

# PLYMOUTH COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS

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JOHN R. BUCKLEY, JR., REGISTER OF DEEDS  
PLYMOUTH COUNTY REAL ESTATE ACTIVITY FOR MARCH 2012

## REAL ESTATE ACTIVITY ON THE RISE IN PLYMOUTH COUNTY

This time last month, Plymouth County Register of Deeds John R. Buckley, Jr. reported what he saw as signs of life in the Plymouth County real estate market. That certainly appears to be the case as the first quarter comes to a close, with significant increases in the number of sales, refinances, foreclosure sales and new foreclosure filings in comparison to the first quarter of 2011.

The Registry of Deeds recorded 612 deeds in March, up from 531 in February and 454 in January, bringing the total for the quarter to 1,597. During the same period in 2011, the Registry recorded 1,366 sales. "We haven't seen an increase in the number of sales over the course of an entire quarter in quite some time," Buckley said. "In the first quarter of this year, we saw a 17% jump over the first quarter of 2011."

Refinance activity is also on the rise. Plymouth County recorded 2,228 mortgages in March, up from 1,953 in February and 1,940 in January. "We had 1,635 mortgages come across our counters in March of last year," Buckley reported. "That's a 36% jump for the month of March." Over the course of the quarter as a whole, Plymouth County saw a 17% increase in volume, from 5,247 mortgages recorded in the first quarter in 2011 to 6,121 recorded during the same period this year.

The number of sales taking place by way of foreclosure also rose in the first quarter of 2012. Plymouth County recorded 291 foreclosure deeds through March of this year, up 38% from the 211 foreclosure deeds recorded in the first quarter of 2011. Similarly, Buckley reported a jump in the number of foreclosure notices for the first quarter. In 2011, Plymouth County recorded 383 notices initiating new foreclosures over the course of the first three months. This year, that number jumped to 577.

There has actually been a downward trend in the degree to which the number of foreclosure filings this year exceed those recorded in 2011. Plymouth County saw an 83% spike in foreclosure deeds in January of this year in comparison to January of 2011. That number fell to 78% when comparing volume through the first two months of this year to January and February of 2011. For the quarter, that number has fallen further, to 51%. "That's an encouraging trend," Buckley observed. "By the same token, "we are still looking at 51% increase in the number of foreclosures for that three month period."

Buckley added, “there has been a perception in recent months, shared by realtors and attorneys who we come into contact with at the registry, that the real estate market is gradually getting healthier. Our numbers over the course of the first quarter would suggest that to be the case. The foreclosure numbers continue to be of great concern to me, but the upward trend in sales is very positive.”

If you would like to receive a copy of our monthly report by e-mail, please contact Assistant Register of Deeds Michael P. Holden at [holden@plymouthdeeds.org](mailto:holden@plymouthdeeds.org).

REAL ESTATE ACTIVITY THROUGH MARCH 2012  
COMPARED TO THE SAME PERIOD IN 2011

All figures are based on sales or mortgages between \$25,000.00 and \$3,000,000.

2012 sales volume: 1,597  
2011 sales volume: 1,366  
(17% increase)

2012 total sales value: \$441,592,223  
2011 total sales value: \$399,214,960  
(11% increase)

2012 average sales price: \$276,514  
2011 average sales price: \$292,251  
(5% decrease)

2012 mortgage volume: 6,121  
2011 mortgage volume: 5,247  
(17% increase)

2012 average mortgage amount: \$245,256  
2011 average mortgage amount: \$251,999  
(3% decrease)

2012 foreclosure deeds: 291  
2011 foreclosure deeds: 211  
(38% increase)

2012 foreclosure notices: 577  
2011 foreclosure notices: 383  
(51 % increase)

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Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell Reports on Real Estate Activity in Norfolk County  
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First Quarter Real Estate Activity Report  
Norfolk County Registry of Deeds 649 High Street Dedham, MA 02026  
Contact Marguerite Lee (781) 461-6143 with any questions  
RE: PRESS RELEASE Norfolk County First Quarter Real Estate Activity Report

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell reported today on real estate activity in Norfolk County during the period January 1, 2012 through March 31, 2012.

"The first quarter of 2012 revealed positive signs of growth and potential," reflected Register O'Donnell. Specifically, O'Donnell pointed to the 3,209 Norfolk County deeds that were recorded during 2012's first quarter, representing a 19% improvement from 2011's first quarter. O'Donnell explained that sales were not the only area to experience growth, "Over the past three months 44,491 documents were filed at the Registry compared to last year's total of 39,114. Part of this 14% spike in activity is owed to renewed Norfolk County mortgage activity." During the first three months of this year, 10,213 new mortgages were recorded, 29% more than 2011's first quarter. Total mortgage indebtedness jumped 74% and settled at \$2.2 billion. Also contributing to the number of records filed, Norfolk County homeowners filed 3,040 Declarations of Homestead between January 1st and March 31st, 64% more than the same period last year.

In comparison to the sheer volume of activity during the year's first quarter, total dollar amounts connected with property sales remained low. The total dollar volume of real estate sales in Norfolk County topped at \$773 million. This figure, which encompasses both commercial and residential sales, represents a drop from 2011's \$832 million amount for first quarter sales. The average sale price of deeds fell countywide as well. For sales over \$1,000 (both residential and commercial properties) the average price was \$506,545, 21% less than the same period last year. Register O'Donnell noted, "It will be interesting to watch the next quarter of the year as to whether prices follow sales and begin to improve."

One aspect of the Registry of Deeds recordings increase viewed closely is foreclosures. Foreclosure activity in Norfolk County contributed to the first quarters' raised document count with 170 filings from January 1 to March 31. This represents a 102% spike from last year. The 170 homes foreclosed upon during this period are not necessarily new to the process but most likely part of a backlog formed in response to a judicial mandate that banks and lenders clean up their record keeping prior to foreclosing. "Regardless of whether you just received your first Notice to Foreclose or have been living with the prospect of losing your home for more than a year the reality is frightening," asserts O'Donnell, "so here at the Registry we provide homeowners by way of our website [www.norfolkdeeds.org](http://www.norfolkdeeds.org) important state and federal resource information regarding foreclosures and mortgages as well as contact information for agencies offering assistance and counseling services."

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, located at 649 High Street, Dedham, is the principal office for real property in Norfolk County. The Registry is the basic resource for homeowners, title examiners, mortgage lenders, municipalities and others with a need for secure, accurate, accessible land record information. The Registry land records back to the founding of Norfolk County in 1793 are available for online viewing. The Registry's online index is available from 1900 forward and continues to expand to include earlier records. Complementing the Registry's efforts to expand and increase the accessibility of land records the Registry now accepts electronically transmitted documents. "E-filing" allows a real estate professional from not only Norfolk County but from across the country to send and record documents within minutes at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds. To learn more about this technology and/or the other services offered by the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds please contact our Customer Service Department at 781-461-6101, or on the internet at [www.norfolkdeeds.org](http://www.norfolkdeeds.org).