

HEALTHY AGING MARTHA'S VINEYARD

Making Martha's Vineyard an Aging-Friendly Island

June 2016

Mr. Michael E. Festa, State Director
AARP Massachusetts
One Beacon Street, Suite 2301
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Mr. Festa:

We, the (6) six towns of Martha's Vineyard, are pleased to state we are committed to working together with Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard (HAMV) to make Martha's Vineyard an Aging-Friendly Island. To help us achieve that objective, we seek to have the Vineyard designated as a World Health Organization (WHO) and AARP Massachusetts Age-Friendly Community, and join your network so we can work with AARP and with other like-minded communities.

Few places will feel the impact of aging baby boomers as much as the Vineyard. Official State forecasts indicate that the Island's 65+ population will grow 134% between 2010 and 2030, while the U.S. grows 81%, and Massachusetts only grows 61%. One in every six Islanders was over the age of 65 in 2010, but by 2030, it will be one in three. We face major challenges meeting the needs of this growing population, because we are a small, isolated community with a high cost of living and limited access to health care.

HAMV was created in November 2013 to help address these challenges. It is a Committee of Dukes County Health Council and is made up of over 75 people, including leaders of more than 35 organizations that serve Island elders.

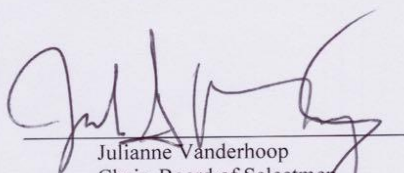
HAMV is well into the process of creating a community-wide action plan, which we hope to have completed later this year. More specifically:

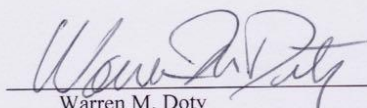
- HAMV conducted a needs assessment of Island elders in the fall of 2015. The survey was mailed to every resident age 65 and older, and we had a response rate of 49%. The survey allowed our elders, especially the most vulnerable, to tell us what their needs are, and it gave us a baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the Island.

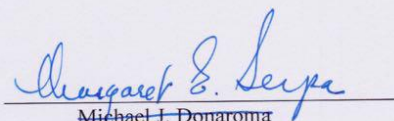
- Based on the survey results, HAMV has set priorities and is now developing a community-wide action plan using a data-driven, outcomes-based strategic planning model called: Results Based Accountability.
- HAMV has established Work Groups to develop strategies in specific areas/domains: Challenges in Health and Mental Health Care; Aging in Community; Transportation; and Caregiver Support. Each group will develop a way for the voices of our most vulnerable elders to be reflected in shaping those plans.

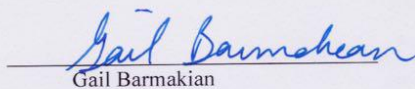
The (6) six towns of Martha's Vineyard and HAMV look forward to working with AARP Massachusetts in making Martha's Vineyard an Aging-Friendly Island.

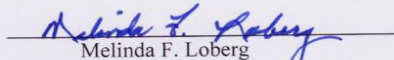
Very truly yours,

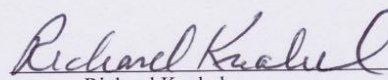

Julianne Vanderhoop
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Town of Aquinnah, MA


Warren M. Doty
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Town of Chilmark, MA


Michael J. Donaroma
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Town of Edgartown, MA


Gail Barmakian
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Town of Oak Bluffs, MA


Melinda F. Loberg
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Town of Tisbury, MA


Richard Knabel
Chair, Board of Selectmen
Town of West Tisbury, MA