

Affordable Housing Opportunity **By John Petrin, Town Manager**

Through working with developers over the years under the rules of Chapter 40B, affordable housing units have been created and sold to people who qualify. From time to time these units are available for resale. When units do become available for resale, they must be done through the current guidelines as approved by the State. The Town currently has two of these units available in the Village of the Americas.

Affordable housing is housing which is reserved for, and affordable to, families or individuals who make less than 80% of median household income for the area, as determined by US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The 80% Income Guidelines are adjusted according to the number of persons in the household as follows: 1 PERSON: \$46,300; 2 PERSON: \$52,950; 3 PERSON: \$59,550; 4 PERSON: \$66,150. Thus, in general terms, a four person family with income less than \$66,150 would qualify to purchase affordable housing. It should be noted however, that any assessment for eligibility, for individuals or households, depends on a variety of factors including debt and asset levels. Prospective applicants for affordable housing should be pre-approved by a lender.

To be considered affordable, housing must be priced so that a qualifying household will spend no more than 30-33% of their annual income on housing. Calculations of affordability must include consideration of interest rates, related fees, real estate taxes, insurance and other factors. In approximate terms, an affordable housing unit in Ashland, in 2010, might be in the region of \$173,500. The affordable units in the Americas Boulevard Condominiums development are priced at \$173,500 for the two bedroom units.

The units available have 1,800 square feet with at least 2 bathrooms and garage space for two vehicles. If you think you may qualify and have interest in this opportunity, please contact the Board of Selectmen's office.

This beautiful weather has created water drought issues for us. At their meeting of September 8th, the Board of Selectmen voted to re-implement water restrictions to Level 1 while allowing the use of water to wash vehicles. The lack of rain is putting our wells in a potentially dangerous situation, thus the need to continue water restrictions. Please stay in tune to the situation as it moves into October.

Ashland Day is happening on Saturday, September 25. This is the 25th anniversary of the event. What an event it has been. They will commemorate this year's anniversary with a spectacular fireworks display at the Hopkinton State Park beach. There has been a solid core of people who have tirelessly worked to put on this event each year. It is a wonderful way to showcase our community. Thanks to the Ashland Day Committee for all that they do to make us a premier community. Let's hope that this beautiful weather continues through that weekend.

A group of people are forming a new non-profit group to support teen activities in Town. They are calling themselves Ashland Teen Advisory Committee (ATAC). These adults will support the Ashland Coalition for Teens (ACT). Their goal is to develop activities for teens. Their first venture will be an outdoor bonfire and gathering. Please stay in touch for details on the event being planned for October and future activities. Thanks to this fine group of community leaders for caring and acting.

Please remember the Food Pantry for donations of food and household goods. Donations can be made by dropping off items at public buildings such as the Post Office. Your consideration is appreciated. Please also consider a financial donation to **The Ashland Emergency Fund**, at P.O. Box 112, Ashland, MA 01721. The Fund supports residents in need and the Food Pantry.

To follow what is happening in your community, follow the events and happenings in the MetroWest Daily News and WACA-TV as they provide superb coverage. Our website at www.AshlandMass.com has been recently revamped. There is much information on the site for you to peruse. We are the recent recipient of the Common Cause Massachusetts 2010 e-Government Award with Distinction for our website. We are proud recipients of their highest award.