May 2021

**Coalition to Create the Martha’s Vineyard Housing Bank (CCMVHB)** <https://www.ccmvhb.org/>               Contact: Laura Silber  laura@ccmvhb.org

***The Goal:***

**To preserve the Island community by establishing a regional Housing Bank that provides significant permanent funding to advance year-round housing.**

***The Mechanism:***

In conjunction with many other communities across the state, we are looking to fund that Housing Bank by establishing a **transfer fee on real estate transactions over a certain amount.  It is likely the first $1million of every transaction would be exempt.**

This would be to raise approximately $7-10 million/year, depending on how the fee is structured.

***The Process:***

We are pursuing a **two-pronged approach**:

1.   **Local level**: we are researching, seeking input from our town governments, involving town committees and community groups, and have held two Community Listening Sessions for public input. **Links to the Listening Session recordings are here, along with a working draft of the Proposed Housing Bank Parameters:** <https://www.ccmvhb.org/communitylistening>

**We will be working toward bringing resolutions to all 6 town meetings in Spring of 2022**.  If passed, these would enable MVY to pursue state approval for establishment of a regional Housing Bank to serve the entire island.

2.   **State level**: we are participating with a growing state-wide effort including Nantucket, Concord, Brookline, Somerville, Truro, and Boston <https://www.realestatetransferfee.org/>  to **support proposed state-wide enabling legislation that would allow real estate transfer fees to be established in Massachusetts to fund community housing.**

(see attached legislative summary)

***The CCMVHB Coalition:***

**The Steering Committee:**  We have 17 members, representing all 6 towns.

**The Coalition Council:** this is an actively participating group of approximately 90 members, including governmental representatives designated from each of the 6 select boards, representation from Dukes County Commission, MV Commission, the Tribal Council, Dukes County Regional Housing Authority, Dukes County Health Commission, and various agencies from across the island.

Members include public health workers, planning board members, workers in the building trades, first responders, business owners, educators, conservationists, professionals, and many others ranging in age from younger adults in their 20s all the way on up. We welcome more active participation.

**The Town Committees** - one for each Island town, with two important roles:

  1) community outreach to raise public awareness and engage public officials

  2) to function as the essential feedback loop to the Steering Committee by providing community input

***The Data:***

**The current median home price on the Vineyard is $1.15 million, and rising.**

* Only 38% MV housing is year-round.

* Over 700 MV families are waiting for affordable rentals

* 443 MV residents on waiting list to purchase affordable homes

* 21% of residents pay more than half their income for housing

* Over 18% of MV housing are short term rentals, averaging $3000/ week.

***The Future MV Housing Bank***:

**We envision the Housing Bank with a structure very similar to the successful Land Bank**.  6 elected commissioners (one from each town) plus a state governmental representative, and 6 town advisory boards that would have the final say-so on the use of funds for projects in their town.

**Toward that end, we envision keeping the Housing Bank administration as lean as possible**, and not duplicate the services of other existing island organizations, such as the Land Bank, and Dukes County Regional Housing Authority.  **The Land Bank has already committed as per their charter -- if the 6 towns vote to establish a Housing Bank -- to collect and process transfer fees on behalf of the Housing Bank.**

**We envision the Housing Bank primarily as a funding mechanism** which would accept proposals for funding from town affordable housing committees, Island Housing Trust, and other private developers.  To that end, it may also have the ability to receive, purchase, and grant, and sell land. **It would neither develop nor manage land.**  We are dedicated to ensuring that the maximum amount of funds collected are targeted at actual housing projects, rather than administrative costs. P.  2 of 3

**Our intent is to prioritize re-purposing existing housing stock, and focus on land that has already been developed.**  We are seeking collaboration from the Land Bank and other Island conservation groups to advance housing while preserving habitat.

**We are very cognizant of wastewater and nitrogen mitigation issues,** and are in conversation with the MV Commission and our legislative delegation to shape provisions in the Housing Bank design that would protect our aquifer. We are also pursuing climate change provisions on both the local and state level.

**We are looking to the experiences of other resort communities:**  The median sale price of an open-market single family home in Aspen, Colorado is currently over $10 million.  To keep their community and economy functioning, Aspen/Pitkin County has developed the longest-lived (30+ years) and most extensive community housing program in the US, specific to their needs.   We understand that we need to take action now, and also plan long term for our Island’s future.

**To that end, we are looking to expand the range of community members the Housing Bank funds could assist, to include our middle income year-rounders:** first responders, teachers, hospital workers, skilled tradespeople, small business owners, the entire spectrum of people who make up our island infrastructure.  Many make too much to qualify for support from existing affordable housing programs, yet are unable to afford to purchase a home at our current market prices.  Nor can they find a rental without cost-burdening the household – if any rental is even to be found. **Other similar communities have developed additional programs to support housing opportunities for a wider range of incomes.   Nantucket is partnering with CCMVHB to research these options, and to advocate for the islands’ unique needs at state level.**

**These innovative programs include:** down payment assistance, and expanding income limits on deed restricted properties, both for rentals and homeownership.  The goal is to keep our working population on-Island to keep our community functioning.

**The Coalition is dedicated to engaging our local governments and the Island community as we proceed.** More Community Listening Sessions will be held in Fall 2021.

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