



Regional Housing Strategy

Upper Cape Subregional Stakeholder Working Group

Meeting 1 Summary: April 27, 2023

The first Upper Cape subregional meeting for the Regional Housing Strategy was held on April 27, 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 need for more housing types, infrastructure, education and information sharing, and regionalization of housing efforts.

NEED FOR MORE HOUSING TYPES

Meeting participants discussed the need for more types of housing in the region aside from detached single-family homes. Not only is a mix of housing types in terms of the physical characteristics important, but also in terms of the income levels housing serves. A mix of both rental and home ownership opportunities is important. Ideally the region's housing market would allow for greater mobility among housing types and options and allow for people to live here while they work as well as when they retire. Building or supporting more diverse housing opportunities is challenged by traditional funding for programs, which, for example, don't provide much support for programs for those earning more than 80% of the area median income, a population in the region that also needs support.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Several participants brought up infrastructure as both a potential challenge and opportunity for housing development and redevelopment. The lack of infrastructure, particularly for wastewater, limits where more compact housing can be built. It was noted, however, that there is an opportunity for housing and infrastructure development to work together to address multiple challenges. For example, more compact housing development or redevelopment can support more cost-effective infrastructure that supports housing, water quality, and other environmental needs. Funding for

infrastructure, and for housing development, will be important and it will be helpful to look at different tools, such as tax increment financing.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

The need for education and information sharing was a recurring topic during the meeting. Participants noted the need for better communication and education surrounding housing needs and development/redevelopment in the region. Education efforts should be coupled with strategies for action and implementation to affect change. It was noted that education and information sharing is important for the public, but also for towns to better understand what strategies may be appropriate for them to employ in addressing housing needs.

Stronger education around both the housing problem and the potential solutions is important moving forward. Additionally, it was noted that it is important for people to understand the tradeoffs of certain decisions. This could support more informed decision-making. Supporting an educational component for those looking to develop housing was also mentioned, such as a guide for navigating the permitting process.

REGIONALIZATION OF HOUSING EFFORTS

Addressing this issue as a region was discussed as important by many meeting participants. Efforts to seek support from the state will be stronger if coming from a unified regional voice, rather than many different voices. The ability for towns to support projects across town borders, in a more regional or subregional manner, was also discussed.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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

- Maintaining a sense of community should be a goal of housing initiatives.
- It is important to address the design and aesthetics of housing development and redevelopment. Imagery is important in helping to convey opportunities and possible outcomes and should include many different types of housing, including multi-family housing.
- Redevelopment will be critical in advancing housing in the region, but there may be a need and opportunities for some appropriate new development as well.
- Understanding how the changes in hybrid or remote work over the last several years impact the region's housing trajectory is important.
- There may be opportunities to provide incentives to those who donate land for housing, similar to the tax incentives provided for land donations for conservation.

The Upper Cape Subregional Stakeholder working group will meet again on Wednesday, May 24, 2023 at 1:00 pm.

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

- Anne Scott Putney, Heritage Museum and Gardens
- Colin Reed, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
- Evan Lehrer, Town of Mashpee
- Jen Copeland, Town of Bourne
- Jessica Whritenour, 300 Committee
- Kathleen Kolva, Joint Base Cape Cod
- Kimberly Fish, Town of Falmouth
- Liz Hartsgrove, Town of Bourne
- Marie Oliva, Cape Cod Canal Region Chamber of Commerce
- Marlene McCollem, Town of Bourne
- Matthew Porter, Joint Base Cape Cod
- Michael Kasparian, Falmouth Chamber of Commerce
- Paula Schnepf, Sandwich Housing Authority
- Peter Johnson-Staub, Town of Falmouth
- Ralph Vitacco, Town of Sandwich
- Tom Feronti, Mashpee Commons



Cape Cod Commission Staff Present

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