



# Cape Cod Commission and the TOWN OF EASTHAM

January 2004

Representation on the Cape Cod Commission provides each Cape Cod town with opportunities to participate in setting regional policy and to advocate for the town's interests in land use planning and regulatory matters at regional, state, and federal levels.

Committees and councils on which Cape Cod Commission members and staff participate include the Barnstable County HOME Consortium Advisory Council; the Barnstable County Wastewater Implementation Committee; the Bays Legal Fund and the Massachusetts Bays Program; the Cape Cod Groundwater Guardian Team; the Cape Cod Joint Transportation Committee, the Cape Cod Transit Task Force, and the Cape Cod Metropolitan Planning Organization; the Massachusetts Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste Advisory Committees; and more.

The Cape Cod Commission provides services and coordinates activities in these major areas:

- **planning and community development**, which includes community character, design, and historic preservation; economic development; and natural resources and land protection;
- **affordable housing**;
- **geographic information system (GIS)**;
- **transportation**;
- **waste management**; and
- **water and coastal resources**.

## *EASTHAM NOTES:*

*Eastham benefits from its membership in the Cape Cod Commission by being able to take advantage of the Commission's planning and technical expertise (see specifics that follow) and by being able to influence the outcome of development proposals that occur both within its boundaries and outside of them, most notably in the neighboring towns of the Outer Cape.*

# Regional Planning and Technical Assistance

## Planning and Community Development

- The Commission prepares, revises, and implements the Cape Cod **Regional Policy Plan** and supports the development, revision, and implementation of **Local Comprehensive Plans (LCPs)**.
- To support local planning and growth-management efforts, the Commission prepared 14 **model bylaws** for towns to consider adapting to their needs. In addition, the Commission prepared a manual to guide the design of developments in communities, **Designing the Future to Honor the Past**.
- In cooperation with other economic development and business groups, the Commission prepares the annual **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Cape Cod**, which helps make Cape towns eligible for funds from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to support job-creating infrastructure projects. The vision set forth in the strategy document is for community sustainability.
- Since the passage of the Cape Cod Land Bank bill in 1998, the Commission has provided **support for local Land Bank committees** by organizing regular meetings and special workshops, collecting and sharing land-acquisition data, and providing a Web site of related information.

### *EASTHAM NOTES:*

- *The Commission provides ongoing assistance for the Eastham Local Comprehensive Plan. Early in the agency's history, the Commission allocated more than \$41,500 for the development of Eastham's original LCP. Later, the Commission helped with the five-year update. The Commission is now supporting a \$17,500 grant for LCP implementation, specifically to rewrite existing zoning bylaws, write new ones, and hold a zoning summit. The bylaws relate to planning issues ranging from cluster development, transfers of development rights, water access, and affordable housing. The Commission works with Eastham's Long Range Advisory Planning Board and the Critical Planning Committee on LCP and planning issues.*
- *In cooperation with Eastham's 2025 Committee, the Commission facilitated a two-day visioning workshop in FY 2000 to help address current and future growth challenges and to refine the direction of the LCP. (Approximately 100 people attended the workshop. The Commission developed a visual quality survey and a draft report summarizing the proceedings.)*
- *In the mid 1990s, the Commission prepared the Outer Cape Capacity Study, which helped to determine the sustainable growth potential of the towns of Eastham, Wellfleet, Truro, and Provincetown.*

...continued on next page

## Planning and Community Development, cont.

- *The Commission helped organize and fund the Lower Cape Wireless Working Group, a regional effort to coordinate the siting of wireless facilities on the Lower Cape. The project, completed in FY 2001, analyzed existing and future wireless telecommunications needs and made recommendations for policies, regulations, and actions, including zoning changes for each town to address gaps in wireless service.*
- *In cooperation with the Fort Hill Consortium and the Eastham Historical Commission, in FY 1999 the Commission prepared a final nomination for the Fort Hill Rural Historic District to be added to the National Register of Historic Places. The Commission has also advised the Eastham Historical Commission in many cases over the past 10 years, including helping to draft the demolition-delay bylaw and completing historic resource inventory forms. Recently, the Commission also assisted the Eastham Historical Society in developing its plans for renovation and expansion of the historic Schoolhouse Museum.*
- *In the mid 1990s, the Commission prepared an environmental impact assessment, provided technical assistance, and helped obtain federal transportation funds for the relocation of the historic Nauset Light.*

## Affordable Housing

- The Cape Cod Commission coordinates **Barnstable County's special affordable housing programs**; the **HOME Consortium**, which was established in 1993 to attract federal and state funds to the region through the HOME Program, the Down Payment Closing Cost Assistance Program, and the Homeowner Repair Program; the **Soft Second Loan Program**; and a **Technical Assistance Program**.
- The Commission also monitors **Chapter 40B developments** Capewide and provides technical comments to local boards reviewing Chapter 40B proposals in their communities.

### *EASTHAM NOTES:*

- *Two Eastham projects have received HOME Consortium awards totaling \$227,000, which represents 8.3 percent of the \$2.7+ million total of HOME funds committed to housing development Capewide since 1993. The Eastham Duplexes, a partnership project between the Eastham Housing Authority and the Lower Cape Cod Community Development Corporation, received \$112,000 for eight rental units. Gull Cottages, also a project of the Lower Cape Cod Community Development Corporation, received \$115,000 for five rental units.*
- *The Commission also administered Barnstable County surplus appropriations for housing, including \$50,000 for the Gull Cottages project and \$5,000 as a county technical assistance award last year for the Roach property.*
- *The Commission's own Technical Assistance Program (TAP) provided the following funds over the last few years: In FY 2003, Eastham received a TAP award of \$3,000 for site and engineering work on the Roach property. In FY 2002, Eastham received a TAP award of \$3,000 for the development of an affordable housing-related Request for Proposals for the Roach property. In FY 1998, the Eastham Housing Authority received a TAP award of \$3,000 for the development of a strategic plan.*

## Geographic Information System

The Cape Cod Commission serves as a service center for regional Geographic Information System (GIS) data and maps. The Commission also processes **data updates** and contributes to regional programs. Technical assistance for Cape Cod towns ranges from copies of **data layers** to more-involved **maps with drafts and revisions**. Towns with their own systems often request Commission-created data, especially for neighboring towns. Towns without their own systems often request printed maps to be used for educational purposes (such as posters at town meetings) or GIS data to be used by hired consultants.

### *EASTHAM NOTES:*

- *Over the years, the Commission has provided the Town of Eastham with extensive Geographic Information System (GIS) support. In FY 2003, the Commission updated GIS parcels data, installed a GIS data set for use in the town's GIS, updated the protected-open-space GIS layers, and provided a map for the town's local planning committee.*
- *In FY 2002, the Commission created a map of existing restricted areas for operation of personal watercraft (jet skis), fulfilled a local planning committee request for a town zoning map and a land use map, and produced a marine water recharge area map.*
- *In FY 2001, the Commission completed special maps of zoning, a Route 6 buffer area, well water quality, and affordable housing.*
- *In FY 2000, the Commission provided GIS set-up assistance; copies of maps for the Eastham visioning workshop; digital GIS data to the Eastham Department of Natural Resources; and a GIS database to the Eastham local planning committee.*
- *In FY 1998–1999, the Commission completely redigitized Eastham's parcels maps and updated the land use and assessor's data, provided GIS set-up assistance to Eastham officials, and provided a base map for the Eastham Local Comprehensive Plan, zoning maps of the entire town and of the Brackett Road area, a map of town-accepted roads, a map of town-owned lands, a land-use map of the Route 6 corridor, a map of capital facilities, and a map of small lots.*

## Transportation

- The Commission maintains and updates the **Regional Transportation Plan** and prepares the annual **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**, which are the primary means by which federal and state funds are allocated to the Cape's transportation needs.
- The Commission conducts **annual summer traffic counts** in all Cape towns; these data are particularly valuable to planners, engineers, departments of public works, and police.
- The Commission has participated in the **Rural Roads Initiative** for the Cape and Islands, which emphasizes context-sensitive design for regional roadways. Inspired by this effort, the state is now addressing the subject through Governor Romney's **Highway Design Manual Task Force**, which is charged with creation of a new highway design manual consistent with the Governor's "Communities First" initiative.
- The Commission staffs the work of the **Cape Cod Transit Task Force**, a collaboration of local, regional, state, and federal officials and members of the private sector with an interest in improving Cape Cod's year-round needs for public transportation, reducing dependency on automobiles, and mitigating summer traffic impacts. The task force issued a Five-Year Public Transportation Plan in 2002 and is continuing to work to enhance and to improve coordination of Cape transit services.

### *EASTHAM NOTES:*

- *The Commission, working with Eastham and MassHighway officials, recently completed a several-year study of traffic congestion and safety issues along the Route 6 corridor from the Orleans/Eastham rotary to Provincetown. The work included performing an analysis of Route 6 crashes and developing recommendations for the design of intersection improvements.*
- *The Commission worked with Mass-Highway on improvements to these specific intersections:*
  - *Route 6 at Brackett Road: Signal upgrade with pedestrian safety improvements*
  - *Route 6 at Samoset Road: Signal upgrade*
  - *Route 6 at Salt Pond lights (Nauset Road): Signal upgrade and pedestrian safety improvements*
  - *Route 6 at Governor Prence Road: Sight-line safety improvements (including advocating for a signal)*
- *The Commission worked to extend the Cape Cod Rail Trail from Locust Road in Eastham to South Wellfleet (completed in 1994). In addition, in 2003 the Commission contracted out the design and coordinated the funding for the Cape Cod Rail Trail bridge over Route 6 (technically in Orleans, but a great convenience for bicyclists in Eastham).*
- *Through the Cape Cod Transit Task Force, the Commission is working with Outer Cape towns and the Cape Cod National Seashore to improve shuttle bus transportation on the Outer Cape.*

## Waste Management

- The Commission provides support to Cape towns on **solid and hazardous waste** management issues.

### *EASTHAM NOTES:*

- *Recently, the Commission provided oversight for a Barnstable County-funded feasibility study of a proposed Outer Cape co-composting facility. The completed study determined that such a facility would be economically infeasible for the Outer Cape towns at this time.*
- *The Commission has provided technical assistance to Eastham about “Pay As You Throw” solid waste management programs and has worked frequently with the town recycling committee on a local initiatives.*
- *Over many years, the Commission has provided assistance with Eastham’s household hazardous waste collections. Eastham has taken advantage of the regional bid process for hazardous waste contractors as well.*

## Water and Coastal Resources

- The Commission coordinates the Cape Cod **Pond and Lake Stewardship Program** to study and protect freshwater water quality and, in 2003, published the *Cape Cod Pond and Lake Atlas*, the most comprehensive count of ponds and review of pond depth and water quality ever completed for the region.
- The Commission is a technical partner in the **Massachusetts Estuaries Project**, a state, regional, and local cooperation to address water quality in the Cape’s embayments. The project will determine embayment-specific nitrogen-loading management criteria and provide preliminary restoration scenarios. The School of Marine Science and Technology at the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth is conducting the project for the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.
- Informed by its coastal and freshwater water-quality studies, the Commission participates in **regional and local**

### *EASTHAM NOTES:*

- *The Commission is continuing the Pond and Lake Stewardship program and water-quality sampling, which in FY 2003, 2002, and 2001 included analysis of water samples from 10 Eastham ponds (lab analysis alone for these three years was valued at approximately \$11,250).*
- *The Commission continues to be involved in estuary assessments, particularly the Massachusetts Estuaries Project. In addition, several other estuary assessments have directly benefited the Town of Eastham over the years. In FY 2003, the Commission completed the Coastal Nitrogen Loading Project, which included the*  
*...continued on next page*

## Water and Coastal Resource, cont.

**wastewater planning**, including support for Barnstable County's Wastewater Implementation Committee, a forum for discussing and capitalizing on regional opportunities for effective wastewater management and for receiving input for the development of a new regional wastewater management plan for Cape Cod.

- The Commission works to identify future **public water supplies** and protect existing and future ones. As part of this effort, the Commission monitors groundwater levels in wells across the Cape each month.
- Through the Cape Cod Groundwater Guardian Team, the Commission conducts **water-education activities** in area schools and on the Web.
- The Commission coordinates the region's involvement in several **coastal hazard-mitigation programs**.

*Nauset Harbor/Town Cove system. The work entailed watershed delineation and analysis of nitrogen loading using a \$20,000 grant previously given to the Town of Orleans to complete a tidal flushing study combined with an additional \$37,000 from the National Biological Survey.*

- *The Commission continues to participate in the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) groundwater modeling project for the Outer Cape. The work has included installation of more than a dozen water-table observation wells and deep water-supply investigation wells in Eastham.*

- *In the late 1990s, the Commission participated in the Lower Cape Water Management Task Force, analyzing water-quality problems on the Outer Cape and evaluating optimum regional water-supply solutions. The Commission provided technical assistance and \$30,000 to the effort over several years.*

- *The Commission recently completed a multi-year study and report on the hydrogeology of vernal pools, kettle hole ponds, and groundwater withdrawal impacts in the Cape Cod National Seashore area.*

- *The Commission monitors the water levels of two groundwater wells in Eastham each month and makes the data available for all.*

- *Last year, the Commission organized a Cape Cod Groundwater Guardian water-education festival for Eastham sixth-grade students at the Nauset Middle School.*

*...continued on next page*

## Water and Coastal Resource, cont.

- *For several years, the Cape Cod Groundwater Guardian Team has trained volunteers and loaned water-education material for exhibits during Eastham's Windmill Weekend. In addition, the team has provided water-education/conservation materials to Eastham businesses without charge for several years.*
- *The Commission recently awarded a \$25,000 grant, through the federal- and state-supported "Project Impact" hazard-mitigation program, to Eastham for drainage improvements to Steele Road.*

# Regulatory Reviews of Developments of Regional Impact

## In Eastham:

Projects that have *completed* the DRI review process:

- **Eastham Transfer Station** - Municipal solid waste transfer station on Old Orchard Road; in 1990, CCC approved the Hardship Exemption.
- **Angle Tree Manor** - Congregate-care facility on Brackett Road; in 1992, CCC denied the Hardship Exemption.
- **Nauset Road Communications Tower** - Construction of a 196-foot-tall tower and a 60-by-12-foot equipment shelter on Nauset Road; in 1998, CCC approved the DRI.
- **Storage Cape Cod** - Construction of five self-storage buildings on Holmes Road; in 2002, CCC approved the DRI Exemption.

Also reviewed:

- **M.F. Roach Subdivision** - 1990 referral - project withdrawn; later, the Town of Eastham acquired the land for open space.
- **Seacoast Inc.** - 1998 referral - project withdrawn.
- **Walters Subdivision** - 2002 discretionary referral - project withdrawn.

## In Orleans and Wellfleet:

Projects that impact Eastham and have *completed* the DRI review process:

- **Community of Jesus/Chapel of the Holy Paraclete** - Construction of a church at Rock Harbor in Orleans. This project was referred to CCC first by the Town of Eastham, then also by the Town of Orleans. In 1992, CCC denied the DRI; the redesigned project was approved in 1993 through a settlement agreement.
- **Massachusetts Audubon Society/Wellfleet Sanctuary** - Visitor center off West Road in South Wellfleet. In 1992, CCC approved the DRI.

Also reviewed:

- **Wellfleet Cinemas Addition** - 1990 referral - project withdrawn.