



Martha's Vineyard Commission 2015 Annual Report

2015 was a year of transition for the MVC, with Adam Turner (right) taking over as Executive Director from retiring Mark London. The Commission worked with Island towns to complete the Martha's Vineyard Transportation Plan, adopted a Built Environment DRI Policy, and worked with towns on efforts to protect the water quality of coastal ponds, deal with climate change, and promote community and economic development. Forty development projects were referred to the MVC for regulatory review.



The eighteen-member Commission is made up of nine Commissioners elected bi-annually to represent the public, two appointed by the Governor, and one appointed by the County Commission and each of the six Vineyard Boards of Selectmen. Jim Vercruysse took over as Chairman in January 2016. The Commission is supported by a professional staff of ten. More detail is provided below and is available on the Commission's website: www.mvcommission.org.



ISLAND-WIDE PLANNING ACTIVITIES

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Commission supports a variety of efforts supporting affordable and community housing.

- **Affordable and Community Housing Zoning Analysis:** MVC staff worked with town boards to implement recommendations of the 2014 *Affordable and Community Housing Zoning Analysis*, identifying zoning tools to promote, create, and preserve housing that responds to needs unmet by market-rate housing. MVC staff provided technical assistance supporting Chilmark's adoption of an *Accessory Housing Zoning By-law*. MVC Staff worked with the Oak Bluffs Affordable Housing Committee on a warrant article to transfer the Resident Homesite Program to the Oak Bluffs Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund, which was adopted at the 2015 November Special Town Meeting.
- **Community Development Block Grants:** The MVC assisted with *Department of Housing and Community Development's FY 2015 CDBG Applications* (prepared by Bailey Boyd Associates) by gathering supplemental materials and coordinating Public Hearings in cooperation with the Towns. In July, the two CDBG grant lead communities, Oak Bluffs and Edgartown, were awarded FY 2015 grants of \$900,000 each.
- **Potential Affordable Housing Sites:** The MVC's cartography staff worked with the Island Housing Trust to assist affordable housing committees and planning boards in identifying potential future sites for affordable housing, producing a series of maps showing land ownership, conservation, and water resources.

COASTAL, OCEAN, AND HAZARD PLANNING

The MVC works with towns, the Commonwealth, and federal agencies on planning coastal areas, ocean conservation and development, and mitigating natural hazards.

- **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 latest draft, prepared by the MVC, is under review by MEMA and FEMA and final approval imminent, after which it can be adopted by each town's Board of Selectmen.
- **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 initiated a program of sophisticated wetland elevation monitoring to assess wetlands' abilities to grow in height as sea level rises. A first monitoring station was installed at Felix Neck, hosted by Mass Audubon, with funding from the Friends of Sengekontacket and Edey Foundation.

- **Massachusetts Ocean Management Plan:** The MVC Coastal Planner is the Governor's appointed representative for the MVC on the Massachusetts Ocean Advisory Commission. It updated the *Massachusetts Ocean Management Plan* in January.
- **Bureau of Ocean Energy Management:** The MVC, towns, and Tribe are members of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management: Massachusetts Task Force providing input into the federal government's plans for wind energy development south of the Vineyard. The MVC joined a successful call for recognition of "community benefit" in the lease auction process. Two developers were selected, one of which included Vineyard Power as a community partner.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Downtown Revitalization and Community Planning:** MVC staff provided technical assistance for the *Oak Bluffs Downtown Streetscape Master Plan*, completed in August, and the Town of Tisbury's ongoing Visioning effort. Staff provided technical assistance to Aquinnah for the Town and Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head/Aquinnah to apply for state Cultural District designation.
- **ArtsMV:** MVC staff provided support to the Martha's Vineyard Arts and Culture Collaborative. The Commission assisted October's *Fall for the Arts* and the newly created *Spring for the Arts*. MVC staff assisted in coordinating the *Creative Economy Speaker Series* and Arts MV annual meeting.
- **Review of Management Plan for State Land:** MVC staff commented on the Department of Conservation Resources' proposed *Management Plan for Nickerson Forest Complex*, encompassing State Beach, portions of South Beach, the Fire Tower, and the Correllus State Forest.
- **Healthy Aging Task Force:** The MVC co-hosted meetings of the Task Force's Housing Work Group through May 2015, provided financial support to and participated in formulation of a *Healthy Aging Strategic Plan*, and provided extensive data for this effort, sponsored by the County.
- **Gosnold Long-Range Planning:** The GIS Coordinator mapped Cuttyhunk's historic paved walking paths and stone walls, providing maps to the Board of Selectmen. The new MVC Executive Director met the Board of Selectmen to identify and discuss future planning projects as well as MVC assistance.
- **Built Environment Policy:** In June, the Commission adopted a *Built Environment Policy*, giving guidance to DRI applicants and available to town boards and the public. The policy seeks to preserve significant buildings, neighborhoods, streetscapes, archeological resources, and other man-made features, and ensure that new building and other development is harmonious, environmentally sound, and accessible.
- **Island Plan Report Card:** MVC staff prepared a report card on the status of implementation of the 231 strategies proposed in the 2009 *Martha's Vineyard Island Plan*. The report card shows that some strategies were completed and most are underway, while no action has taken place for some. After Commission review, it will be shared with town boards and the public.

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 maintains and continuously updates a county-wide GIS (Geographic Information System) spatial data warehouse and provides data to towns, consulting groups working on town projects, academics conducting research, state agencies, and local residents. The cartography department 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 department 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.

TRANSPORTATION

The MVC is responsible for transportation planning on the Vineyard, in association with the Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

- **Joint Transportation Committee:** The Commission facilitates JTC meetings to coordinate Island transportation planning. It is made up of appointees from each of the six Island towns, the County, and as of 2015, the VTA and MVC Executive Directors; MassDOT is an ex-officio member. The JTC met to formulate, discuss, release for public comment, and approve the main documents required to access federal and state funding for transportation projects, namely the 2016-2019 *Martha's Vineyard Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*, the 2016 *Unified Planning Work Program*, and the *Martha's Vineyard Transportation Plan*.
- **Martha's Vineyard Transportation Plan:** The MVC developed a new version of the Plan for 2016-40, the Island's long range plan for all modes of transportation to and on the Island, with proposed projects and estimated funding. The Plan includes new maps showing crash data and environmental justice and was endorsed in July 2015.
- **Transportation Improvement Program Projects:** The TIP provides state and federal funding for eligible transportation projects on the Island.

- Lagoon Pond Drawbridge: After ten years of planning and construction, the new Drawbridge opened to traffic in November. Demolition of the temporary bridge and landscaping will be completed in 2016. The MVC facilitated the efforts of the Drawbridge Committee to have MassDOT harmonize the design with its context, improve pedestrian paths and open space around the bridge, and minimize negative construction impacts.
 - State Road and Old County Road Intersection: This intersection in West Tisbury was realigned to improve safety.
 - Upcoming Projects: Projects are under development for TIP funding are: drainage improvements to the Edgartown-Vineyard-Haven Road, extension of the Island Shared-Use Path on Beach Road in Tisbury and Oak Bluffs, and improvements to bike paths in the State Forest.
- **Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee**: MVC staffs an advisory committee to the JTC and the wider community on bicycling and pedestrian matters. The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) members continued drafting a *Complete Streets Policy* for use by the JTC and towns to consider bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
 - **Scenic Roads Initiative**: MVC staff supported the Island Roads Committee efforts to better protect the scenic character of Vineyard roads, working with a consultant to develop a *Scenic Roads Work Program*.
 - **Trails Planning**: Part 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. In 2015 he assisted the Town of West Tisbury adding old roads to its inventory of Special Ways and provided information to Oak Bluffs and Tisbury about potential Special Ways. Eight segments of potential new trail routes were worked on across the Island. Time was also spent on conducting a triennial inspection of the Land Bank's partial interests (conservation restrictions, agricultural preservation restrictions, and view easements) to ensure they are being honored.
 - **Data Collection**: MVC staff conducted automatic traffic recording counts at various locations, and performed Turning Movement Counts at several intersections across the Island. MVC staff used a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit and clinometer (measuring slopes) to inventory and map downtown sidewalks in Edgartown and Vineyard Haven. Staff also collected parking observation data in downtown Oak Bluffs and 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.

- **Massachusetts Estuaries Project**: For more than a decade, the MVC provided extensive water-quality testing and land use data analysis as a basis for the Commonwealth's Mass Estuaries Project, which prepares detailed models of water quality problems in coastal ponds and helps identify the most cost-effective way to solve them. In 2015, the MEP completed final reports for Chilmark and Tashmoo Ponds. The final report for the Menemsha-Squibnocket-Nashaquitsa system is expected early spring 2016. 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.

- **Fertilizer Controls:** In 2014 the MVC designated the Martha’s Vineyard Lawn Fertilizer Control District of Critical Planning Concern, allowing Island towns to adopt local lawn fertilizer regulations as a low-cost tool to combat excess nitrogen in coastal ponds. In 2015, the regulations took effect and the Island Boards of Health offered well-attended license training classes.
- **Water Testing:** MVC staff took water samples of Farm, Sengekontacket, Lagoon, Tashmo, Edgartown Great, Chilmark, and Tisbury Great Ponds. MVC staff assisted and collected samples with Center for Coastal Studies in Provincetown as part of their Collaborative Nantucket Sound Monitoring Program looking for pharmaceuticals in coastal ponds.
- **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.

COLLABORATION

The Commission facilitates 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 fall workshops for planning board and zoning board members, *Site Plan Review* and *Introduction to the Zoning Act*, included discussion of the legislature’s proposed comprehensive changes to the Act that will affect towns. The *Zoning Act* workshop was free to town employees and officials. Other programs included *Certified Aging in Place Certification*, *Cape Light Compact’s Commercial and Industrial Energy Efficient Programs and Three Year Plan*, and a webinar on *Trail Wayfinding Systems for Public Agencies*. The MVC loans resource documents to planning boards. The MVC helped sponsor the *Living Local* event for the first time and invited Gordon Peabody to present his low-tech method for sustainable erosion control.
- **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 Island conservation commissions. MVC staff participated in meetings of the All-Island planning boards and supported an effort initiated by the All-Island Selectmen to improve taxi regulations. The MVC hosted a visit by MassDevelopment explaining the new *TA Connect* program to coordinate state technical assistance programs of local benefit; as a result, West Tisbury submitted a request for help addressing pedestrian circulation at the town center. The Commission also provides town officials legislative updates, information about federal and state programs, grant opportunities, and workshops.
- **Inter-Regional Collaboration:** The MVC Executive Director meets monthly with other members of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies, to discuss legislation and funding programs with senior Commonwealth officials, and to collaborate on many fronts. Staff participated in a series of online sessions with other regional planning agencies (RPAs) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health exploring the health implications of transportation and development, including state mechanisms helping localities address health issues when evaluating development proposals. The MVC became one of eight

RPA's on a 15-member Rural Policy Commission within the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, charged with making recommendations to enhance the economic vitality of rural communities and advance the health and well-being of rural residents. MVC staff participated in the *Summit on Climate Resiliency* at UMass Dartmouth where the Coastal Planner made a presentation on the MVC's climate change adaptation activities.

REGULATORY ACTIVITIES

- **DRI's:** The Commission reviews Developments of Regional Impact that potentially would impact more than one Vineyard town whether due to water quality, transportation, affordable housing or other factors affecting the character and vitality of Martha's Vineyard. In 2015, forty projects were before the MVC for DRI review.
 - Ten were full DRIs with public hearings, eight of which were approved with conditions, one project was withdrawn by the applicant before a decision was made, and one was under review at year's end.
 - No DRIs were denied.
 - Ten minor modifications of previously approved DRI's were approved without public hearings.
 - Six projects were referred to the MVC for concurrence review. All but one were sent back to their towns as not needing DRI review;
 - Five previously approved DRIs returned for LUPC approval of their landscape plans.
 - At year's end, the MVC had five projects at various stages of DRI review.
 - Four additional projects are awaiting town referral, applicant documentation, or are on hold at the applicant's request.
- **DRI Checklist Review:** The MVC's Land Use Planning Committee (LUPC) held a series of public meetings attended by town officials and members of the public and the Executive Director met town planning boards, building inspectors, and other professionals to get input for the biennial evaluation of the standards and criteria for what should be reviewed by the MVC as Developments of Regional Impact. At year's end, the Executive Director was compiling comments, a review of the past decade's referrals, and recommendations into a report for Commissioners.
- **DCPCs:** Districts of Critical Planning Concern are designated by the Commission to afford additional protection to sensitive areas, supporting special town regulations.
 - **Island Road District:** The MVC and the Town of West Tisbury amended the Special Ways Zone of the Island Road District by adding four new ways: Pine Hill Road, Red Coat Hill/Motts Hill Road, Shubael Weeks Road, and Old Coach Road.
 - **Litigation:** In 2015, the MVC continued in litigation defending the Special Ways in Edgartown and the Town of Aquinnah District.

FINANCES

The Commission's FY2015 income was \$1,512,259, of which 69% came from town assessments, 27% from grants and contracts, and 4% from other sources. Expenses were \$1,563,105 of which 51% was for salaries, 20% for salary-related costs, 3% for legal fees, and 26% for other expenses. The annual audit by an independent auditor showed fiscal soundness. The budget and audited financial statements are on the website.

COMMISSIONERS

Clarence Trip Barnes	Tisbury elected Member-at-large
John Breckenridge	Clerk-Treasurer, Oak Bluffs elected Member-at-large
Yvonne Boyle	Governor's Appointee (part of year)
Christina Brown	Edgartown elected Member-at-large
Harold Chapdelaine	appointed by the Tisbury Board of Selectmen (part of year)
Peter Connell	Governor's Appointee (non-voting on regulatory issues, part of year)
Robert Doyle	Chilmark elected Member-at-large
Fred Hancock	Chairman, appointed by the Oak Bluffs Board of Selectmen
James Joyce	appointed by the Edgartown Board of Selectmen
Joan Malkin	Chairman of PED Committee, appointed by the Chilmark Board of Selectmen
W. Karl McLaurin	appointed by the Governor (part of year)
Kathy Newman	appointed by the Aquinnah Board of Selectmen
Doug Sederholm	West Tisbury elected Member-at-large
Abe Seiman	Oak Bluffs elected Member-at-large
Linda Sibley	West Tisbury elected Member-at-large, Chairman of Land Use Planning Committee
Josh Goldstein	Tisbury elected Member-at-large
Lenny Jason	Appointed by the County of Dukes County
Ernest Thomas	appointed by the West Tisbury Board of Selectmen
Jim Vercruysse	Vice-Chairman, Aquinnah elected Member-at-large

STAFF

Adam Turner	Executive Director as of August 2015.
Mark London	Executive Director until July 2015
Sheri Caseau	Water Resources Planner
Christine Flynn	Economic Development and Affordable Housing Planner
Paul Foley	DRI Coordinator
Priscilla Leclerc	Transportation Planner
Chris Seidel	GIS Coordinator
Jo-Ann Taylor	Coastal Planner and DCPC Coordinator
Bill Veno	Senior Planner
Curt Schroeder	Administrator
Donna Stewart	Administrative Assistant

TOWN ACTIVITIES

In addition to the efforts described above, assisting the whole Island or all of the towns, the MVC undertook the following activities in each town.

AQUINNAH

Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- **Economic Development:** MVC Staff assisted the Town Administrator and Tribe with materials to apply jointly for a state-designated cultural district.

Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** At the request of the Assessing Department, the MVC cartography department provided a detailed road map of Aquinnah, reconciling data between the state's and Town's information.

Transportation

- **Data Collection:** In Aquinnah during 2014, the MVC conducted an automatic traffic recorder count at one location.
- **Aquinnah Circle:** MVC staff worked with Aquinnah officials on options to reconfigure vehicular and pedestrian movement around the attractions at the Aquinnah Circle in preparation for the relocation of the lighthouse.

Water Resources

- **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.

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI:** No projects were referred by Aquinnah as DRIs in 2015.
- **Districts of Critical Planning Concern:** The MVC continued to support the Town of Aquinnah in litigation defending the Town of Aquinnah District.

Staff Liaison

- MVC Coastal Planner and DCPC Coordinator Jo-Ann Taylor is the main staff liaison with the Aquinnah Planning Board.

CHILMARK

Dan Greenbaum, Chilmark's representative on the Joint Transportation Committee, passed away in late 2015. Dan's generous sharing over many years of his technical expertise and wisdom benefitted the MVC's work on transportation issues before the JTC, review of DRIs, and development and analysis of transportation surveys.

Coastal Planning

- **Squibnocket :** MVC staff continued to provide support in planning for the future of Squibnocket Beach and the access to adjacent private properties. MVC staff participated in the MEPA review of the projects.

Community Planning

- **Menemsha Comfort Station:** At the request of the Town Administrator, MVC staff acted as facilitator to a public visioning meeting to garner ideas regarding the Menemsha comfort station, which needs extensive repair or replacement.

Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- **Affordable Housing:** Staff continues to assist Chilmark with formalizing their Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committees in conformance with state guidelines. Staff provided the Chilmark Affordable Housing Committee with model zoning by-laws to promote affordable housing such as West Tisbury Accessory Unit By-law.
- **Grants:** MVC staff assisted the Town Administrator with information on the state's MA Downtown Initiative Grant Program

Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** The GIS staff assisted the Board of Selectmen with mapping of street features in Menemsha. This work included traditional GPSing and making the data collection application available online for use on an iPad. The *Harbor Master* was assisted with mapping of management areas in Menemsha Pond in preparation for dredging. Staff prepared a map developable land within Chilmark for the Planning Board. The GIS staff continues to provide phone support to Chilmark town employees for any mapping software questions.

Transportation

- **Joint Transportation Committee:** The JTC benefitted for many years from the technical expertise and wisdom of Dan Greenbaum, Chilmark's representative on the JTC, who passed away in late 2015.

Water Quality

- **Tisbury Great Pond:** The MVC worked again with the Center for Coastal Studies in Provincetown to conduct water quality sampling in Tisbury Great Pond, collecting fourteen samples to assess changes in nitrogen concentration and salinity. This information will be used by the MEP to continue to monitor the flushing characteristics of the system.
- **Chilmark Pond:** Staff assisted MEP staff in the deployment of tide gauge and water sampling to determine the flushing characteristics of the system.

- **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 and dry weather samples 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, Chilmark Pond Owners and the Tisbury Great Pond Riparian owners.

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI:** No projects were referred by Chilmark as DRIs in 2015.

Staff Liaison

- MVC Executive Director Mark London was the main staff liaison with the Chilmark Planning Board until he retired in August.

EDGARTOWN

Coastal Management

- Edgartown Harbor Plan: MVC staff serves as the Edgartown Harbor Planning Representative to the Massachusetts Secretariat of Energy and Environmental Affairs. MVC staff assisted the Edgartown Harbor Planning Group to prepare for update and renewal of the Edgartown Harbor Plan; the draft update is presently awaiting Secretary of EEA approval.

Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- **Grants:** MVC staff worked with the Town's consultant to provide supplemental materials and coordinated Public Hearing for FY 2015 CDBG Grant Application for approximately \$900,000 which was awarded in July 2015.

Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** The MVC's GIS department assisted the Historic District Commission producing maps of the proposed expansion of the historic district. It supplied FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps to the Conservation Commission, converting dredging coordinates to the state's format. It furnished the Planning Board with GIS-format data delineating 'clear zones' within the Katama Airfield Overlay District and identifying parcels within these zones.

Open Space

- At the request of the Conservation Commission, staff began providing assistance in updating the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan. An array of current baseline maps were provided to the Commission and it identified an ad hoc steering committee to work with MVC staff to flesh out how to best involve the public and identify goals and strategies.

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 typical locations.

Water Quality

- **Water Sampling:** In cooperation with the Edgartown Shellfish Warden, water quality samples and on-station field data were collected from Sengekontacket 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.
- **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, and the Vineyard Golf Club Review Committee.

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI:** Edgartown referred ten projects as DRIs in 2015:
 - Four DRIs required hearings – two were approved with conditions (Island Source Airport Storage, Beach Street house demolition), one was withdrawn by the applicant before a decision by the MVC (Pohogonut house demolition), and one was still under review at year’s end (MV Refuse and Resource Recovery District reorganization);
 - Three modifications to previously approved DRIs were approved without hearings (Tom’s Neck Farm re-division, Cape Cod Express addition, Island Source Airport Storage modification);
 - Two projects were referred to the MVC for concurrence review – both were determined to not require DRI review (Mullen Way subdivision of habitat, Evolve Studio Alexander addition);
 - One landscaping plan for a previous DRI was approved at LUPC without public hearing (Edgartown Lofts parking plan);
 - MVC staff has worked with the Edgartown Planning Board in anticipation of Stop & Shop expansion being referred as a DRI.
- **Legal Defense of Special Ways:** The MVC continued to defend the Edgartown Special Ways in litigation.
- **Fuller Street Beach MEPA Review:** MVC staff participated in MEPA review of the Town’s project to restore Fuller Street Beach.

Staff Liaison

- Executive Director Adam Turner serves as the main MVC staff liaison with the Edgartown Planning Board.

Geographic Information Systems

- **GIS Mapping:** The MVC's cartography department visited Cuttyhunk in June to GPS the island's historic paved walking paths and stone walls. These data were subsequently mapped and hard copy versions were provided to the *Board of Selectmen*. Other maps regarding wetlands, flood areas, and land ownership were also provided to support local planning efforts throughout the year. The MVC collaborated with the Commonwealth's Fish and Wildlife Service by providing trail and road data for Cuttyhunk. This data will support the FWS deer survey to assess the Lyme disease issue on Cuttyhunk. The GIS staff traveled to Cuttyhunk a second time in October of 2015 to introduce the MVC's new executive director, Adam Turner, to the Board of Selectmen. A variety of planning projects were discussed and future MVC efforts to assist Gosnold were identified.

Coastal Management

- **Cuttyhunk Fish Pier/Marina Site Improvements:** MVC staff participated in MEPA review and site visit for the Town's proposal for pier and marina improvements, and provided favorable comment.

OAK BLUFFS

Community Planning

- **Downtown Revitalization:** MVC Staff assisted the Planning Board with the Oak Bluffs Downtown Streetscape Master Plan which was completed in August 2015. Staff participated in several meetings relating to connecting Shared Use Paths to the downtown business district, Park-and-Ride options, and the North Bluff Boardwalk Plans.
- **Planning & Zoning:** MVC Staff presented resource and planning documents to the Oak Bluffs Planning Board to help discussions relative to doing a Master Plan.
- **Oak Bluffs Open Space and Recreation Plan:** MVC Staff provided socio-economic data in preparation of the draft Open Space and Recreation Plan. The MVC also submitted a letter of support to the state regarding the town's draft plan and its compliance with the MVC's Island Plan.

Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- **Grants:** MVC staff worked with the town's consultant to provide supplemental materials and coordinated Public Hearings for FY 2015 CDBG Grant Application for approximately \$900,000 which was awarded in July 2015.
- **Resident Homesite Program:** MVC Staff worked with the Oak Bluffs Affordable Housing Committee on a warrant article, which was adopted at the 2015 November Special Town Meeting, to transfer the Resident Homesite Program to the Oak Bluffs Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** The Town's *Police and Fire Departments* obtained mapping help for the required pre-planning efforts that go into the summer's Fireworks and Illumination Night events. The *Conservation Commission* received mapping assistance on their open space plan report and detailed maps of the Sunset Lake area depicting the impact of flooding, storm surge, and sea

level rise on the residential neighborhoods in this area. To identify future special ways, the *Planning Board* requested a map showing the ancient and current special ways within the town. The *Building Inspector's Office* was supported in their quest to find the original 1986 Water Resource Protection Overlay District Map; this area was subsequently digitized and appended to the Overlay Zoning data layer. At the request of the *Watershed Planning Committee*, a map was produced for Town Meeting to support the article establishing a Nitrogen Management District for Lagoon Pond.

Transportation

- **Drawbridge:** Oak Bluffs has representatives on the Lagoon Pond Drawbridge Committee, whose work has been facilitated by the MVC since the start, and which will continue to work with MassDOT to finalize the landscaping and other work on the new drawbridge.
- **Transportation Improvement Program Project:** MVC staff is supporting the Town's planning for Shared-Use Path extensions on Seaview Avenue and linking to the SUP on Beach Road, to be financed with federal and state funds.

Water Quality

- **Water Sampling:** MVC staff collected water quality samples and on-station field data from Sengekontacket, Lagoon, and Farm Ponds, in cooperation with the Oak Bluffs Shellfish Department.
- **Massachusetts Estuaries Project (MEP):** MVC staff meets regularly with the Joint Lagoon Pond Watershed Wastewater committee to discuss options for improving water quality and meeting the maximum nitrogen load limit. 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 Sengekontacket Committee, 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.

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI:** Oak Bluffs referred eleven projects to the MVC as DRIs in 2015:
 - One project was reviewed as a DRI with a public hearing (North Bluff seawall), which at year's end was still under review;
 - Five were minor modifications to existing DRIs approved without public hearings (Island Inn staff housing, Community Services Youth Collaborative building (twice), Barn Bowl & Bistro modification to wastewater treatment, MV Hospital Clinic);
 - One was referred to the MVC for a concurrence review and determined to not require DRI review (Westin Avenue demolition);
 - One was a previously approved DRI returning to LUPC for compliance review (Barn Bowl & Bistro noise complaint);
 - Three additional projects were in process or anticipated at the end of the year (awaiting DRI application for Denniston demolition, Southern Woodlands modification to subdivision, Lagoon Ridge subdivision).

- **DCPC:** MVC staff and Commissioners provided information to the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board regarding identification of old ways for possible protection as Special Ways under the Island Road DCPC.
- **MEPA:** MVC staff participated in MEPA review of the Goodale Construction Company.

Staff Liaison

- Economic Development and Affordable Housing Planner Christine Flynn is the main staff liaison with the Oak Bluffs Planning Board.

TISBURY

Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- **Vineyard Haven Harbor Cultural District:** MVC staff assisted the Board of Selectmen to receive a state-designation for the Vineyard Haven Harbor Cultural District and its official ribbon cutting ceremony took place in June 2015.

Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** The mapping staff supported the *Planning Board's* Visioning process in 2015 with maps for the Vision Planning meetings and the Tisbury Street Fair, and an online interactive map of sidewalks to engage residents to assess the walkability of Vineyard Haven. Maps of flooding and sea-level rise were prepared for the Planning Board to facilitate discussions regarding future development. The *Water Department* requested the MVC deliver their inventory of catch basin data to the Department's consultant working to further that project. The *Assessing Office* sought the assistance of the MVC to fulfill their requirements of neighborhood maps and Town-owned parcels. At the request of the *Watershed Planning Committee*, a map was produced for Town Meeting to support the article establishing a Nitrogen Management District for Lagoon Pond and Tashmoo Pond.

Transportation

- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project:** MVC staff provided technical support to the Town and MassDOT planning for the reconstruction of Beach Road between Wind's Up and Five Corners.
- **Drawbridge:** Tisbury has representatives on the Lagoon Pond Drawbridge Committee, chaired by Selectman Melinda Loberg, whose work has been facilitated by the MVC since the start, and which will continue to work with MassDOT to finalize the landscaping and other work on the new drawbridge.
- **Tisbury Marketplace to Veteran's Park Shared Use Path:** MVC staff worked with Town officials to reengage landowners about a planned SUP link approved by Town Meeting in 2010 and 2012 that expands options for cyclists and pedestrians.
- **Union Street:** MVC staff assisted the Town in planning for and monitoring changing the direction of Union Street.

Water Quality

- **Water Sampling:** MVC staff collected water quality samples and on-station field data 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.
- **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.

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI:** Tisbury referred thirteen projects to the MVC as DRIs in 2015:
 - Three projects were full DRIs reviewed with a public hearing and all were approved with conditions (Cape Cod 5, Dias High Point Lane, DeBettencourt High Point Lane);
 - Two minor modifications of existing DRI's were approved and remanded back to the town without DRI review (Water Street affordable housing, Pizza at Pine Village);
 - Two projects were referred to the MVC for concurrence review and determined to not require DRI review (Barnes Evelyn Way second floor, Kenny Concrete);
 - Three landscape plans for previously approved DRIs were approved by LUPC without hearings (NStar submarine cable, Vineyard House, Cape Cod 5);
 - Two projects are on hold at the applicants' request (Packer containers, Stop & Shop house demolition),
 - One project was referred in mid-December and will begin the DRI review process in 2016 (Dias High Point Lane second building).
- **Staff Liaison**
 - Former MVC Executive Director Mark London was the main staff liaison with the Tisbury Planning Board. Senior Planner Bill Veno is the new liaison to the board.

WEST TISBURY

Economic Development and Affordable Housing

- MVC staff met with West Tisbury's Planning Board Assistant to discuss options to advance the board's efforts to develop a Master Plan for the Town

Geographic Information Systems

- **Mapping:** The Planning Board received mapping support to visualize the proposed Special Ways at Town Meeting. These Ways were adopted by the Town and formally added to the Commission's Overlay Zoning data layer. The Board also requested maps depicting the lands with agricultural and conservation restrictions in West Tisbury. The MVC's cartography team assisted the Mill Brook Watershed Management Planning Committee by providing maps of the watershed, streams, dams, and data logger locations.

Transportation

- **Old County Road Intersection:** The MVC had worked with the Town and MassDOT for several years to come up with a design for the intersection of Old County Road and State Road that improved safety, increased green space, and respected the integrity of the vegetated island. Last year's construction used federal and state funding.

Water Quality

- **Water Testing:** Fourteen samples were collected in two rounds during the summer to assess changes in nitrogen concentration and salinity that will be used by the Massachusetts Estuaries Project (MEP) to continue to monitor the flushing characteristics of the system.
- **Mill Brook:** MVC staff collected stormwater and dry weather samples 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.

Regulatory Activities

- **DRI:** West Tisbury referred four projects to the MVC as DRIs in 2015:
 - Two were full DRIs reviewed with a public hearing and approved with conditions (Huseby Mountain Farm subdivision, Polly Hill education center);
 - One was referred to the MVC as a concurrence review and determined to not require DRI review (Checamo Path Subdivision);
 - One was a previously approved DRI whose archeological investigation was approved by LUPC (Polly Hill education center).
- **DCPC:** MVC staff worked with the Planning Board and Byways Committee up to and following nomination of several new Special Ways as amendments to the Island Road District, namely Pine Hill Road, Red Coat Hill/Motts Hill Road, Shubael Weeks Road and Old Coach Road. The nominations were considered by the MVC early in 2015 and the new Special Ways added. The Annual Town Meeting voted approval with the exception of a portion of Old Coach Road. After another public hearing, the MVC concurred with the Town Meeting and approved the boundary for Old Coach Road as amended by vote of the Town Meeting. MVC staff continued through the end of 2015 in support of the Byways Committee in review of possible update to the Special Ways regulations, to be presented to the Planning Board.

Staff Liaison

- Senior Planner Bill Venno is the main staff liaison with the West Tisbury Planning Board.

MARTHA'S VINEYARD COMMISSION

P.O.BOX 1447 • 33 NEW YORK AVENUE • OAK BLUFFS • MA • 02557

508.693.3453 • FAX: 508.693 7894 •

INFO@MVCOMMISSION.ORG • WWW.MVCOMMISSION.ORG

REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY OF DUKES COUNTY

SERVING AQUINNAH, CHILMARK, EDGARTOWN, GOSNOLD, OAK BLUFFS, TISBURY, & WEST TISBUR