

The Pierce family story illustrates what can happen when we don't build enough housing to sustain the economy. Michael and Michelle Pierce grew up in Groton, got married, settled in southern New Hampshire and lived on Michael's \$22-an-hour salary as a sheet metal fabricator in Methuen, making things like chassis for large computers.

As expenses grew, they decided to try North Carolina. But finding the right job proved difficult, so they came back. Mike got his old job back, they lived with his mother for a while before finding a \$916-per month apartment at Sandy Pond Road in Groton. They love everything about it except that it's a two-bedroom. With home prices still high, moving down south is still on the table.

"The reason why so many people are heading south is because there's a lot more variety in housing," said Michael. "There are \$700,000 houses and \$180,000 houses. We aren't looking for something luxurious, just something reasonable."

Sandy Pond Road was created through Groton's inclusionary zoning bylaw, which requires that 15 percent of the units must be affordable in new developments of 10 units or more. When a builder proposed 84 single-family homes, the town allowed the affordable units to be built on a nearby site owned by the builder. The town wanted these units developed as rental housing and explored having the housing authority buy the units.

MHP helped the housing authority negotiate the terms of the purchase and then helped finance the purchase through a state pilot program that promotes small-scale production in smaller communities.

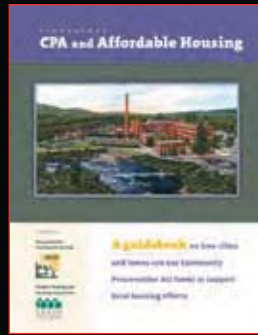
The Pierce family at home in Groton

Michael and Michelle Pierce with children Mikaela and Jonathan

Quest for affordability in the 'burbs



Helping the Groton Housing Authority is just one example of how MHP supports communities. MHP holds trainings for local officials and



It all starts in the community

provides staff and financial support to communities trying to build affordable housing.

Special events in 2007 included training for housing authorities and a

two-day intensive housing institute. In 2008, MHP will co-sponsor a new planning grant program for housing authorities and will publish a new guidebook on how to use Community Preservation Act Funds for affordable housing.



Sandy Pond Road

The Groton Housing Authority

MHP supports communities

MHP's Community Housing Initiatives team provides sustained advice and technical assistance to communities and housing authorities. Ongoing efforts receiving MHP support include:

Foxborough— Provided technical assistance to the housing authority and also a \$2.68 million first mortgage and a \$750,000 deferred payment second mortgage for the construction of 18 rental units on a former state hospital site.

Groton— MHP provided technical assistance to the housing authority and also a \$507,000 first mortgage loan to help purchase nine rental units built through an inclusionary zoning bylaw triggered by another development in town.

Hingham— MHP is providing technical assistance to the Hingham Housing Authority for the development of 50 units on a former military site.

Provincetown— MHP is providing technical assistance to help identify a developer who will construct at least 40 units of mixed-income housing.

Westport— MHP is providing technical assistance for the development of 54 affordable units on two town-acquired sites. A developer has been chosen and the project is in the permitting process.
