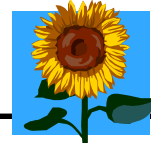


Regional Update

A Monthly Report of Activities on the Eastern Shore of Virginia



June 2007

Accomack-Northampton Regional Housing Authority Re-Opens Onancock Square

Federal, state, county and town officials joined the Accomack-Northampton Regional Housing Authority Board and staff, Onancock Square Apartments residents, and the Apartments' former owner to celebrate completion of the substantial renovations to the 40-unit Apartments.

Over \$1.3 million was spent on renovations to the 20-year-old affordable apartment units. The former owner, Bob Margolis of TM Associates, and his staff prepared the successful funding applications for the \$3.2 million project and served as managers of the development project, which included the purchase for the Apartments by the Authority.



Onancock Square resident, Linda White cutting the Re-Opening ribbon



Ms. Linda White, a resident of the Apartments since their opening in 1987, cut the ribbon. Onancock Mayor Bruce Paone, Authority Chair Steve Miner, Margolis, and contractor Larry Canterbury addressed the gathering.

The history of Onancock Square starts in 1982 when a town revitalization plan identified the undeveloped "Pennewell Subdivision" as a potential location for affordable multi-family rental housing. When Marvin Masur, builder of the Sea Breeze Apartments in Cape Charles, approached the Town in 1984 about building a similar project in Onancock, town leaders steered Masur to the plan-identified site.

Masur and his partner, Herbert V. Kelly, Esq., both of Newport News, secured a \$1.25 million loan from the U.S. Farmers Home Administration and completed construction in 1987. Margolis purchased the Apartments in 1996 and owned them until the sale to the Authority in June 2006.

In addition to complete renovations of all 40 apartments, the project built a new playground, re-paved the parking lot, and constructed a community meeting room that will be available to the tenants for community events, and to other local agencies that provide support services to the tenants. The renovation included installing new roofs and roof sheathing, siding, windows and doors, exterior lighting, heat pumps, kitchen cabinets and appliances, and floor coverings. Three of the units are handicap accessible.



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Housing Authority Receives Planning Grants

The A-NRHA has received \$30,000 in grants from the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) and The Norfolk Foundation to do further planning and design of the proposed workforce housing development on Occohannock Neck Road in Exmore.

The A-NRHA has a contract to purchase a 54-acre parcel to develop affordable housing. Initial concepts for the development include homes for families with income ranging from \$25,000

to \$90,000. Both rental and home ownership markets would be addressed. Green space, energy efficient structures, passive recreational facilities, modern telecommunications services, and other amenities are being studied.

The Norfolk Foundation provided a \$20,000 grant to match the VHDA's \$10,000 grant. Mike Hawkins of the VHDA presented a check to members of the A-NRHA Board on May 7. It is anticipated that the plans will be completed by October.



(L-R) Lee Mapp and Katie Nunez of the A-NRHA, Mike Hawkins of VHDA, Paul Berge, A-NRHA Executive Director.

Coastal PDC's Hold Quarterly Meeting at A-NPDC

The Coastal Planning District Commissions held their quarterly meeting at the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission in Accomac on May 22, 2007. The purpose of the meeting was to have the Executive Directors and Environmental Programs staff gather to give updates and discuss current projects that receive funding through the Coastal Technical Assistance Grants.

After the meeting, the committee met with Lynn Gayle, a local farmer, to learn about plasticulture. Plasticulture is practiced to create a micro-environment for certain plants, such as tomatoes. The committee learned how the use of plasticulture and drip irrigation is an effective method of applying water and nutrients to crops. This results in disease reduction and crop yield increases.



Coastal PDC Staff listen as Lynn Gayle describes plasticulture farming methods.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Progress

Virginia Tech's Office of Economic Development has nearly completed its study of the Eastern Shore's economic development conditions. The next step is to present the study in public meetings. The meetings will be structured to solicit citizen feedback, develop action items and build consensus on a prioritized list, and to discuss how to implement the projects with available or acquired resources.

Northampton County has scheduled its public meeting for Thursday, June 28, 2007, from 6:00 – 9:30 p.m. at the Northampton Middle School. More information about the meeting will be provided closer to the date. Accomack County has not yet scheduled its meeting.

For more information, contact Barbara Schwenk at the A-NPDC; email: bschwenk@a-npdc.org or phone: 757-787-2936 x115.

A-NPDC and A-NHRC Elect New Officers for 2007

The Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission held their annual election of officers on April 16, 2007. The following officers were elected for a one-year term:

Chair: Andrew R. Barbour;
Vice Chair: C. Reneta Major;
Executive Committee Member:
Gwendolyn F. Turner

The Accomack-Northampton Housing and Redevelopment Corporation elected new officers at their May 23, 2007 Meeting. The following officers were elected for a one-year term:

President: Anthony P. Sacco;
Vice President: J. W. Jeffries;
Treasurer: Diana Giddens;
Secretary: Paul F. Berge

Staff Meet with Rotary Club Team Member from England

On May 8, 2007, Rachel Sellwood, Deputy Chief Executive of the East Kent Cyrenians of Canterbury, met with A-NPDC Executive Director Paul Berge, Director of Housing Development Kat Edwards and Community Development Coordinator Patti Merritt for an overview of housing programs administered by the A-N Regional Housing Authority and A-N Housing and Redevelopment Corp. Ms. Sellwood is one member of a team from England sponsored by the local Exmore Rotary Club as part

of a Group Study Exchange to Virginia during April and May 2007.

The team (which included a history teacher, a litigation lawyer, a reporter/broadcaster, the team leader—a longtime member and President of the Rotary in Dover, and Ms. Sellwood) was to visit various Rotary Clubs throughout Virginia to observe management practices and share information with their counterparts in this country. Ms. Sellwood, who has worked in voluntary sector social housing, hoped to gain an understanding of social housing issues in America. Information was provided on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, the Homeless Intervention Program, Home Ownership Programs, Indoor Plumbing/Rehab Program, and Housing Opportunities for People With Aids.



(L-R) Kat Edwards, Rachel Sellwood, & Patti Merritt



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