are either on hold at the applicant's request or still under review; three (**3**) previously approved DRI's were granted extensions; and one project that was referred did not trigger DRI review.



## Housing, Community and Economic Development

- **Housing Plans** – specific information on the development of Housing Production Plans is discussed above.
- **Downtown Revitalization and Community Planning:** MVC Staff continued to provide technical assistance to complete the *Oak Bluffs Downtown Streetscape Master Plan Phase I* and will continue to assist the town with Phase II. The Town of Tisbury's ongoing Visioning effort included mapping and other background information. Staff provided technical assistance and support to Aquinnah and

Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head/Aquinnah to apply for and receive a state designated Cultural District. The Aquinnah Circle Cultural District is the first joint cultural district in the nation to include a municipality and Native American Tribe.

- **Gosnold Long-Range Planning:** The MVC staff continued to work with the Town of Gosnold Selectman and staff on several projects including improvement of the Towns internet/data capability, development of a specific personnel and compensation policy, housing, and transportation grants.
- **Economic Development:** Review of the State's Economic Development & Emerging Technologies Bill: MVC Staff provided towns and county a breakdown of One Billion Dollars in capital spending for various state programs. The Economic Development Bill is aimed at supporting initiatives focused on job creation, workforce development, and infrastructure projects while staff highlighted several key funding appropriations that could benefit Martha's Vineyard.
- **State of the State Economy Presentation by Dr. Michael Goodman.** The Commission organized and sponsored this Presentation in partnership with the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority and MV Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Michael Goodman is Professor of Public Policy, Executive Director of the Public Policy Center, and Acting Chair of the Department of Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. Dr. Goodman offered his perspective on the current condition of and prospects for the Massachusetts economy during a period of considerable economic and political uncertainty. His talk highlighted the state's recent economic performance, assessed the major threats to our economic outlook, and identified the major challenges that are weighing heavily on the prosperity of our people and major institutions with special attention to the implications for Martha's Vineyard and the larger Cape and Islands region.
- **ArtsMV: Fifth Annual Meeting: Best Practices Planning Session** with the some of the following presenters:
  - Anita Walker, Executive Director Mass Cultural Council
  - Helena Fruscio, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology and Director of the Creative Economy
  - Maria Marasco, Regional Director, Massachusetts Office of Business Development
    - The Commission assisted *October's Fall for the Arts* and *Spring for the Arts marketing campaigns*. MVC Staff updated economic impacts such as jobs, wages, and business within the Creative Economy.
    - MVC Staff is currently assisting efforts in Oak Bluffs and Edgartown to create a state designated Cultural District.
  - Additional MVC Sponsored Webinars and Workshops:
    - South East Economic Development Corporation (SEED) and Small Business Administration (SBA): Entrepreneurial and Business Workshops with over 25 Participants.
    - Cape Light Compact: Three Year Plan
    - USDA Rural Development Office: Economic Development Webinar
    - TA Connect Webinars:
      - Site Readiness Programs
      - Placemaking
      - Creative Economy, Innovation, & Technology
      - District Management Strategies for Downtowns
  - Blue Economy: MVC supported Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and MV Chamber of Commerce to secure letters of support from Island towns for state grant and attended several listening sessions
  - The MVC provides the towns, business community and public with economic and

demographic information from federal and state sources while also responding to more than 400 requests for information.

### **GIS:**

The MVC's cartography and spatial data staff provides spatial analysis and cartographic production to aid MVC and town planning efforts, including custom cartographic services to towns, organizations, and individuals.

- **Data Updates and Distribution:** The MVC cartography staff maintains and continuously updates a county-wide GIS (Geographic Information System) spatial data warehouse. The MVC uses the GIS to provide data to towns, consulting groups working on town projects, academics conducting research, state agencies, and local residents. The cartography staff produced a series of town maps displaying frequently requested data such as zoning, overlay zoning, watershed boundaries, roads, flood zones, and parcels (available in the MVC website Map Library).
- **GIS/Mapping Software Installation, Training, and Support:** MVC staff provides technical support for the County's Island-wide GIS software contract, giving all Island towns and the MVC unlimited GIS software licensing at a fixed fee. Technical support to towns included software installs, on-site training, twice-monthly GIS how-to sessions, and technical support via phone and email.
- **Assistance to MVC Planning Projects and Island-Wide Efforts:** In collaboration with the Island's Conservation Partnership and with information-sharing and feedback from many conservation stakeholders, the cartography staff updated and refined its trails and conservation land database, which is vital to multiple planning efforts. It also produced watershed maps for the Water Alliance's Living Local exhibit and Watershed Public Awareness Project in Island libraries.

### **Coastal Resources**

- **Climate Change Adaptation:** MVC continued technical work and outreach on impacts of sea-level rise and climate change, and related mitigation strategies. The main challenge here is preparing to adapt to coming changes with vulnerability assessments and mitigation strategies to improve the Island's resiliency.
- **Hazard Management:** The *Dukes County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* is updated every five years to keep towns eligible for FEMA funding of mitigation measures. The 2015 edition, prepared by the MVC, was approved by MEMA and FEMA, and was adopted by each town's Board of Selectmen and certified by the Commonwealth in 2016. The plan includes management tools as well as keeping the towns eligible for federal funding of mitigation projects. Mitigation measures were highlighted and discussed in various planning sessions.
- **FEMA:** MVC staff coordinated with FEMA to hold Q and A sessions with regulators and professionals on the updated NFIP flood maps. FEMA personnel came in person to speak with the users.
- **CRS:** MVC staff coordinated with two towns interested in pursuing Community Rating System (CRS) rating to potentially lower flood insurance premiums. Neither town chose to pursue the relief further.
- **Massachusetts Ocean Management Plan:** The MVC Coastal Planner is the Governor's appointed representative for the MVC on the Massachusetts Ocean Advisory Commission. In 2016, the group participated in development and review of the Northeast Ocean Plan.
- **Martha's Vineyard Wind Energy Area:** The MVC, towns, and Tribe kept in close contact with the 2 leaseholders for wind development south of Martha's Vineyard. Various geophysical surveys were conducted in 2016.

## **Transportation**

The MVC provides transportation planning for the Vineyard, in association with the Towns, Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority, Martha's Vineyard Airport, Steamship Authority, public, and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). MassDOT contracts for planning in the region and provides approximately \$300,000 to the MVC budget for transportation planning and related services such as mapping.

**Joint Transportation Committee:** The Commission facilitates meetings of the JTC, made up of appointees from each town, the County, Vineyard Transit Authority (VTA), MVC Staff, and the Airport and MassDOT as Ex-Officio Members, to coordinate Island transportation planning. In 2016, the JTC met to formulate, discuss, release for public comment, and approve the certification documents required to continue to qualify for federal and state funding for transportation projects in the region. The certification documents developed in 2016 included the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Martha's Vineyard Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FFY 2017-2021. The UPWP and TIP are produced annually on Martha's Vineyard. In addition, the Martha's Vineyard Public Participation Plan (PPP) was developed to provide an overview of transportation planning and outline the public process.

- **Martha's Vineyard Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** The TIP is produced annually on Martha's Vineyard through the JTC and includes federal aid projects to implement within available federal and state funds. In Federal Fiscal Year 2016, \$14,095,057.20 in federal funds were obligated for Martha's Vineyard. **The 2016 update on Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Projects:**

### **Korean and Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Bridge**

Construction was completed on the *Lagoon Pond Drawbridge in Tisbury* project, and the MassDOT Chief Executive Officer and Secretary Stephanie Pollack participated with the Veterans, Wampanoag Tribe, and communities in the ribbon cutting ceremony on Thursday, November 10, 2016, to officially dedicate the *Korean and Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Bridge*.

### **Bus Purchases**

The 2016 TIP year funding was used for Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority (VTA) bus purchases. The transfer of funds for the VTA bus purchases was toward the purchase of vehicles in 2016 for a total estimated cost of \$1,752,902, with \$432,902 in CMAQ from the TIP, and the remaining \$1,320,000 in state and federal rural capital assistance funds.

### **Bicycle-Pedestrian Network Improvements**

Two links in the island planned shared use path (SUP) network are under design, both are along *Beach Road, one section in Tisbury and the other begins at the Lagoon Pond Bridge heading into Oak Bluffs* to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities. MVC Staff continues planning support toward resurfacing of the Correllus State Forest paths with the Department of Conservation Resources, MassDOT, and the Towns.

- **Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC):** MVC staffs the BPAC, an advisory committee to the JTC and the wider community on bicycling and pedestrian matters. The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) members continued efforts and support toward improved facilitation of bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements in their respective towns.
- **Complete Streets:** MVC Senior Transportation Planner with Baystate Roads Program organized a MassDOT Complete Streets Program workshop on Martha's Vineyard in March 2016, held in Oak Bluffs. All six towns attended as the first step in the MassDOT Complete Streets Program. Tisbury

and West Tisbury are developing and submitting complete street policies to MassDOT for review and approval. Provided updated complete streets program information in the fall.

- **Trails Planning:** A portion of the MVC Senior Planner's time is contracted by the Land Bank to work with towns and landowners to protect and extend the Island's trail network.
- **Data Collection:** During 2016, MVC staff conducted automatic traffic recording counts at various locations, and performed Turning Movement Counts at some intersections. MVC Senior Transportation Planner and a University of Connecticut intern used the Global Positioning System (GPS) unit and iPad to geocode and photograph a two-mile section of the state forest paths for the Department of Conservation and Recreation. A map package of the results was developed by MVC GIS Coordinator. Summer interns continued to collect parking observation data in downtown Oak Bluffs and Vineyard Haven.
- **Increased Engineering Capacity** – MCV staff worked with the members of the JTC to develop programs and funding opportunities for the hiring and work of an engineer to work with the JTC and towns to design, review and develop project plans for transportation projects.

### Water Quality

- **Water Testing, Solutions, and Water Policy** projects are discussed above.
- **Water Alliance and Associations:** The MVC Water Planner is an active participant in the Martha's Vineyard Water Alliance, which meets monthly in the MVC offices, and all Island pond advisory committees.
- **Groundwater monitoring:** In conjunction with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) staff monthly measures and maintains database of groundwater elevation at nine well-sites around the island.

### Collaboration

The Commission facilitated collaboration on many fronts.

- **Education and Training:** The Commission hosted courses and information sessions on topics of interest to town officials, the business community, and members of the general public. Two workshops from the Citizen Planning Training Collaborative tailored for planning board and zoning board members were offered in the fall: *Writing Reasonable and Defensible Decisions* and *How to Create a Master Plan and Plan with Community Support*.
- **Island Collaboration:** The MVC facilitates meetings of town boards and other organizations to foster exchange of information and collaboration, such as the Joint Affordable Housing Group and the Island Conservation Commissions. Staff also attends and presents information to the quarterly meetings of the All Island Planning Boards. Staff support to an effort initiated by the All-Island Selectmen to improve taxi regulations, which produced a draft set of uniform regulations for circulation and comment in the beginning of 2017.
- **Inter-regional Collaboration:**
  - Staff participated in a series of on-line sessions with other Regional Planning Agencies and the MA Department of Public Health exploring the health implications of transportation and development. This included exploration of state mechanisms for aiding localities to identify and address health issues in their evaluations of development proposals.
  - The MVC is one of eight regional planning agencies represented on a 15-member Rural

Policy Advisory Commission within the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development. The Commission is charged with making recommendations over a four-year period to enhance the economic vitality of the Commonwealth's rural communities and advance the health and well-being of its rural residents. Senior Planner Bill Veno is the appointed member and is on the commission's infrastructure subcommittee

- **Statewide Workforce Housing Projections:** MVC Staff in collaboration with MAPC, Cape Cod Commission, and Nantucket Planning & Economic Development Commission on Workforce Housing and Population Projections. Christine Flynn and Bill Veno have participated in this process
- **MARPA.** The Commission is a member of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Associations (MARPA). The thirteen Massachusetts regional planning agencies that form MARPA are advisory bodies to member communities, private business groups, and state and federal governments. MVC staff meets monthly with other members of the MARPA to discuss legislation and funding programs with senior Commonwealth officials, and to collaborate on many fronts.

### SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES FOR CHILMARK

In addition to the efforts described above, the MVC undertook the following activities in the Town of Chilmark.

#### Coastal, Ocean, and Hazard Planning:

#### Regulatory Activities

- **MEPA** - MVC staff participated in the MEPA review of remediation proposed by Sheriff's Meadow for the Mill Brook headwaters.

#### Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- Notified and help draft letter from the Chilmark Selectmen regarding proposed policy changes to FY 2017 CDBG Funding.
- MVC Staff worked with the Chilmark's Housing Committee and Planning Board to review and support island-wide uniform zoning definitions for Affordable and Community Housing and Affirmative Fair Housing Practices.

MVC Staff worked with The Resource Inc. (TRI) to apply for an Island-wide Community Preservation Act Application that would create an Island-wide Interest Free Housing Loan Program

#### Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** The MVC GIS staff provided maps for the Town's Housing Committee and the Menemsha Area Planning Committee. The GIS staff also GPS'd roadside features in the Beetlebung area as well as created maps of this area to assist the Walking Path Committee. In early 2016, the GIS staff delivered software support by installing the ArcMap and Query Manager mapping software to several workstations in Town Hall.

## Transportation

- **Martha's Vineyard Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** The TIP is produced annually on Martha's Vineyard through the JTC and includes federal aid projects to implement within available federal and state funds. In Federal Fiscal Year 2016, \$14,095,057.20 in federal funds were obligated for Martha's Vineyard.
- **Planning:** MVC Senior Transportation Planner with Baystate Roads Program organized a MassDOT Complete Streets Program workshop on Martha's Vineyard in March 2016. Provided updated complete streets program information in the fall.

**Water Quality:** The Commission continued its scientific and community work helping to protect the Vineyard's water quality and especially our threatened coastal ponds.

- **Chilmark Pond:** Staff conducted water sampling and on-station field data collection in Chilmark Pond to assess changes in nitrogen concentration and salinity. Staff assisted Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group with data collection and field work for the Phragmites harvest study as a potential nitrogen mitigation strategy.
- **Menemsha, Squibnocket, and Nashaquitsa Ponds:** MVC staff assisted SMAST staff with placement, deployment, and collection of tide gauges to complete MEP data collection for the Menemsha-Squibnocket-Nashaquitsa system.
- **Mill Brook:** MVC staff collected stormwater dry weather samples and stream flow data of the Mill Brook system as part of the Mill Brook Watershed study.
- **Community Assistance:** The MVC Water Resource Planner serves as technical advisor to the Mill Brook Watershed Committee and Chilmark Pond Owners. Staff has assisted visiting researchers in sample collection and site review.

## Collaboration

- **Facilitated Menemsha Circulation Meeting:** At the request of the Town Administrator, staff acted as facilitator to a public visioning meeting to garner ideas regarding the vehicle and pedestrian circulation in Menemsha.
- Participating in an ad hoc **Town Paths Committee** chaired by Selectman Malkin which is reexamining options for improving walking conditions in the Beetlebung Corner area of town.

## Regulatory Activities

In 2016, three (**3**) projects in Chilmark were reviewed in some manner by the MVC through the DRI process. These projects can be classified as follows:

- Two (**2**) were full DRI's reviewed with public hearings that were approved with conditions;
- One (**1**) project was referred and is still under review at year's end.

## SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES FOR EDGARTOWN

In addition to the efforts described above, the MVC undertook the following activities in the Town of Edgartown.

### Coastal, Ocean, and Hazard Planning:

- **Edgartown Dredge Plan:** MVC Staff is working with the Edgartown Dredge Committee to update the Towns Dredging plan and State permit.
- **Wetlands Vulnerability and Adaptation:** MVC Staff continued assessing the vulnerability of wetlands to the impacts of climate change, particularly inundation. MVC Staff and others are prioritizing vulnerable wetlands to target for protection and continued assessment, and continued a program of sophisticated wetland elevation monitoring to assess wetlands' abilities to grow in height as sea level rises. Measurements were recorded at the first monitoring station at Felix Neck, hosted by Mass Audubon with funding from the Friends of Sengekontacket and Edey Foundation.

### Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- **Grants:** MVC staff worked with the Town's consultant to provide supplemental materials and coordinated Public Hearing for FY 2016 CDBG Grant Application for approximately \$900,000 which was awarded in July 2016. Notified and help draft letter from the Edgartown Selectmen regarding proposed policy changes to FY 2017 CDBG Funding.
- MVC Staff worked with The Resource Inc. (TRI) to apply for an Island-wide Community Preservation Act Application that would create an Island-wide Interest Free Housing Loan Program.
- MVC Staff worked with the Edgartown's Affordable Housing Committee and Planning Board to review and support island-wide uniform zoning definitions for Affordable and Community Housing and Affirmative Fair Housing Practices. The MVC also funded the towns HPP process through a combinations of funding sources.
- **Potential Affordable Housing Sites:** Staff worked with the Affordable Housing Committee on the Mashaket Affordable Housing Project.

### Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** The MVC's GIS department assisted the Historic District Commission producing maps of the proposed expansion of the historic district for use at the annual town meeting and a black and white version was created for submission to the Register of Deeds. Maps of the regulatory data layers from the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program were provided to the Conservation Commission.
- **Data Updates:** The GIS staff continued their efforts of maintaining the Island-wide database of Open Space and Trail data. Where necessary, new trails were GPS'd in the field by the MVC staff including work in Chappy.

### Open Space

- Commission staff continued to provide technical assistance to the Edgartown Conservation Commission in updating their open space plan. MVC staff developed a mapping and graphic inventory of all open space lands and recreational facilities in the Town. This will be used as a basis in considering and updating open space plans and policies.

### Transportation

- **Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road:** MVC Staff continued to work with the Edgartown Highway Superintendent and MassDOT staff on potential drainage improvements to the Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road.
- **Data Collection:** A draft report, *Sidewalk Inventory and Basic Assessment for Healthy Living in Edgartown*, included the results of the GPS and clinometer sidewalk survey, maps, and photos of representative sidewalk locations. MVC data collection in Edgartown included automatic traffic recorder counts on roadways, and Turning Movement Counts at intersections and near the Chappy Ferry dock.

**Water Quality:** The Commission continued its scientific and community work helping to protect the Vineyard's water quality and especially our threatened coastal ponds.

- MVC Staff worked with the Friends of Sengekontacket, Tisbury Waterways, the Lagoon Pond Committee, and the Joint Lagoon Pond Watershed Wastewater Committee to devise plans to address excess nitrogen.
- **Water Sampling:** In cooperation with the Edgartown Shellfish Warden, water quality samples and on-station field data were collected from Sengekontacket Pond, Katama Bay, Cape Pogue, Pocha Pond and Edgartown Great Pond. These data form a baseline understanding of the ponds and help determine whether the water quality goals from the Massachusetts Estuaries Project's study are achieved. Water Resource Planner collaborates and shares sampling data with Great Pond Foundation. Oyster specimens were collected for nitrogen analysis in conjunction with SMAST research project.
- **Coastal Ponds:** MVC Staff is assisting the Planning Board and the Edgartown Ponds Advisory Committee to identify and evaluate options to achieve the nitrogen reduction called for by the MEP for the great ponds. The Water Resources Planner participates in the Friends of Sengekontacket, Chappaquiddick Island Association, Edgartown Shellfish Committee, Water Alliance, and the Vineyard Golf Club Review Committee.

### Regulatory Activities

In 2016, **13** projects in Edgartown were reviewed in some manner by the MVC through the DRI process. These projects can be classified as follows:

- **4** were full DRI's reviewed with public hearings that were approved with conditions;
- **3** were minor modifications of existing DRI's that were approved and remanded back to town without DRI public hearing review;
- **2** were projects referred to the MVC for a concurrence review that were sent back to the town without DRI review;
- **1** was withdrawn;
- **2** were previously approved DRI's granted extensions;
- **1** project was referred and is still under review at year's end.

## SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES FOR OAK BLUFFS

In addition to the efforts described above, the MVC undertook the following activities in the Town of Oak Bluffs.

### Coastal, Ocean, and Hazard Planning:

- **CRS (Community Rating System)** MVC staff coordinated with the Town in consideration of pursuit of a Community Rating System (CRS) rating that could reduce flood insurance premiums. After consideration, the Town did not pursue the action.
- **Wetlands Vulnerability and Adaptation:** MVC Staff continued assessing the vulnerability of wetlands to the impacts of climate change, particularly inundation. MVC Staff and others are prioritizing vulnerable wetlands to target for protection and continued assessment, and continued a program of sophisticated wetland elevation monitoring to assess wetlands' abilities to grow in height as sea level rises. Measurements were recorded at the first monitoring station at Felix Neck, hosted by Mass Audubon with funding from the Friends of Sengekontacket and Edey Foundation.

### Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- MVC Staff continued to provide technical assistance to complete the *Oak Bluffs Downtown Streetscape Master Plan Phase I* and will continue to assist the town with Phase II.
- MVC Staff is currently assisting efforts in Oak Bluffs to create a state designated Cultural District
- MVC Staff provided technical assistance to apply for Community Compact Grant to fund Economic Development Infrastructure and Blue Economy Projects
- Grants: MVC staff worked with the Oak Bluff's consultant to provide supplemental materials and coordinated Public Hearing for FY 2016 CDBG Grant Application for approximately \$900,000 which was awarded in July 2016. Notified and help draft letter from the Oak Bluffs Selectmen regarding proposed policy changes to FY 2017 CDBG Funding.
- MVC Staff worked with The Resource Inc. (TRI) to apply for an Island-wide Community Preservation Act Application that would create an Island-wide Interest Free Housing Loan Program.
- MVC Staff worked with the Oak Bluff's Affordable Housing Committee and Planning Board to review and support island-wide uniform zoning definitions for Affordable and Community Housing and Affirmative Fair Housing Practices.

### Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** The GIS staff delivered maps upon request to several Town departments: The *Conservation Commission* received maps of Public Coastal Natural Resources, Camp Meeting Area Effected Flood Areas, & Town Beaches and Town Water Access; The *Planning Board* received maps of Special Ways within the Southern Woodlands District, Auto Rental Locations, and prints of consultant's materials for meetings; The *Assessing Dept.* received specific data (i.e. overlay zones, flood zones, etc.) when requested; The *Police and Fire Dept.* received maps for planning the emergency management coverage of the summer fireworks and illumination night.

### Transportation

- **Martha's Vineyard Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** The TIP is produced annually on Martha's Vineyard through the JTC and includes federal aid projects to implement within available federal and state funds. In Federal Fiscal Year 2016, \$14,095,057.20 in federal funds were obligated for Martha's Vineyard.
- **Planning:** MVC provided information and support for various aspects of TIP projects, including the project right-of-way process and complete streets program. MVC Senior Transportation Planner with Baystate Roads Program organized a MassDOT Complete Streets Program workshop on Martha's Vineyard in March 2016. Provided updated complete streets program information in the fall.
- **Data Collection:** The MVC data collection in Oak Bluffs included automatic traffic recorder counts on roadways, Turning Movement Counts at intersections. Parking occupancy observations were also performed in the summer in downtown Oak Bluffs.

### Water Quality:

The Commission continued its scientific and community work helping to protect the Vineyard's water quality and especially our threatened coastal ponds.

- MVC Staff worked with the Friends of Sengekontacket, Tisbury Waterways, the Lagoon Pond Committee, and the Joint Lagoon Pond Watershed Wastewater Committee to devise plans to address excess nitrogen.
- **Water Sampling:** MVC staff collected water quality samples and on-station field data from Sengekontacket, Lagoon, Oak Bluffs Harbor and Farm Ponds, in cooperation with the Oak Bluffs Shellfish Department.
- **Massachusetts Estuaries Project (MEP):** MVC staff meets with the Joint Lagoon Pond Watershed Wastewater committee to discuss options for improving water quality and meeting the maximum nitrogen load limit. Staff continues to apply for grant funding to help mitigate the effects of nitrogen pollution. MVC staff continues to meet with Oak Bluffs officials and the Friends of Sengekontacket to review the MEP Sengekontacket study findings and discuss options for mitigating nitrogen pollution. MVC staff is also meeting with town officials and the Friends of Farm Pond on the Tidal Restoration Project to implement the MEP.
- **Community Assistance:** The MVC Water Resource Planner is an active member of the Joint Lagoon Pond Watershed Wastewater Committee, and the Friends of Sengekontacket. Staff has met with Fresh Pond owners to help develop plan to address water quality issues in that pond. Staff has met with property owners to help mitigate stormwater runoff impacts. Staff has assisted visiting researchers in sample collection, site review and wetland restoration project installation.

### Collaboration

Staff continued to participate in review and comments on the Town's pursuit of a shared use path from the drawbridge towards the town center, and with the Streetscape planning efforts as they affect all modes of transportation and mobility downtown.

Staff also led a series of workshops to discuss the development along the Edgartown - Vineyard Haven Road near the High School.

## **Regulatory Activities**

In 2016, **20** projects were reviewed in Oak Bluffs in some manner by the MVC through the DRI process. These projects can be classified as follows:

- **6** were full DRI's reviewed with a public hearing and approved with conditions;
- **1** was denied;
- **3** were minor modifications to existing DRI's that were approved and remanded back to the town without DRI public hearing review;
- **3** were a project referred to the MVC for a concurrence review that was sent back to the town without DRI review;
- **1** was a previously approved DRI's returning to LUPC for approval of their landscape plan;
- **2** projects were withdrawn;
- **1** previously approved DRI was granted an extension;
- **3** projects were referred and are still under review at year's end.

## SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES FOR TISBURY

In addition to the efforts described above, the MVC undertook the following activities in the Town of Tisbury.

### Coastal, Ocean, and Hazard Planning:

#### **Coastal Management**

- CRS (Community Rating System) - MVC staff coordinated with the Town in consideration of pursuit of a Community Rating System (CRS) rating that could reduce flood insurance premiums. After thoughtful consideration, the Town did not pursue the action.
- Resilience Visioning – MVC staff participated with Planning Board members and others in a visioning project undertaken as a student capstone project.

#### **DCPC's**

- Island Road District Special Ways Zone – MVC staff coordinated with the Planning Board on mechanics of their potential nomination of a first Special Way in Tisbury, discussing with them the steps involved. MVC staff also assisted with preparation of potential regulations for discussion purposes.

### Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- MVC Staff continued to work with the Tisbury Planning Board and Vision Council to identify economic development opportunities and improvements for the downtown business district.
- Notified and help draft letter from the Tisbury Selectmen regarding proposed policy changes to FY 2017 CDBG Funding.
- MVC Staff worked with The Resource Inc. (TRI) to apply for an Island-wide Community Preservation Act Application that would create an Island-wide Interest Free Housing Loan Program.
- MVC Staff worked with the Tisbury's Affordable Housing Committee and Planning Board to review and support island-wide uniform zoning definitions for Affordable and Community Housing and Affirmative Fair Housing Practices.

### Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** The MVC's GIS staff have worked extensively with the Department of Public Works ("DPW") staff to transfer some of their sewer information into digital format. The MVC is also making this data available to the staff through the online interactive mapping system ArcGIS On-line. The DPW staff have received initial training on using this system and how to mark-up a map online. Plans are also underway to transfer the DPW's snow removal plan into digital. The MVC GIS department looks forward to continuing this partnership with the DPW in 2017.
- Also in 2016, the GIS department provided assistance to the Board of Health by tallying the data to determine the number of bedrooms and average water use per parcel in Tisbury. This information was used in the design of the new regulations surrounding no-net nitrogen loading. The MVC's cartographer also provided a detailed topographic map for use in stormwater management discussions. To assist the planning board, large copy prints of map were provided as needed and data was supplied to the graduate student reviewing Resiliency within Tisbury. The GIS department has also been working with the Assessor's Department to generate the updated 'Neighborhood Map' series

### Open Space

- Commission staff provided technical assistance to the Tisbury Visioning Committee in updating their open space plan. MVC staff developed a mapping and graphic inventory of all open space lands and recreational facilities in the Town. This will be used as a basis in considering and updating open space plans and policies.

### Transportation

- **Martha's Vineyard Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** The TIP is produced annually on Martha's Vineyard through the JTC and includes federal aid projects to implement within available federal and state funds. In Federal Fiscal Year 2016, \$14,095,057.20 in federal funds were obligated for Martha's Vineyard.
- **Planning:** MVC Senior Transportation Planner with Baystate Roads Program organized a MassDOT Complete Streets Program workshop on Martha's Vineyard in March 2016. Provided updated complete streets program information in the fall. MVC staff participated in support of the Town's activities for complete streets and other topics for the planning board and Vision group. MVC staff continued to work with town and MassDOT staff on the design development for the Shared Use Path (SUP) link / Beach Road project. MVC staff participated in the Town's Parking Committee meetings.
- **Data Collection:** The MVC data collection in Tisbury included automatic traffic recorder counts on roadways, and Turning Movement Counts at a few Vineyard Haven intersections. Parking occupancy observations were also performed in the summer in Vineyard Haven.

### Water Quality:

The Commission continued its scientific and community work helping to protect the Vineyard's water quality and especially our threatened coastal ponds.

- **Water Sampling:** MVC staff collected water quality samples and on-station field data of Lagoon Pond and Lake Tashmoo in cooperation with the Tisbury and Oak Bluffs Shellfish Departments.
- **Lagoon Pond:** MVC staff is meeting with the Joint Lagoon Pond Watershed Wastewater Committee to review the Lagoon Pond MEP study findings and discuss options for improving water quality and meeting the Pond's nitrogen loading limit. MVC has developed several grants for nitrogen mitigation in the watershed.
- **Tisbury Channel Dredging:** The MVC Water Resource Planner continued to work with other members of the Tisbury Dredge Committee on a proposal for eelgrass mitigation of dredge spoils of Tashmoo Channel and monitors the nourishment of beaches with dredge spoils from the inner harbor dredging. MVC staff continues a post-dredge assessment of the eelgrass beds adjacent to the nourishment sites and at control sites. MVC staff continues to advise Harbor Committee and Selectmen on issues related to eelgrass and anchoring.
- **Community Involvement:** The MVC Water Resources Planner participates on the Joint Lagoon Pond Watershed Wastewater Committee, Tisbury Waterways Inc., and the Tisbury Dredge Committee. The Water Resources Planner has provided technical support on stormwater mitigation to the Town and Drawbridge Committee and to the Board of Health for use in changes to regulations. Staff has met with property owners to help mitigate stormwater runoff impacts. Staff has assisted visiting researchers in sample collection and site review.

### Collaboration

- Staff provided information to the Planning Board regarding creation of Special Ways regulations for Tisbury.
- Staff continued to work closely with Town boards on the Tisbury Beach Road transportation improvements project. Selectmen appointed Senior Planner Bill Veno to serve on the Tisbury Beach Road Design Committee which will refine the details of the project with MassDOT to ensure the

- community's goals fulfilled.
- Staff also continues to assist with the planned shared use path to link Beach Road at Tisbury Marketplace and Lagoon Pond Road.
- Staff reviewed circulation issues at Causeway Road with the Public Works Director and suggested signage and marking measures to reduce vehicle speed and improve cyclist and pedestrian safety.

### **Regulatory Activities**

In 2016, **13** projects were reviewed in Tisbury in some manner by the MVC through the DRI process. These projects can be classified as follows:

- One **(1)** was a full DRI reviewed with a public hearing that was approved with conditions;
- Seven **(7)** were minor modifications of existing DRI's that were approved and remanded back to the town without DRI public hearing review;
- Two **(2)** were projects referred to the MVC for concurrence review that was sent back to the town without DRI public hearing review;
- One **(1)** was a previously approved DRI's returning to LUPC for approval of their landscape plan;

**Two (2) projects were referred  
and are still under review at  
year's end.**

## SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES FOR WEST TISBURY

In addition to the efforts described above, the MVC undertook the following activities in the Town of West Tisbury.

### Water Quality

- **Mill Brook:** MVC staff collected stormwater, dry weather samples and stream flow data of the Mill Brook system as part of the study to evaluate the Mill Brook Watershed study. This stream is a major contributor of fresh water and the nutrients it carries to Tisbury Great Pond.
- **Community Assistance:** The MVC Water Resource Planner serves as technical advisor to the Mill Brook Watershed Committee and the Tisbury Great Pond Riparian owners.

### Coastal, Ocean, and Hazard Planning:

- **CRS (Community Rating System)** MVC staff coordinated with the Town in consideration of pursuit of a Community Rating System (CRS) rating that could reduce flood insurance premiums. After consideration, the Town did not pursue the action.

### Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- Notified and help draft letter from the West Tisbury Selectmen regarding proposed policy changes to FY 2017 CDBG Funding.
- MVC Staff worked with The Resource Inc. (TRI) to apply for an Island-wide Community Preservation Act Application that would create an Island-wide Interest Free Housing Loan Program.
- MVC Staff worked with the West Tisbury's Affordable Housing Committee and Planning Board to review and support island-wide uniform zoning definitions for Affordable and Community Housing and Affirmative Fair Housing Practices.

### Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** The Planning Board received mapping support for several projects: Manter's Path; Bike Paths; One Acre Properties within West Tisbury; and Mixed Business Zone. The MVC mapping staff also aided the Conservation Commission by delivering maps of the James Pond Area and conducting field work along the Tiasquam River to GPS the data logger locations.

### Transportation

- **Martha's Vineyard Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** The TIP is produced annually on Martha's Vineyard through the JTC and includes federal aid projects to implement within available federal and state funds. In Federal Fiscal Year 2016, \$14,095,057.20 in federal funds were obligated for Martha's Vineyard.
- **Planning:** MVC staff continued to work with the Town on potential future projects, and provided complete streets program information. MVC Senior Transportation Planner with Baystate Roads Program organized a MassDOT Complete Streets Program workshop on Martha's Vineyard in March 2016, held in Oak Bluffs. Provided updated complete streets program information in the fall.
- **Data Collection:** The MVC data collection in West Tisbury included automatic traffic recorder counts on Edgartown-West Tisbury Road. MVC staff performed Turning Movement Counts at the West Tisbury school and visited to discuss potential improvements.

## **DCPCs**

- MVC staff participated with the Byways Committee and Planning Board to amend the Special Ways regulations. The MVC and Town had amended the regulations substantively in 2008. In 2016, the MVC approved amendment to make the language more user friendly. The amended text has not yet been presented for vote by Town Meeting.
- MVC staff participated in the Byways Committee's research into Manter's Path as a possible Special Ways nomination. The Byways Committee subsequently recommended to the Planning Board and the Planning Board voted to nominate Manter's Path.

## **Coastal Management**

- CBRA maps – MVC staff investigated, with the Town, the ramifications of proposed amendments to the federal barrier beach maps in the vicinity of Lambert's Cove Beach, concluding that the changes are benign.

## **Collaboration**

- Staff supported activities of the Town's Byways Committee to prepare amendments to the Town's Special Ways regulations and nomination of Manter's Path as a new Special Way.
- At year's end, staff began working with a Town committee reexamining accommodations for bicyclists – especially along State Road.
- Staff, working on behalf of the land bank, seems to have completed a multi-year effort that will result in a formalized public walking path linking the Howes House parking lot to the Mill Pond via Brandy Brow. In addition to securing the land bank easement over a private landowner's property, the effort required working with the Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Parks Commission, and Library.

## **Regulatory Activities**

In 2016, four **(4)** projects were reviewed in West Tisbury in some manner by the MVC through the DRI process. These projects can be classified as follows:

- One **(1)** was a full DRI reviewed with a public hearing that was approved with conditions;
- One **(1)** was a minor modification of an existing DRI that were approved and remanded back to the town without DRI public hearing review;
- One **(1)** was a project referred to the MVC for concurrence review that was sent back to the town without DRI public hearing review;
- One **(1)** was a project referred to the MVC for mandatory DRI Review that did not trigger DRI Review because it was on a property that was already a DRI and the proposal was within the limits of the previously approved DRI.

### **2016 Commissioners**

Clarence “Trip” Barnes	Tisbury, elected Member at Large
John Breckinridge	Clerk/Treasurer, Oak Bluffs, elected Member at Large
Christina Brown	Edgartown, elected Member at Large
Robert Doyle	Vice Chairman, Chilmark, elected Member at Large
Josh Goldstein	Tisbury, elected Member at Large
Fred Hancock	LUPC Chair, appointed by the Oak Bluffs Board of Selectman
Lenny Jason	Appointed by the Dukes County Board of Selectman
James Joyce	Appointed by the Edgartown Board of Selectman
Joan Malkin	Appointed by the Chilmark Board of Selectman
Kathy Newman	Appointed by the Aquinnah Board of Selectman
Ben Robinson	Appointed by the Tisbury Board of Selectman
Doug Sederholm	West Tisbury, elected Member at Large
Abe Seiman	Oak Bluffs, elected Member at Large
Linda Sibley	West Tisbury, elected Member at Large
Ernest Thomas	Appointed by the West Tisbury Board of Selectman
Jim Vercruyse	Chairman, Aquinnah, elected Member at Large

### **Staff**

Sherri Caseau	Water Resource Planner
Dan Doyle	Transportation Planner
Christine Flynn	Economic Development & Affordable Housing Planner
Paul Foley	DRI Coordinator
Priscilla Leclerc	Transportation Planner
Curt Schroeder	Administrator and Chief Fiscal Officer
Chris Seidel	GIS Coordinator
Donna Stewart	Administrative Assistant
Jo-Ann Taylor	Coastal Planner and DCPC Coordinator
Adam Turner	Executive Director,
Bill Veno	Senior Planner



**MARTHA'S VINEYARD COMMISSION**

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REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY OF DUKES COUNTY  
SERVING AQUINNAH, CHILMARK, EDGARTOWN, GOSNOLD, OAK BLUFFS, TISBURY, & WEST TISBURY