

**From:** David Vigneault

**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2019 1:32 PM

**To:** Joan Malkin <joanmalkin@gmail.com>; Fred J. Hancock <fredupfront@comcast.net>

**Cc:** Adam Turner <turner@mvcommission.org>; 'Christine Flynn' <flynn@mvcommission.org>; Lucy Morrison <lcmorrison31@gmail.com>; Dan Seidman <dseidman@sprynet.com>; 'Ann Wallace' <awallace02535@gmail.com>; 'Harvey Beth' <hjbeth@yahoo.com>

**Subject:** RE: Housing Policy comment

Joan & Fred,

Thank you for last evening's opportunity to continue adding to your efforts to update the MVC Housing Policy.

Additional to the significant points made by others, I would like to summarize the three aspects of my comments last evening at the Commissioner's meeting.

1. The definition of and distinction between Affordable and Community Housing is an important addition to the draft Housing Policy. Martha's Vineyard is one of only two Massachusetts counties that can address and deed restrict important rental and ownership needs in that income range. However, developers considering their costs relative to owner/tenant incomes addressed should be faced with proportional choices, i.e., one unit at 80% income v. two units at 150% income. Operating within such a range of options might additionally allow the developer and the Commissioner to address the issue of "fractions" and any monetary mitigation, i.e., 10% of a fifteen unit project equaling one unit at 80% and one at 150%.
2. As regards the MVC use and definition of "Housing Entity" as the destination of any housing mitigation: Since 2000, the majority of housing mitigation offers have gone to the town in which development occurs. As such, not changing the current draft language would additionally allow the Commissioners consideration of any developer offer to specifically address a regional need such as housing for seniors or islanders with disabilities by selecting the Housing Entity most suited for that specific purpose.
3. Section 5.6 of the draft addressing Accessibility and Visit-ability is an important addition to the Housing Policy. However, the most important aspect of the three facets of visit-ability - a minimum of one zero step entrance to the building/unit - needs to be stated as a requirement. Without access to the building/unit the other two aspects of visit-ability are moot. The reasonable need to consider and reduce this practical and needed tenet of basic access is amply addressed in current draft language, i.e., "The Commission may waive or modify the requirements set forth in this section if it believes compliance would be unduly burdensome".

All the best in this important effort.

David

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**From:** Joan Malkin <[joanmalkin@gmail.com](mailto:joanmalkin@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2019 8:29 AM

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**Subject:** Re: Housing Policy comment

Thanks Doug. Fred will no doubt include your comments (and all the others) for discussion at our next meeting. I'm sure I speak for the committee when I express my gratitude for your thoughtful participation.

Joan Malkin  
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Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 21, 2019, at 7:38 AM, Doug Ruskin <[doug.ruskin@gmail.com](mailto:doug.ruskin@gmail.com)> wrote:

Hi Joan –

As requested, below are my comments to last night's meeting regarding the new Housing Policies. Please confirm receipt.

1. The draft document acknowledges that 10% may be “conservative” in the footnote 4 on page 6. I believe that 10% is definitely inadequate in light of the escalating problem. When I started working on this over 15 years ago, year-round rentals were not ubiquitous, but were available. Today there are none advertised or listed with realtors and only to be had by lucky word of mouth. In addition, the Housing Production Plans (HPP) referring to 10% are primarily linked to the state's housing inventory threshold of 10% which is measured only up to 80% AMI. While this remains the majority of the need, there is a growing shortage above that. The HPPs acknowledge that as well. As you know, even an income of 150% AMI cannot generally qualify for a Vineyard home when prices are starting around \$650K. Therefore 20% is a better figure. Though I respect the concern that it may be considered onerous, the point is that if a DRI has a housing impact it needs to be addressed at a level that can actually help.
2. All housing impacts must be considered. Having served on multiple non-profit boards, I am quite familiar with the monetary pressures and fund-raising challenges. But despite being non-profit, those organizations are businesses. If they expand and add staff, they need to be responsible for their impact on the community – no less than their benefit to it. Similarly for governmental entities. If you exempt them, then the need must be filled by others – which means everyone else should contribute beyond their direct impact. A slippery slope in my opinion...

To be clear, I do agree that any project with no demonstrable housing impact should be exempt, as should any project that includes sufficient units to mitigate its impact, provided they are perpetually restricted up to 100% AMI. The partial exemption for 100%-150% AMI also makes sense, though I urge that units be provided for the differential, not money (#3 below) .

3. Following on the last point in #1, units or land are far more necessary than money at this point. Monetary mitigation should only be used for fractional mitigation.
4. As mentioned by others, I agree that the determination of what AMI is to be served by the mitigation cannot be left solely to the applicant's discretion. I realize this may be a bit tricky, but there needs to be a formula or at least a mechanism – implemented by the MVC or perhaps the municipality involved – whereby that is not within the applicant's sole control.
5. It was stated at the meeting that the intensity codes in Appendix B were derived from a 2003 study. I am concerned about creating formulae based on 16-year old analysis. The codes should be supported by more recent data. In addition they are not entirely clear: If I have medical practice, am I a code 2 (professional services) or a 3? What about a single practitioner vs. a medical suite with multiple doctors? I would also argue that a distribution and wholesale, which involves customer traffic is a higher use than warehouse. A current study would help, though I would implement as written while such a study is underway.

Feel free to call or email if anything is unclear.

Thanks,  
Doug Ruskin  
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