

VHDA Extends SPARC Deadline

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Due to a slow housing market, Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) has extended the deadline to apply for a low-interest home loan through its SPARC (Sponsoring Partnerships and Revitalizing Communities) program.

As a result of the SPARC program, qualifying residents of the Town of Pulaski have the opportunity to apply for low-interest home loans. The deadline for applying to receive a portion of the \$1 million set aside for Pulaski residents has been extended from June 30 to the end of this year.

“VHDA recognizes that the slow real estate market may have impacted your ability to utilize your current allocation of SPARC funds,” a VHDA e-mail to the town states. It goes on to say that the extension “should provide ample time to exhaust your allocations, while providing for a new transition to” the agency’s newly-designed program.

According to the e-mail, the SPARC program is being redesigned because an evaluation determined most of the citizens benefiting from “this scarce resource (statewide) would have qualified for VHDA financing utilizing our standard prevailing interest rate.”

SPARC loans provide loans at interest rates ranging from half to a full percent below VHDA’s prevailing rates at the time of closing.

Redesigning the program, the e-mail indicates, will “ensure this valuable resource assists those individuals and communities most in need.”

The Town of Pulaski is in its fifth year of qualifying to receive SPARC funds.

Whether the town will continue to qualify for funds under the redesigned program will not be known until the program changes have been announced.

The purpose of SPARC is to promote affordable housing for first-time homebuyers. People who have not owned a home for three years met this qualification under the original program.

This year, the Town of Pulaski is targeting households with annual incomes ranging from \$34,500 to \$46,000. Selected applicants can either purchase or build a home valued up to \$225,100.

The town covers the cost of required home inspections and waives building permit fees on SPARC loans.

Applications for SPARC loans may be made through VHDA-approved lenders or the applicant’s personal lender. Area approved lenders include Suntrust Mortgage, Bank of America and Stellar One.

Those interested in a loan may contact Pulaski’s Town Managers Office at 994-8600.