



THE 19 MEMBERS of the Cape Cod Commission board—all citizen volunteers—include:

- one member appointed to a three-year term by the Board of Selectmen from Brewster, Bourne, Chatham, Dennis, Eastham, Falmouth, Harwich, Mashpee, Orleans, Provincetown, Sandwich, Truro, Wellfleet, and Yarmouth;
- one member appointed to a three-year term by the Town Manager from Barnstable;
- three members appointed annually by the Barnstable County Commissioners (one County Commissioner, one Native American, and one Minority Representative); and,
- one Governor’s Appointee, who is a non-voting member with a term that coincides with that of the Governor of Massachusetts.



All Cape Cod Commission members receive and evaluate information from the agency’s staff members; consider policies to guide many of the agency’s activities; and make decisions about development proposals under the agency’s regulatory jurisdiction.



A Commitment...with Many Rewards

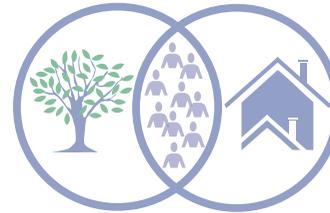
Each member is a liaison to the Commission from his or her community, and vice versa. Participation as a member also provides a unique opportunity to learn about other communities in this special place and to participate in important policy- and decision-making that can affect all of Cape Cod. Many members remain participants for several terms, which is a testimony to the stimulating and meaningful role that a Cape Cod Commission member has.

One job of Commission members is to review development proposals to ensure their adherence with the standards of the Regional Policy Plan (RPP). Commission members commit to reviewing materials, attending public hearings, and participating in discussions during public meetings that determine the outcome of the reviews. In return, Commission members...

- ✓ learn about the economy, environment, and culture of all 15 Cape towns;
- ✓ meet fascinating people; and,
- ✓ see interesting places that help make Cape Cod unique and valued by so many.

Participatory Government

The full 19-member Cape Cod Commission board generally meets in public session every other Thursday. Meetings are often held in the afternoon in the First District Courthouse of the Barnstable County complex (off Route 6A) in the village of Barnstable, although the time and location may vary.



In addition, Commission members may also be asked by the board’s chairman (who is elected by the members annually) to serve on one of three “standing committees”: Planning, Regulatory, or Executive. The standing committees generally meet in the Cape Cod Commission office every other Monday.

Better Development

Commission members also serve on regulatory subcommittees to review specific Development of Regional Impact (DRI) proposals. Here, members rely on the technical expertise of the agency’s staff to gather and interpret data and provide advice on the interpretation of the RPP’s standards. The evaluation of that data and the decision-making itself are vested in Commission members, however, not in staff. In this way, members serve as “quasi-judicial” officials.

DRI subcommittees review applications, materials, and reports; participate in site visits; conduct required public hearings (often in the evening); and attend public meetings (day or evening) during which they discuss issues and concerns and then formulate recommendations that are later finalized by a vote of the full Commission board.

Whenever possible, the first public hearing for each DRI is held in the town in which the project is proposed. Other hearings and meetings may also be held in that town, or in Barnstable.

Community Involvement

Each Commission member makes periodic reports about the agency’s activities to his/her own Board of Selectmen (or the Town Council, in the case of Barnstable). Within the limits defined by the state’s Open Meeting Law and the agency’s own Public Relations Policy and Communications Policy for Cape Cod Commission Members, members make themselves available to answer questions, provide information to town officials and residents, and submit annual reports about the agency’s non-regulatory activities and accomplishments.



Regional Influence

Cape Cod Commission members are an advisory board that guides many of the agency’s policies and initiatives and upholds the Cape Cod Commission Act and ordinances adopted by Barnstable County’s regional government. In addition, officers—usually the chairman—may also be appointed to represent the agency on special committees or other boards, for example, those that oversee transportation planning activities throughout the region.



Keeping a Special Place...Special

THE CAPE COD COMMISSION is the regional planning, economic development, and regulatory agency serving Barnstable County, Massachusetts, a region better known as “Cape Cod.” The Commission was created by an act of the Massachusetts state legislature, confirmed by a majority of Barnstable County voters in 1990.



The Cape Cod Commission is one of the 14 regional planning agencies (RPAs) in Massachusetts. RPAs help communities within their jurisdictions to plan and implement short- and long-range improvements for land use, environmental, economic development, community development, and transportation needs.

In addition to being one of the state’s regional planning agencies, the Cape Cod Commission is also considered to be one of the departments under the structure of Barnstable County regional government (see back panel of this brochure). The Commission is separately funded, however, through the Cape Cod Environmental Protection Fund, which the state legislature established through the same act that formed the Commission itself.



Members Support the Mission

The Cape Cod Commission’s mission is to keep a special place special.

Commission members and staff work with Cape Cod residents, town officials, business and non-profit organizations, and state and federal agencies to manage growth, protect the region’s unique environment and character, and foster a diverse economy and vibrant communities for present and future generations.

Among the Cape Cod Commission’s many significant responsibilities, the agency prepares and implements a regional land use policy, known as the Regional Policy Plan (RPP), for all of Barnstable County. Once approved through a public hearing process of the regional government, the RPP defines standards for major development proposals throughout Cape Cod. The Commission initiates a thorough review of the RPP at least once every five years (and can propose adjustments more often) through a process that solicits input from all residents and local officials.



Barnstable County Regional Government

The basic structure of Barnstable County’s regional government includes:

- Barnstable County Commissioners, the executive branch, which is a three-member board, each of whom is elected to a four-year term by Cape Cod voters. The board proposes the county budget and oversees county operations, facilities, and the activities of county departments, including the Cape Cod Commission.
- Assembly of Delegates, the legislative branch, which has one delegate from each of the 15 towns, elected to two-year terms by town voters. The Assembly approves the county budget and regulations and ordinances that affect all of Cape Cod.
- County departments, which serve varied constituents across Cape Cod, include the Cape Cod Commission, the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension, Children’s Cove Child Advocacy Center, the County Clerk, the Department of Health and Environment, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Finance and Treasurer’s Office, the County Dredge, the Facilities Department, the Fire/Rescue Training Academy, the Information Technology Department, the Registry of Deeds, the Resource Development Office/AmeriCorps Cape Cod, the Retirement Association, the Cape Cod Water Protection Collaborative, and the Cape Cod Economic Development Council.

The Roles and Responsibilities of Cape Cod Commission Members



CAPE COD
COMMISSION

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