



Regional Housing Strategy

Outer Cape Subregional Stakeholder Working Group

Meeting 2 Summary: May 22, 2023

The second Outer Cape subregional meeting for the Regional Housing Strategy was held on May 22, 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on stakeholder engagement and outreach, receive feedback on a definition of attainable housing, and to review example strategies to address defined housing challenges.

Following introductions, Cape Cod Commission staff provided an update on stakeholder engagement including a summary of key themes from prior meetings as well as preliminary results from the housing preference survey. Meeting participants were asked to provide input on defining attainable housing, based on their own experience and from examples around the country. Commission staff then provided an overview of strategies to address housing challenges that have been utilized across the country and asked participants to provide their thoughts on strategies that best address the housing challenges on Cape Cod.

DEFINING ATTAINABLE HOUSING

Participants agreed that using the 30% of a household's income figure in the definition may not be appropriate given 30% of income for low-income households is vastly different than for higher-income households. Participants also agreed that a characteristic of attainable housing is the ability to join and move freely within the market. There was discussion, but not consensus, on whether the attainable housing definition should include those that fall within already established definitions of workforce housing, or if attainable housing should be entirely separate.

Another aspect of attainable housing that was discussed was the notion of "having something to look forward to" in the market. This means there is the opportunity to move from renting to owning a home and at the other end of the spectrum, the opportunity for older people or retirees to be able to downsize. Additionally, some participants voiced concern that some workers are coming to the Cape with a one-year lease, or put in employee housing, but they are worried they might lose their housing after their lease. It was noted that this should be considered when discussing free movement within the housing market.

It was also noted that area median income is too technical of a term for the broader public and the definition should be understandable by citizens, not only housing experts.

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS KEY CHALLENGES

Commission staff provided an overview of some example strategies other places are using that can address one of four key housing challenges in the region: it isn't allowed or it's too complicated to build housing other than single-family homes, it's too expensive to build housing, it's too expensive to secure or maintain housing, and it's hard to find and keep year-round rental housing.

Participants noted that it isn't only expensive to build housing in the region, but it also takes a lot of time. Participants discussed the difficulty in finding developers to build the type of housing that the Cape needs. In some of the participants' experiences, larger developers are the only entities that have enough financial backing to build larger scale multi-family projects on the Cape, but those same entities can make the same amount of money by building single-family homes.

Participants noted that Wellfleet has had success in acquiring individual parcels and developing them for affordable housing. This success has been in part due to the use of the town's CPA funds. Given this has proven successful, strategies to support towns in purchasing land for housing development or redevelopment would be useful.

Many participants agreed that community members misunderstand the current housing situation, and an education campaign and organized messaging will help towns advocate for and explain the need for more housing. Education for some levels of local government could also be helpful to clarify Cape Cod's housing needs.

Many participants mentioned that accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are prohibitively expensive to build and there is not enough funding for them, which could explain the slow adoption of the housing style. In addition, some members explained that homeowners don't want to be landlords to the new tenants and that getting a property manager to service scattered locations (as opposed to larger developments in one location) can be extremely challenging. Strategies that can defray the costs of building ADUs and provide support for people as landlords or property managers may be useful.

Participants noted interest in the Lease to Locals program in Summit County, CO, which provides financial incentives for people to switch from renting their homes on a short-term basis to renting it on a longer-term basis to local employees. Given the seasonal workforce and year-round employee housing needs in the region, and the numerous short-term rentals in the region, this may be something to further investigate.

It was recommended that more research be done on what would be needed to use Gateway City funding or a similar program in Cape towns, besides Barnstable, that do not meet the requirements of being a Gateway City. When discussing the potential for 40R districts, it was mentioned that establishing a 40R district requires a high level of effort. It was also noted that funding from the

state for the 40R program has not always been guaranteed, which may have deterred towns from considering this tool.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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

- Intergenerational homesharing has been tried on the Cape but failed to gain traction, perhaps due to trust issues.
- Some participants thought that if the Housing Strategy only recommends housing in line with current character, community members may close off the possibility of different types of housing that are more uncommon on the Cape such as mixed use and mixed income housing.
- It was noted that there may be deed restrictions on some condominiums in some Cape towns that prevent year-round housing and these restrictions should be changed.
- In Provincetown the conversation of capping short-term rentals has been brought to Town Meeting and the discussion is ongoing.

Meeting 2 Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach: Cape Cod Commission staff will provide an update on the stakeholder engagement process for the Cape Cod Regional Housing Strategy, including a summary of key themes from prior stakeholder meetings and preliminary results from the housing preference survey.
3. Defining Attainable Housing: Cape Cod Commission staff will share examples of how attainable housing has been defined in other housing plans from around the country and facilitate a discussion on defining attainable housing for Cape Cod.
4. Strategies to Address Defined Housing Challenges: Cape Cod Commission staff will provide an overview of strategies to address housing challenges that have been utilized from across the country that could be impactful on Cape Cod and seek feedback on strategies to address housing challenges that are appropriate for Cape Cod.
5. Next Steps: Commission staff will discuss next steps for participants, including future meeting dates.

Meeting 2 Participants

Stakeholder Participants

- Suzanne Thomas, Town of Wellfleet
- Melissa Lynch, Wellfleet Shellfishing Community
- Rachel Butler, Town of Eastham
- Tim Famulare, Town of Provincetown
- Michelle Jarusiewicz, Town of Provincetown
- Thaddeus Soule, Town of Provincetown
- Gloria McPherson, Provincetown Resident
- Barbara Carboni, Town of Truro
- Ryan Curley, Wellfleet Selectboard
- Jim Russo, Eastham Chamber of Commerce
- Sarah Endres, Outer Cape Health Services
- Elaine McIlroy, Wellfleet Housing Authority

Cape Cod Commission Staff Present

- Kristy Senatori, Executive Director
- Erin Perry, Deputy Director
- Chloe Schaefer, Chief Planner
- Cory Murray, Community Development Planner
- Sarah Colvin, Communications Manager