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Morgan Woods developed by Community Builders wins ULI award

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At their 2008 Fall Meeting, Urban Land Institute (ULI) honored Morgan Woods, developed by The Community Builders Inc. (TCB and designed by Winslow Architects, Inc. of Arlington, the J. Ronald Terwilliger Workforce Housing Model of Excellence Award. This award is given in recognition of exemplary developments that meet workforce housing needs in high cost communities.

Award winning Morgan Woods is located on Martha's Vineyard and was inspired by the need to house the many locals who often times had to move off island to accommodate the Vineyard's influx of summer residents. Here the "Island Shuffle" occurs whereby many of the locals pack their belongings and leave their homes on the island because they simply can't afford the price of rental property during the summer tourist season. Many live out of their cars or move to the mainland. The victims of this "shuffle" include teachers, firefighters and municipal employees.

As a means of putting an end to this migration, the Town of Edgartown donated 12 acres of land and selected TCB and its architect - Winslow Architects, Inc. - to oversee the design and development of what is now known as Morgan Woods, a 60-unit affordable housing complex located next to a nature conservancy.

Winslow Architects responded to the requirements of the town by designing buildings that "disguised" multifamily housing within building types that reflected typical New England architecture including main houses, sheds and barns. As a result, Morgan Woods offers 60 units of housing arranged within 21 buildings giving the appearance of single-family homes complete with wooden shingles, weather clapboards, front porches and individual entries.

Not only did Winslow Architects have to design the development within affordable means but they also had to take into account that getting workers and materials onto the island can easily increase costs by 25%. To make this project financially feasible, Winslow Architects designed Morgan Woods utilizing modular construction and worked with Williams Building Company of West Yarmouth and Keiser Industries of Oxford, Me. to construct the modular development.

Morgan Woods has won several awards and is now viewed as a significant model of how to meet workforce housing needs in high cost communities.

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