

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT**  
**James Clarke – Director**

The Department of Planning and Community Development is pleased to submit its annual report for FY05 from July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005. One of the major planning accomplishments of the year was the review of the new Reuse Plan and Zoning Bylaws for the Naval Air Station. Although prepared by the South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation and its private partner LNR, planning staff played a key role in reviewing drafts of both documents and suggesting amendments to the documents that would better serve the town of Weymouth. The documents were submitted to the three towns for their review and approval in early May, 2005. The town traffic engineer monitored the progress on the intersection improvements on Route 18, with Independence Square under construction during the fiscal year and three other intersections being readied for advertising next fiscal year. The traffic engineer also critiqued the work of Berger Associates on Columbian Square traffic alternatives in preparation for the Naval Air Station environmental permitting process.

The restoration of the Greenbush commuter rail line continued in earnest during the year. Bridge work on Wharf Street and Regina Road was substantially completed and preliminary work at both stations began. North Street bridge abutments were completed and Green Street was closed to allow the new grade separated road to be constructed. Unicorn Avenue was the first grade crossing to be constructed along the entire line, closing that street in late spring. The town continues to work with Braintree to prepare roadway and parking lot plans for the Landing.

The traffic engineer initiated a study of parking and access issues for the East Weymouth commuter rail station. The traffic engineer is working with several members of the East Weymouth Neighborhood Association to anticipate automobile and pedestrian issues relating to the opening of the station and preparing a list of action items to implement prior to inception of rail service.

The town has hired Beta Engineering of Lincoln, R.I. to prepare a functional design report for potential traffic signals at the intersection of Libbey Parkway and Middle Street. The report will design a traffic signal option and detail any geometric changes in the road to allow safe operation of the intersection. In addition to review of the traffic implications for most development proposals submitted to the office, the traffic engineer responded to requests from the Mayor's Office and citizens on minor, but important, traffic issues in a neighborhood or on individual streets.

A more detailed review of the department activities follows:

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

In June 2005 the town issued the third request for proposals for lease of municipal property for use as a wireless telecommunications station. The incinerator smoke stack at the closed landfill at the end of Wharf St. and the Police Station tower were made available for this use. The 20 year leases will provide the town with a modest revenue stream and prevent the proliferation of unsightly cell towers in town.

The Economic Development Planner continues to work with a group of town officials in identifying surplus town owned land that the town will consider selling at auction. Over one dozen properties, including the Fore River Grange, have been approved for auction and should net several hundred thousand dollars for the town. An auction is scheduled for July 2005. The sale of tax title or un-needed town owned properties generates revenue for the town and puts properties back into productive use on the town's tax rolls.

A landscape architecture consultant has nearly completed a master plan for the development of the Back River Trail. The conceptual master plan for the trail will be completed in the fall of 2005. One of the recommendations of the 2001 Master Plan was to create a multi-use trail along the Back River, connecting 7 publicly owned properties into a linked trail network. The Back River Trail will extend from the Abigail Adams Park in North Weymouth to the Iron Hill property at the outlet of Whitman's Pond in East Weymouth. The Economic Development Planner has been involved with overseeing the contract with the consultant and working on the plans for this new trail that will be an asset to the community.

The update of the town's Open Space & Recreation Plan is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2005. The state recommends that these plans be updated every 5 years. If a community has a current, approved Open Space & Recreation Plan, the town is eligible for certain state discretionary grants. The Economic Development Planner is serving as the project manager. The project also included an assessment of all parks and playgrounds to determine if they are accessible to people with disabilities. This report included a list of work needed to make all of the town's parks and playgrounds handicapped accessible. The draft report was completed and reviewed this year.

A group of town officials is working with a consultant to update and re-codify the Zoning Ordinance. It is anticipated that this major revision of the Zoning Ordinance will be completed by the end of 2005. The town is utilizing a \$30,000 grant from the state to implement zoning related recommendations from the Master Plan. The Economic Development Planner is acting as the project manager. This project has been delayed due to the time demands put on planning staff by the new Naval Air Station plans.

The average unemployment rate in Weymouth during the last fiscal year, July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005 was 4.8%. (*State Division of Career Services*) For the second year in a

row the town's unemployment rate has been the same as the state for the same time period. Weymouth's unemployment levels are consistent with the state's unemployment trends.

The Economic Development Planner serves on the following committees: Chairman of the South Shore Coalition, Naval Air Station Citizen Advisory Committee, Metropolitan Area Planning Council Economic Development Policy Committee.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT**

Fiscal Year 2004-2005 marked the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) program, the federal entitlement grant program administered by United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assist low and moderate income families and individuals in the areas of housing, economic and community development.

The grant program provides annual grants to towns and cities to provide public services and to improve infrastructure, public facilities, housing, and more. In 2004-2005 the town of Weymouth received a grant of \$940,000.00.

The funds were awarded to eligible non-profit and for profit organizations and to town agencies and departments to offer services and conduct activities benefiting low and moderate-income residents. Funded activities included public services such as transportation for seniors to medical appointments and shopping sites, subsidized daycare for children during summer months, and housing services for the severely disabled. Other activities included installation of an elevator at the Pingree School and lavatory improvements (to enable access by severely handicapped adults), Lane Beach bath house access improvements, park access preliminary plan, stage access at the Whipple Senior Center, and continued Echo Avenue roadway and drainage improvements.

This fiscal year the town completely revised its HUD-mandated Five Year Plan governing the use of block grant funds. The Five Year Plan is a comprehensive assessment of housing, economic development, public service, and public facility needs having an impact on low and moderate income residents. The Plan then establishes objectives to be achieved over the five year period to meet such needs. This new plan pertains to July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2010.

CDBG funds must predominately assisted low and moderate income residents, as required by HUD regulations. A list of all activities funded during the last fiscal year follows.

| <b>At a Glance List of CDBG and HOME Activities</b>                             |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| <b>Total Grant Funds for CDBG for 2004-2005: \$940,000.00</b>                   |                     |
| <b>PLANNING/ADMINISTRATION FUNDS AWARDED \$188,000.00 (20% of the grant)</b>    |                     |
| <i>Dept. of Planning and Community Development - Program Administration</i>     | \$188,000.00        |
| <b>PUBLIC SERVICE FUNDS AWARDED \$141,000.00 (15% of the grant)</b>             |                     |
| <i>Marge Crispin Center - Lunch Program</i>                                     | \$2,565.00          |
| <i>Marge Crispin Center - Transportation Program</i>                            | \$1,940.00          |
| <i>Atlantic House / Center for Health and Development - Housing Coordinator</i> | \$5,750.00          |
| <i>Before &amp; After School Care (BASKET) - Sliding Scale Day Care</i>         | \$9,370.00          |
| <i>Department of Elder Services- Volunteer Management</i>                       | \$30,327.00         |
| <i>Department of Elder Services - Transportation</i>                            | \$27,353.00         |
| <i>Lakeview Manor Tenants' Association - Job Skills Training (Computers)</i>    | \$6,236.00          |
| <i>Weymouth Housing Authority- Residential Housing Coordinator</i>              | \$17,032.00         |
| <i>Just Right Childcare - Sliding Scale Day Care</i>                            | \$9,370.00          |
| <i>Father Bill's (QISC) - Case management</i>                                   | \$20,157.00         |
| <i>Department of Recreation - Van Transport for Elders</i>                      | \$3,250.00          |
| <i>South Shore Elder Services - Meals on Wheels</i>                             | \$7,650.00          |
| <b>Total Allocated to Public Services:</b>                                      | <b>\$141,000.00</b> |
| <b>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY FUNDS AWARDED \$891,141.00</b>                |                     |
| <i>Weymouth Public Schools - Pingree School- elevator/lavatory access</i>       | \$275,000.00        |
| <i>DPCD - Housing Services</i>  | \$91,600.00         |
| <i>DPCD- Echo Avenue Roadway Improvements</i>                                   | \$400,000.00        |
| <i>DPCD- Parks Accessibility</i>  | \$18,400.00         |
| <i>Department of Public Works - Lane Beach Comfort Station Access</i>           | \$81,841.00         |

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| Department of Elder Services - Stage Access     | \$27,300.00         |
| <b>Total Allocated to Community Development</b> | <b>\$894,141.00</b> |
| <b>HOME ACTIVITIES \$225,030.00</b>             |                     |
| HOME Administration                             | \$22,503.00         |
| CHDO Operating                                  | \$39,000.00         |
| CHDO Development (15% statutory requirement)    | \$33,755.00         |
| Rental Housing Development                      | \$129,772.00        |
| <b>Total Allocated to HOME Activities</b>       | <b>\$225,030.00</b> |
| Housing Rehab Loan Program (estimated)          | \$150,000.00        |

#### HOUSING PROGRAMS

The Dept. of Planning & Community Development (DPCD) implements a broad range of housing programs that represent a significant portion of the town's efforts in addressing the goals and priorities outlined in Weymouth's HUD Consolidated Planning Strategy (CPS).

The following programs were administered by the DPCD in 2004/05.

##### *CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program*

The HRLP provides lower income homeowners with below market interest rate home repair loans and rehabilitation/technical assistance services. Loans are funded through a self sufficient revolving loan fund that is maintained in South Shore Savings Bank, through borrower loan repayments. Financing to a maximum of \$10,000 is currently available to lower income families at rates of 3% and 0%.

The DPCD assisted 8 households with financial assistance through the RLA in 2004/05. The program funded 8 amortizing loans @ 0% & 3% interest rates for a total of \$50,774.

##### **HRLP Loan Data - Life of Program (to 6/30/05 )**

247 - Total # loans approved

**\$1,529,277** - Loan Funds Committed

##### **HRLP Revolving Loan Account (6-05**

\$137,913.59 - Prin. Balance Due (25 loans)

\$106,119.55 - Revolving Loan Account Balance

Deleted: (1/01 - 6/01)

**HOME / Affordable Housing Programs**

During the past year the Dept. of Planning & Community Development continued to promote the development of affordable housing opportunities in Weymouth. Weymouth received \$225,030 in HOME funds for housing development during the 2004/2005 program year.

- **HOME/Soft Second Loan Program**

The Soft Second Loan Program is a home ownership initiative administered through Mass. Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the Mass. Housing Partnership (MHP) in cooperation with local lenders and housing agencies. Weymouth has received \$680,000 in MHP funding including a set-aside of \$20,000 in Soft 2<sup>nd</sup> funding in January 2005. The Soft 2<sup>nd</sup> program provides lender financed below market rate mortgage loans for low and moderate income families purchasing in Weymouth. The Town can augment the assistance under Soft 2<sup>nd</sup> by providing low income borrowers with 3% of purchase price towards down payment and closing costs utilizing HOME funds secured by a deferred payment loan.

Three (3) first time homebuyers purchased their first homes under the program in 2004/05. The program provided 1<sup>st</sup> mortgage financing, Soft 2<sup>nd</sup> mortgage subsidy and loan loss reserve funding.

**Soft Second Loan Program activity**

Approved Applicants

7/03 to 6/04 - 10      7/04 to 6/05 -3

- **HOME Housing Development Programs**

Weymouth has utilized funding under the HOME program to finance the acquisition of 36 units of affordable rental housing. The following HOME assisted proposed developments are currently being reviewed:

1. Neighborhood Housing Services of the South Shore – two 3 BR rental units for victims of domestic violence
2. Brockton Area Multi. Services Inc. (BAMSI) – 2 group home units for residents suffering from mental disability.
3. South Suburban Affordable Housing Inc. – 2 rental units for lower income households

- **HOME CHDO Programs**

The town provided \$39,000 in CHDO Operating funds to non-profits NHS-SS and QCAP for the operation of the FTHB counseling classes in Weymouth. Classes educate homebuyers about the requirements for purchasing a first home and certify eligibility for Soft 2<sup>nd</sup> and MassHousing mortgage programs.

Four classes were conducted by QCAP in Weymouth with 37 Weymouth residents certified under the program. NHS-SS sponsored four classes and four introductory sessions with 30 Weymouth households participating.

**CHDO Purchaser Based Assistance First Time Homebuyer Programs**

Weymouth serves as a lead community for Quincy Community Action Programs and Neighborhood Housing Services of the South Shore, under the MA Dept. of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) Purchaser Based Assistance Program. QCAP provided down payment assistance to 3 Weymouth first time homebuyers in 2004-05. NHS SS assisted 8 families with Weymouth purchases and provided approximately \$35,000 in downpayment assistance to four eligible families.

**HUD Continuum of Care/McKinney Homeless Program**

The Local Board on Homelessness, made up of representatives from the city of Quincy, town of Weymouth, and homeless service providers in the Quincy/Weymouth area, is concerned with regional homelessness issues and reviews funding proposals submitted by COC members under HUD's McKinney Homeless Programs. The DPCD Housing Coordinator serves as the town's representative. The COC received \$2,132,925 in McKinney Homeless Program funding to meet many supportive housing needs in 2004-2005. The Quincy-Weymouth Continuum of Care currently administers 19 homeless family subsidies and 76 homeless individual subsidies. Of the individual subsidies, 10 subsidies are for homeless persons with HIV and 12 subsidies are for homeless veterans.

Two new projects and four renewals were approved under the application received for the fiscal year. They included:

**1. Supportive Housing Program-\$713,475**

This *new* project with the Quincy Interfaith Sheltering Coalition (QISC) as project sponsor creates a permanent supportive housing program that will move twenty-five (25) chronic homeless individuals directly from shelter and/or streets into SRO housing. Supportive services will be provided by a network of agencies including employment services, substance abuse treatment, support groups, mental health case management, and educational services.

**2. Supportive Housing Program – \$661,500**

This *new* project with the Quincy Interfaith Sheltering Coalition (QISC) as project sponsor creates a permanent supportive housing program that will move eight (8) homeless families directly from shelter and/or the streets into permanent supportive housing. Supportive services will ensure stability and continuity of housing through connecting the families to mainstream resources and community-based services. The program seeks to stabilize housing homeless families while significantly raising the earning potential of the family.

**3. Supportive Housing Program - \$259,530**

This *renewal* project the Quincy Interfaith Sheltering Coalition (QISC) as project sponsor seeks to continue its “services” only Supportive Housing Program (SHP). The programs purpose is to link homeless persons to job placement, training support and stabilization services; to assist participant’s secure appropriate transitional/permanent housing; and to provide ongoing supportive services for the participants in housing.

**4. Shelter Plus Care – Tenant Based Individual Rental Assistance Program. - \$284,328**

This is a one-year *renewal* for twenty-two (22) certificates that serve individuals.

**5. Shelter Plus Care – Tenant Based Individual Rental Assistance Program - \$129,240**

This is a one-year *renewal* for ten (10) certificates that serve individuals.

**6. Shelter Plus Care – Tenant Based Individual Rental Assistance Program. - \$84,852**

This is a one-year *renewal* for five (5) certificates that serve individuals.

**Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) Programs**

MHFA programs provide affordable mortgage financing for 1st Time Homebuyers as well as funds for existing homeowners in addressing home repair and lead paint problems.

NHS SS, under Weymouth HOME/CHDO agreements, assisted 4 homeowners with MHFA “Get the Lead Out” financing and technical assistance. Approximately \$60,000 in lead abatement financing was provided by MHFA affiliated lenders.

**WEYMOUTH HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

The WHC held an extra meeting during the summer to prioritize its projects for the coming year. In addition to those agreed upon, the Commission completed or began several new projects during the final year of Dick Pattison’s chairmanship.

In September, the program “Weymouth History” was presented by Channel 11, WETC. It was run a full month and then re-run in the spring. The WHC voted to thank Ted Clarke who developed and narrated the program. DVDs and videotapes were put on sale and placed in schools and town libraries. A second program “Historic Tours of Weymouth” is in preparation for the fall of 2005.

The WHC shared a table with the Weymouth Historical Society at Weymouth Day in October, and plans to do the same on Weymouth Day, October 1, 2005. The WHC will

have objects for sale. In November, the first of what it is hoped will become regular meetings was held with Herb Caldwell, President of the Weymouth Historical Society and Michelle Cappellini of the Abigail Adams Society at which the groups agreed to collaborate on efforts to promote our town's history and the events held in conjunction with that.

Steve Puleo attended a workshop held by Massachusetts Archives under the Secretary of State, then applied for a \$5,000 grant on historical documents which was awarded to the WHC in the spring. An initial survey conducted by Steve and Jim Clarke, Director of Planning and Development indicated that the town has many historical documents, some of which may have intrinsic as well as historical value.

Through Dick Pattison's efforts, the WHC now has a preservation fund. Dick also began a trivia section on the town website. Ed Walker continued use of the showcase on the stairway of Town Hall for historical displays. A database of historic properties was developed by Ted Clarke, with an updated version made available this summer.

The nomination process for a Sea Street National Register Historic District is underway. Also on Sea Street, the Wessagusset site sustained vandalism damage, but Jodi Purdy-Quinlan, who began and has sustained the area, instituted a project to clean up and improve the site. Foster's in South Weymouth went out of business in midsummer 2005 and owner Pat Foster donated a magnificent mural depicting Weymouth history to the WHC which was received through the efforts of Jodi Purdy-Quinlan.

Tom Curtis joined the WHC in April, filling the seat left vacant by Peg Strachan in June. We want to thank Peg for her years of service on the Commission. At the final meeting in June, Ted Clarke was elected Chair, replacing Dick Pattison who will remain as a member.

## **PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

The Planning Board held three joint hearings with the Town Council to review requests for zoning changes. The hearings were for a request to add medical offices as an allowed use in the POP zoning district, review the new Zoning Ordinance for the Naval Air Station, and rezone land adjacent to the Weathervane development from PIP to R-1. The Board recommended favorable action on all three requests.

One new subdivision, a four lot parcel off Westminster Road, was approved by the Board. Several Form A plans, road condition reviews, and performance bond actions were acted on by the Board this year. Monitoring of ongoing subdivisions continued. The bulk of the fall and winter was devoted to the preparation of the Capital Budget, which was completed and submitted for the Mayor's review on time. The Planning Board reviewed two preliminary subdivision plans to set residential density for proposed

development. The Weathervane development acquired additional land south of their project site and incorporated the property in the project. Tirrell Woods, a potential planned unit development behind the Weymouth Sportsmens Club was approved for forty-eight residential units.

The Board of Zoning Appeals had another active year, hearing forty-eight new cases over twenty-three meetings. While most of the cases were additions or alterations to single family homes, the following cases were of particular note: Pond Street 40B application for 24 housing units, conversion of Pond Meadow Nursing Home to 18 residential units, replacement of Walgreens at Independence Square with new building, and revisions to the Weathervane golf and housing development.

The Redevelopment Authority continued to oversee the new utility and roadway layout for the Echo Avenue neighborhood, just west of the south cove of Whitman's Pond. The final design was completed for the takings necessary to layout the new roadway. The Authority has scheduled construction bidding for August and intends to begin the project before the end of the year.

The office conducted three site plan reviews during the year. They included three two-family units near Whitman's Pond on Washington Street, a wireless communications structure in the Pilgrim Church steeple on Athens Street, and a [resubmitted](#) of an approved site plan for a separate apartment building to the rear of 706-708 Main Street.

#### CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Conservation Commission continued its efforts to administer, and enforce where necessary, the state Wetlands Protection Act and local wetlands ordinance. While larger development projects generally get more scrutiny and have the potential to harm wetland habitat, the many incidences of homeowners dumping debris and cutting brush and trees can also cause incremental damage to wetlands. These violations often go unnoticed and the Commission and staff relies on education and a vigilant public to assist the Commission in carrying out their duties. The Commission was pleased that the Mayor increased the hours for the Conservation Administrator which has helped on processing applications and oversight of projects.

The Commission acted on the following requests during the fiscal year.

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| Notices of Intent                           | - | 40 |
| Requests for Determination of Applicability | - | 21 |
| Certificates of Compliance                  | - | 12 |
| Request to Amend Order of Conditions        | - | 8  |
| Extensions to Order of Conditions           | - | 4  |
| Enforcement Orders                          | - | 11 |

The town required several reviews by the Commission on sewer, water, and parks improvement projects. These included the multi-phase main line sewer replacement project, improvements to the Winter Street water treatment plant and the pre-loading of Legion Field to compress the peat prior to restoring the recreation area. Commission staff monitored the Greenbush restoration project and the MWRA sewer replacement in the Fore River. Other projects of note include the 40B Pond Street residential project, the New England Wildlife Center and Weymouth Neck remediation by Conoco-Philips.

The Commission received \$4,950.50 in local fees and \$3,148.75 in state fees for a total of \$8,101.25 during the fiscal year.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The boards, commission, and staff want to thank the Mayor for his support during the year. We also acknowledge the assistance of the other town departments and interaction with the Town Council. We look forward to next year as we build on the accomplishments of the past.

Staff:

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