

WAYLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY



Cochituate Village Apartments Masonry Restorations

This was a banner year for the Wayland Housing Authority (WHA), as we celebrated the 40th anniversary of our incorporation and the 100th anniversary of the Cochituate School (now the Cochituate Village Apartments, a federally-subsidized apartment building for elders and people with disabilities). We also are enjoying great success with our Family Self-Sufficiency program, through which participating Section 8 rental assistance recipients receive guidance and support in taking charge of their lives – finding a job or training program, saving money for a home, and so on – and working toward independence from public subsidy. Finally, we have applied to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to include Bent Park, our state-governed apartments for elders and people with disabilities, in the federal program, which will allow the WHA to operate more efficiently and, we think, enhance the long-term viability of Bent Park. Read on for more details.

As you likely know, the WHA provides, maintains, administers, and advocates for housing for low- and moderate-income people in Wayland. Our housing programs include Bent Park Elderly Housing; Cochituate Village Apartments Elderly Housing; Family Scattered Site Public Housing; and Section 8 Voucher Rental Assistance Program, a federal program that pays rent to private landlords for qualified low-income tenants. The WHA also participates in the federal Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program, which encourages communities to develop local strategies to help public housing tenants and provides support services and information to Section 8 voucher families to help

them obtain employment that will lead to economic independence and self-sufficiency. The WHA's part-time FSS Caseworker manages the program and, through her outstanding efforts, the FSS program has exceeded the participant goals for the first year. The WHA and another housing authority will submit a joint application for funding to introduce the FSS program into the public housing program.

In 2009, the WHA was designated as a High Performing housing authority by the HUD Public Housing Public Assessment System. The WHA received high scores in the maintenance of physical assets, finance, administration, and resident relations. The WHA utilized HUD Capital Funds to repair the coping and front entrance entablature of the historic Cochituate Village Apartments. In addition, the WHA installed new sidewalks. The WHA has been working with the Town's Department of Public Works to address drainage problems on Bradford Street that adversely affect the Cochituate Village Apartments.

The WHA Board instituted a smoking ban in all common spaces. (The Board subsequently expanded the ban to prohibit smoking in individual apartments, effective in 2011. The WHA is one of the first housing authorities in the Commonwealth to ban smoking in apartments.)

As noted above, the WHA applied to HUD to add the state housing program at Bent Park to its federal portfolio. This unique opportunity resulted from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Transferring Bent Park will have little or no impact on our residents, but we expect that Bent Park's being in the federal portfolio will enhance its long-term financial and physical viability.

The WHA office is a resource for the Town on additional affordable housing programs, such as the Soft Second Loan Program (first-time homebuyer mortgage assistance); Affordable Accessory Apartment Program (incentives for construction of accessory apartments on Wayland homes for low-income tenants); and First-time Homeownership Programs.

The WHA works with Town boards and committees to foster development of affordable housing in Wayland. WHA representatives serve on the

Wayland Housing Partnership, the Community Preservation Committee, and the Master Plan Study Committee. Contact the WHA office or the Town Clerk for information about these positions.

At the WHA's Annual Meeting, the following officers were elected: Mary Antes, Chair; Susan Weinstein, Vice Chair; and Bret Francis, Treasurer.

We also report other notable happenings that affect affordable housing in Wayland:

Town Meeting voted to provide town-owned land on Stonebridge Road to Habitat for Humanity for the development of four affordable housing units. We applaud the Town's generosity and support.

The Town's Inclusionary Zoning By-law (§§198-2201 – 198-2211), which requires that affordable housing units be built in all developments of 6 or more units, is already having positive impacts on the town's affordable housing stock. We look forward to two units related to the "Covered Bridge" project on Rice Road and one unit with "Sage Hill" on Concord Road. We also anticipate two affordable housing units from the Michael Road development being constructed pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 40B, the Commonwealth's affordable housing development law.

In a difficult decision, Town Meeting reduced the number of required affordable housing units at the proposed Town Center from 22 to 12 one-bedroom units. These dwellings will be constructed atop a section of commercial units. It provides some solace to those who opposed the reduction that the developer is required to make a cash payment to the Town in consideration of this change.

The Town of Wayland became a member of the WestMetro Home Consortium, which may enable Wayland to access federal HOME funds for construction of affordable housing.

The WHA Board is assisting the Board of Selectmen to develop an affordable housing, open space, and septic plan for town-owned land on Doran Road. The Town received a \$35,000 grant from the Mass. Housing Partnership to study the feasibility of constructing affordable housing on the site. (Later, Town Meeting did not support an article submitted by abutting and nearby landowners to

place these parcels of land under conservation protection. Here again, the WHA appreciates the citizenry's interest in making informed decisions.) We eagerly await the results of the feasibility study and look forward to working collaboratively to find ways to address the many competing and compelling needs of our community.

The WHA Board acknowledges with gratitude its dedicated staff and applauds their accomplishments, both as indicated by regulatory agencies and by the results we see for ourselves. We also express our appreciation to the people of Wayland who volunteer, vote, and otherwise support affordable housing in our community.