

Regional Update

A Monthly Report of Activities on the Eastern Shore of Virginia

February 2006

\$1.2 Million in Funds Awarded for Housing Persons with Disabilities

HUD has announced the award of \$1.2 million to construct 15 apartments for persons with disabilities. The apartments will be located in Exmore on Occohannock Neck Road. HUD also awarded \$221,000 for 5 years to operate the apartments.

A national non-profit organization, Accessible Space, Inc. (ASI), will own and operate the apartments in partnership with the Eastern Shore Center for Independent Living (ESCIL), a regional service provider and advocate for persons with disabilities.

ASI was recruited by the Housing for Persons with Disabilities Task Force, a committee led by ESCIL Executive Director Althea Pittman. The Task Force was created to implement the recommendations of the Eastern Shore Regional Housing Strategic Plan prepared by the A-NPDC and adopted by Accomack County, Northampton County, and the Town of Chincoteague. A-NPDC staff also served on the Task Force.

“We are extremely pleased about this award. It will fill a critical unmet

need in our region,” said Pittman and A-NPDC Director Paul Berge. “We especially want to thank the Virginia Housing Development Authority and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development for recommending ASI and providing funds to hire them.”

ASI has developed 117 similar projects in 28 states since 1978, totaling 2,606 housing units. Shown below is The Sanderling, 19 apartments recently opened in Chesapeake, Virginia, by ASI.



The Sanderling, ASI apartments recently opened in Chesapeake, Virginia.

PDC Staff Warmly Welcome Keith Townsend and Mary Waldron

Mr. Keith Townsend has been hired to provide administrative support to various programs for the PDC. His duties also include greeting and assisting all visitors to the PDC.

Mr. Townsend is originally from the Eastern Shore having graduated from Arcadia High School in 1991. He left the Shore to attend Virginia Tech but returned here in 2005. He started January 16th. We warmly welcome Mr. Townsend to the PDC and look forward to working with him.



Ms. Mary Waldron has been hired to provide bookkeeping services to the PDC. She is also working on collections of past due accounts.

Ms. Waldron is originally from New Jersey and has started her own bookkeeping service, Marden Bookkeeping. She is also the Chairman of BusiNet and with her husband is working on teaching a ballroom dancing class at the ESO Arts Center. We warmly welcome Ms. Waldron to the PDC and look forward to working with her.



Accomack Manor Housing Production Project Underway

Accomack Manor construction of affordable senior housing has begun. The complex is located on a site near Rt 13 north of Bailey Road and west of the Town of Parksley. The building will have ninety units and provide one and two bedroom units. The facility will also offer community and fitness rooms and laundry facilities.

All the financing has been arranged and construction has been started. Currently, crews are preparing the site. Accomack County's CDBG financing will be used to put in the water and

sewage disposal systems. The development team is using tax credits and private financing to build the housing.

Within the next two weeks the water and sewage system contract will be bid. The Accomack-Northampton Regional Housing Assessment and Strategic Plan, adopted in June 2002, identified the need for 439 units of elderly housing. Accomack Manor will go a long way towards meeting these identified needs.

For more information, contact David Annis at (757)787-2936.

Virginia Natural Gas Study Released

On January 10, 2006, the Study of the Possibility of Exploring for Natural Gas in the Coastal Areas of the Commonwealth was released. The report concludes that Virginia should, if given the opportunity, allow exploration of natural gas in its Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) areas contingent on several conditions. An attachment showing a draft Joint Resolution for the General Assembly notes these conditions. One of these conditions states that no onshore facility could be located on the Eastern Shore.

Other conditions include requirements that no well be drilled within 50 miles of the shore. The revenue from the drilling will be shared with affected localities and can be used to support state response to other energy and environmental impacts, such as cleanup of the Bay and research into alternative energy resources.

The report states that "the Eastern Shore contains unique areas inconsistent with operation of natural gas or oil on-shore facilities." Other portions of the report state that a spill could hurt our tourism base and Virginia's tourism brand.

At this time no one knows if significant deposits of natural gas are on Virginia's portion of the OCS. Exploring would answer those questions. If natural gas is found and drilling ensues it appears that the Eastern Shore might benefit from some shared payments and royalties. Other benefits such as job creation are in doubt. Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth of Virginia appear to be the ones that get the lion's share of the benefits.

PSA To Relocate to Northampton

At the December 12, 2006 regular Board meeting of the ESVPSA, it was decided that the single entity Authority would be better situated in Northampton County. This change will become effective on July 1, 2006.

All current projects are now in Northampton County and include the eventual operation of the Bayview Project's Wastewater Treatment System and Public Drinking Water Infrastructure, potential oversight and operation of the Eastville administrative complex sewer and public water systems, and potential surface drainage projects in Northampton County.

Artie Miles, Public Services Director Resigns

Public Services Director Arthur C. (Artie) Miles recently submitted his resignation from the ESVPSA. It will be effective at the end of January. He will have responsibilities with the Virginia operations of George, Miles & Buhr, LLC, an engineering and architectural firm based in Salisbury, Maryland.

Paul Berge, Executive Director of the ESVPSA and the A-NPDC said, "Artie has been a valuable asset in dealing with the Authority's existing and proposed projects during two and half years of dynamic change for the ESVPSA. We wish him well at GMB."



How to Contact the A-NPDC

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