



## Regional Housing Strategy

### **Mid Cape Subregional Stakeholder Working Group**

## **Meeting 1 Summary: April 28, 2023**

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The first Mid Cape subregional meeting for the Regional Housing Strategy was held on April 28, 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to provide information and data on housing challenges on Cape Cod, an overview of the Regional Housing Strategy, and to discuss elements of a successful strategy, which will help to define regional recommendations.

Following introductions, Cape Cod Commission staff provided an overview of the Regional Housing Strategy and its elements. Meeting participants were asked to provide input on how they would define a successful regional housing strategy, their vision for housing in the region, and initial ideas on possible strategies to address the region's housing challenges. Key themes emerged from the conversation including the high cost of housing and year-round unit conversions, preserving community character and natural resources, prioritizing redevelopment, and regionalization to support municipalities.

### **THE HIGH COST OF HOUSING AND YEAR-ROUND UNIT CONVERSIONS**

Meeting participants discussed the high costs and low supply of year-round rental units and attainable housing, individually and as a reflection of the conversion of year-round housing units to second homes and rental units to year-round units. It was noted that these obstacles challenge the ability of businesses to attract and retain a workforce that lives locally and does not have to commute from off-Cape.

### **PRESERVING COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Meeting participants stated the importance of preserving community character with efforts to increase housing availability, noting that development should be aesthetically pleasing and context-sensitive to its location and the types of housing needed will vary by town and maybe even village. Participants expressed the desire to develop housing that preserves and protects natural resources with consideration for wastewater and water supply.

### **PRIORITIZING REDEVELOPMENT**

Meeting participants discussed the need to focus on redevelopment. Given the Cape's sensitive resources and limited land left for either protection or new development, redevelopment will be

critical in addressing the region's housing challenges. Participants noted the importance of including green space along with redevelopment. Meeting attendees discussed the need to develop different types of housing, how infill and mixed-use development can be solutions to more than one regional issue, and the benefits of allowing an additional story as a way to increase density while limiting the development footprint, and making development economically feasible.

## REGIONALIZATION TO SUPPORT MUNICIPALITIES

Meeting participants desired to have a regional strategy that can be translated down to municipalities through zoning bylaws, local comprehensive plans, and other municipal planning tools in a way that can empower municipalities to support housing efforts. Participants expressed an interest in regional resources to support municipalities' work to address the housing crisis. Suggestions included creation of a regional housing services office, a regional housing coordinator, a regional revolving loan fund to fund housing, and a clearinghouse of resources and options to address different challenges. Additionally, it was noted that having a regional repository of guidance for quickly implementing different programs as market and other conditions shift, would help provide more nimble action that is responsive to current needs.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Other considerations for development of the regional housing strategy that participants raised during the meeting included:

- The need to support housing for different populations, such as seasonal workforce housing and congregant housing.
- Finding innovative solutions for funding and meeting affordable housing goals as traditional programs do not address the Cape's needs, including supporting housing for those earning more than 80% of the area median income.
- Increasing community education and engagement on the topic of affordable housing, developing common definitions for common terms, and building greater trust among the public.
- A more simplified pathway for building accessory dwelling units would be helpful.
- How regional targets for the number of units or mix of units can guide desired development and be used as metrics to measure success.

The Mid Cape Subregional Stakeholder working group will meet again on Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at 9:00 am.

## Meeting 1 Agenda

1. Introductions: Cape Cod Commission (Commission) staff will facilitate the introduction of participants.
2. Setting the Baseline: Commission staff will provide a brief overview of some key information and data points that illustrate the housing challenges facing the Cape Cod region.
3. Overview of the Regional Housing Strategy: Commission staff will provide an overview of the components of the Regional Housing Strategy for Cape Cod.
4. Defining Success: Participants will identify and discuss how they envision what a successful implementation of the Regional Housing Strategy for Cape Cod would look like including outcomes.
5. Example Strategies: Participants will discuss examples of potential strategies, tools, and resources that could help address housing challenges on Cape Cod.
6. Next Steps: Commission staff will discuss next steps for participants, including future meeting dates.

## Meeting 1 Participants

### Stakeholder Participants

- Carlyn Carey, Town of Dennis Zoning Bylaw Study Committee
- Jillian Douglass, Town of Barnstable
- Karen Greene, Town of Yarmouth
- Elizabeth Jenkins, Town of Barnstable
- Heidi Nelson, Duffy Health Center
- Wendy Northcross, JFK Museum
- Wendy Ohlson, Yarmouth Housing Authority
- Maggie Spade-Aguilar, Town of Dennis
- Mary Waygan, Town of Yarmouth
- Michaela Wyman-Colombo, Town of Mashpee Selectboard

### Cape Cod Commission Staff Present

- Kristy Senatori, Executive Director
- Erin Perry, Deputy Director
- Chloe Schaefer, Chief Planner
- Sarah Colvin, Communications Manager
- Heather McElroy, Natural Resources Program Manager
- Michele White, Special Projects Coordinator
- Helaine Goudreau, Special Projects Coordinator