



Barnstable County Economic Development Council (BCEDC)

Draft Minutes | June 12, 2024 at 3:00pm.

Meeting Location: Cape Cod Commission's Ocean Conference Room, and online via Zoom at capecodcommission.org/bcedc/join

The meeting was held in a hybrid format, with some members of the Barnstable County Economic Development Council (BCEDC) participating remotely, pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, as further amended by Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023.

The Chair announced that since some members were participating virtually, all votes and other actions would be done by roll call.

Attendance/Roll Call

<u>Member</u>	<u>Business Sector</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Greg Bilezikian	Real Estate Development	Present
Rob Brennan	Construction/Engineering	Absent
Amanda Converse	Retail Commerce	Present
Kara Galvin	Workforce Development	Absent
Cindy Horgan	Childcare	Absent
Tammi Jacobsen	Higher Education	Present
Alisa Magnotta	Social Services	Present
Jack Stevenson	Construction	Absent
Robert Talerman	Banking/Finance	Present
Wendy Northcross	Museums	Present
Non-voting Members		
Mark Forest	BC Commissioner	Present
Harold Mitchell	CCC Rep	Present
John Ohman	Assembly of Delegates	Absent
Cape Cod Commission Staff Present		
Kristy Senatori	Executive Director	
Erin Perry	Deputy Director	
Chloe Schaefer	Chief Planner	
Carolina Romero	Economist	
Cory Murray	Community Development Planner	
Sarah Colvin	Communications Manager	
Louis Morbidoni	Administrative Assistant	

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm with roll call.



Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion by Alisa Magnotta, seconded Greg Bilezikian, the draft minutes from the 5/14/24 BCEDC meeting were approved with a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote

Greg Bilezikian	Yes
Amanda Converse	Yes
Tammi Jacobsen	Yes
Alisa Magnotta	Yes
Wendy Northcross	Abstain
Robert Talerman	Yes

Upon a motion by Alisa Magnotta, seconded Greg Bilezikian, the draft minutes from the 6/7/24 BCEDC Nominating Committee were approved with a roll call vote; Mr. Talerman mentioned that only the three members of the Nominating Committee meeting would be participating in the roll call: Greg Bilezikian, Alisa Magnotta, and Robert Talerman.

Roll Call Vote

Greg Bilezikian	Yes
Alisa Magnotta	Yes
Robert Talerman	Yes

Presentation of the final draft of the Cape Cod Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

(CEDS): Erin Perry, Deputy Director of the Cape Cod Commission, introduced the final draft of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Ms. Perry mentioned that the presentation would touch briefly on each chapter of the CEDS, and that the final draft incorporates the feedback and information obtained by the Commission through the public comment process, as well as the feedback gathered from the BCEDC over the course of the planning process. Furthermore, Ms. Perry observed that the Commission had received an additional comment a few hours prior to commencement of the meeting. Ms. Perry explained that the comment remarked upon the continued contribution of the commercial fishing industry to the region's economy, as well as its historical contribution to the local culture. Ms. Perry mentioned that some updates were made to the final draft of the CEDS to incorporate this feedback, and that she and other Commission staff members would be happy to answer any questions BCEDC members might have in regard to these updates.

Ms. Perry then offered some background information on the CEDS; she explained that the CEDS is a five-year strategic plan aimed at supporting economic development on Cape Cod, and that that the plan was of particular importance, as it is a requirement for maintaining the Economic Development District designation obtained in 2013, which in turn enables the region to access EDA grant funding opportunities. She noted the draft CEDS before the BCEDC is intended to foster economic development on Cape Cod through 2029.

Ms. Perry reminded the BCEDC that EDA requires the CEDS include economic conditions summary, an action plan, an in-depth opportunity analysis, and an evaluation framework. Ms. Perry explained that



the CEDS opens with an introduction to the region. This section also discusses the local economic context, with particular attention to people, places, and the economy.

Ms. Perry then explained that the subsequent chapter documents the CEDS planning process, and how the Commission gained input not only from BCEDC members, but also other stakeholders across the region. Ms. Perry observed that the final draft of the CEDS would be reviewed by the BCEDC in the present session, and then by the full Commission on the following day (June 13, 2024), with the aim of submitting it for approval to the EDA at the end of the month. Ms. Perry explained that while the CEDS is a plan designed primarily for economic development, it also ties into the other regional planning work that the Commission does, being driven by the principles and goals of the overarching Regional Policy Plan. Further, Ms. Perry remarked that the CEDS ties into many of the plans that the Commission has developed for tackling issues that affect the region, from the climate to housing to transportation to wastewater management efforts. Ms. Perry also noted that the CEDS contains a chapter on the opportunities analysis conducted with the BCEDC, which formed the basis for developing the vision, goals, and action plan.

Ms. Perry then invited Ms. Chloe Schaefer, Chief Planner for the Cape Cod Commission, to continue the presentation. Ms. Schaefer reiterated that the vision and goals for the CEDS are a product of the opportunities analysis, as well as of the feedback received during the Economic Summit. Ms. Schaefer explained that the CEDS envisions a strong and vibrant Cape Cod, a region that supports a resilient, inclusive and diverse community, with access to housing options, high quality business, education and employment opportunities, as well as thriving natural resources.

Ms. Schaefer added that the CEDS contains six goals, divided into three main categories (people, places and economy), which arise from the unique characteristics that have drawn people to Cape Cod over the centuries. Ms. Schaefer also pointed out that the CEDS includes a list of objectives that align with each specific goal.

Under the category “people”, the two goals are related to housing attainability and community. Under the category “places”, the goals are related to infrastructure and natural resources. Finally, the goals under the “economy” category are related to workforce development and economic diversity and resiliency.

Ms. Schaefer explained that the CEDS identifies ten key actions, which form the action plan, and which aim to advance the numerous goals and the overall economic vision for the region. She also observed that many of the actions advanced not just one, but several goals. The key action plan was devised by incorporating observations and feedback from several different focus groups. The key actions are:

- Incentivize Year-round Housing
- Simplify Appropriate Housing Development
- Provide Opportunities for Organizations and Entrepreneurs to Pilot Ideas
- Support Year-round Community Activity and Civic Engagement
- Develop and Connect Students and Workforce to Educational and Training Opportunities
- Identify and Support Growing Industries in the Region



- Invest in Water Quality and Wastewater Infrastructure
- Invest in Broadband Infrastructure
- Advocate for Replacement of the Canal Bridges
- Advance Climate Change Resiliency

Ms. Schaefer then mentioned that the CEDS contains an evaluation framework, which includes qualitative indicators, which are more organic and will surface as different actions progress; macro indicators, data points which do not necessarily show much change from year to year but over time will provide indication of trends; and programmatic indicators, which can help to understand how the implementation of actions are progressing.

Ms. Schaefer concluded her presentation by offering an overview of what the Cape Cod Commission intends to do to advance the CEDS in the first year. In particular, she noted that many of the actions will require different lead actors, but that the Cape Cod Commission can nonetheless offer important collaboration and partnership in supporting these actions, including:

- Supporting towns with zoning changes, especially in relation to housing opportunities
- Assisting towns in developing local climate action plans
- Helping the region to secure funds for wastewater infrastructure
- Completing the economic impacts analysis for the bridges
- Incentivizing year-round housing, by initiating a study to understand what type of programs can help convert short term rentals to year-round rentals
- Completing and disseminating the outcomes of the broadband needs assessment
- Continuing to provide support and administration to the BCEDC

Ms. Schaefer added that she was happy to take any questions and that staff was hopeful that the BCEDC would move to approve the amended 2024 CEDS which now includes the feedback regarding the importance of the fishing industry mentioned earlier by Ms. Perry, in order to forward it to the Cape Cod Commission for approval and submission to the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

Mr. Talerman commended Ms. Schaefer on her presentation, and he observed that – apart from Wendy Northcross, who was recently appointed to the BCEDC – all the other members had ample opportunities to be involved in the development of the draft and offer their feedback. Mr. Talerman further observed that the draft constitutes an actionable plan for the upcoming five years, while also painting the big picture for the Cape Cod region. In particular, Mr. Talerman remarked that he was impressed by the trends in the data, especially in regard to shifts in income patterns over the years.

Mr. Talerman opened the floor for comments and questions from members. Tammi Jacobsen asked what specific amendments had been made to the CEDS in regard to the fishing industry. Ms. Perry explained that some additional language was added to the CEDS in the economic context section, to briefly illustrate the history of the fishing industry and its evolution on the Cape. Furthermore, Ms. Perry explained that the CEDS now also touches on the importance of the fishing industry from an economic perspective, as well as in the provision of year-round jobs. Finally, Ms. Perry noted that the CEDS now



includes additional references to the fishing industry in the action plan, including as it relates to the workforce needs associated with the industry.

Greg Bilezikian observed that, while he was grateful for the introduction of language that recognizes the contribution of the fishing industry, he had some reservations regarding tying specific industries to the CEDS, noting that there are other industries that play a vital role in the region, such as the construction and real estate development industry.

Kristy Senatori, Executive Director of the Cape Cod Commission, responded to Mr. Bilezikian's observations by mentioning that staff adopted a very judicious approach, and incorporated the suggested comments in those sections of the CEDS that were already discussing traditional industries on the Cape, with the overall goal of adding some emphasis without putting too much emphasis on one industry over another.

In addition, Mr. Talerman asked if part of the reason for incorporating language relevant to the fishing industry into the CEDS might be related to potentially having access to unique funding opportunities designed specifically to protect that industry. Ms. Perry replied that there certainly could be funding sources that could support some of the programs aimed at ensuring continued workforce participation in the fishing industry, whether through EDA or alternative sources, and that amendments to the CEDS could certainly support potential funding.

Alisa Magnotta had some remarks in regard to the Evaluation Framework presented by Ms. Schaefer, and while she commended the Commission staff on the work done in monitoring the region's demographics, she observed that she thinks more parameters should be collected, besides year-round population, age and racial diversity, in order to gain a better understanding of what the population mix is now, compared to what it will be in five years if the CEDS is successful in meeting its goals. Ms. Senatori concurred with Ms. Magnotta: she explained that the reason why these macro indicators are incorporated in the CEDS is so that Commission staff can provide an annual report on the data every year, and she observed that more evaluation metrics can also be incorporated into the report, to track different aspects of the local demographics.

Mark Forest praised the CEDS and voiced his opinion in support of including language specific to the fishing industry, explaining how the industry is an important component of the local economy, and how he sees no downsides in making more references to that industry. He also expressed his hope that in the future there could be more involvement with the Commercial Fishermen's Alliance, and that the feedback received helps the BCEDC to better understand the needs of this industry. He also noted the CEDS is a document that serves multiple functions, one of which is making sure that the region qualifies for EDA funding, and that EDA continues to see the fishing industry as a priority area; as a result, he thinks that not giving sufficient attention to the fishing industry would be a mistake.

Harold Mitchell also praised the CEDS. He observed that being an alternate for the BCEDC, he usually refrains from commenting; however, in this case, being the chairman of the Cape Cod Commission and having been present when the previous CEDS was drafted, he remarked that he was aware of the effort that went into drafting the document and wanted to offer his praise. He mentioned that the document



was excellent, and that he was excited to get the document to the Commission on the following day, feeling confident that the Commission would approve it.

Approval of the 2024 CEDS, as amended, to forward it to the Cape Cod Commission for approval and submission to the U.S. Economic Development Administration

Upon a motion by Alisa Magnotta, seconded Tammi Jacobsen, the BCEDC voted to approve the 2024 CEDS and forward it to the Cape Cod Commission for approval and submission to the U.S. Economic Development Administration, with a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote

Greg Bilezikian	Yes
Amanda Converse	Yes
Tammi Jacobsen	Yes
Alisa Magnotta	Yes
Wendy Northcross	Yes
Robert Talerman	Yes

2019 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Year 5 Annual Report

Ms. Schaefer began by reviewing the goals accomplished in the past year, as outlined in the Year 4 Annual Report of the 2019 CEDS.

- **Administration & General Planning**, for which the main achievement was drafting the 2024 CEDS document
- **Outreach & Information Sharing**, including continuous updates to the Cape Cod data website, as well as the organization of the upcoming One Cape 2024 Summit
- **Targeted Technical Assistance**, such as assistance to towns in regard to LCPs and zoning

Ms. Schaefer mentioned that the priority initiatives undertaken in the past year were the completion of the Regional Housing Strategy (released in May); advancements in the Freshwater Initiative; and advancement of the broadband needs assessment. Ms. Schaefer observed that the report contains a vast amount of data, articulated into the three main categories of people, places and economy, which offer a series of important indicators such as employment and unemployment rates, wage differences across industries, and housing prices. Ms. Schaefer explained that the last portion of the Year 5 Annual Report details the scheduled goals for the upcoming year, which are outlined in the Year 1 Action Plan contained in the 2024 CEDS.

Mr. Talerman praised Ms. Schaefer and mentioned that the data looked particularly interesting, especially the data points concerning income level compared to the federal poverty levels. Mr. Talerman observed that if one were to judge solely based on that data point, the Cape Cod region seems to be performing very strongly, but when the data regarding the real cost of living is factored in, the picture



painted is very different. Ultimately, Mr. Talerman remarked that this example goes to show the importance of the data collected by Cape Cod Commission staff.

Ms. Magnotta added that she needed to delve more deeply into the data, however she was particularly interested in the different block groups, particularly the low-income ones; she mentioned that she was interested in seeing how the data might change over time, and she added that the data would be helpful for her organization's long-term strategic plan.

Upon a motion by Tammi Jacobsen, seconded Alisa Magnotta, the BCEDC voted to approve the 2019 CEDS Year 5 Annual Report and forward it to the Cape Cod Commission for approval and submission to the U.S. Economic Development Administration with a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote

Greg Bilezikian	Yes
Amanda Converse	Yes
Tammi Jacobsen	Yes
Alisa Magnotta	Yes
Wendy Northcross	Yes
Robert Talerman	Yes

Cape Cod Commission Executive Director Update:

Ms. Senatori began by thanking BCEDC members for the approval of the CEDS, and for their participation and input throughout the drafting process, and she added that she was hopeful that the Commission would approve the document on the following day for submission to the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Ms. Senatori observed that the process could take a couple of months, and that she would let the BCEDC members know when the EDA approves the document. Ms. Senatori mentioned that the Regional Housing Strategy for Cape Cod had been released, and that staff was now working with multiple organizations and agencies to implement it.

Ms. Senatori also explained that the Commission had recently contracted Outwith Studio and Utile to conduct a study on establishing a Community Land Trust and Regional Housing Land Bank, one of the recommendations within the Regional Housing Strategy. Ms. Senatori said that staff was hoping to move those recommendations forward in an efficient and expeditious manner. Ms. Senatori added that staff were also working on contracting with a consultant to develop model housing plans, to support streamlined permitting in the region.

Ms. Senatori then mentioned that Commission staff had completed a third round of stakeholder meetings pertaining to the Freshwater Initiative (held in May and June), and that they were now in the process of both finalizing the economic analysis for freshwater and developing draft recommendations; she added that these would be presented to the BCEDC at a future meeting, for the members' review and consideration.

Ms. Senatori also offered an update on digital equity and broadband, one of the priorities outlined in the CEDS. She explained that Commission staff was working with the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, and that a grant had been received for digital equity planning. This kind of work was being



carried out in several towns, such as Bourne, where the plan was now complete; Sandwich, for which the plan had been released for public comment; and Falmouth and Barnstable, as well. Ms. Senatori added that Commission staff was working with CTC Technology to conduct a broadband needs assessment, with a final report expected at the end of the month.

Ms. Senatori also observed that the BCEDC meeting schedule typically does not include meetings in July and August, and that as such the next meeting would be held in September, barring unforeseen changes. Finally, Ms. Senatori mentioned that the Commission staff would be holding their annual One Cape Summit on September 18th and 19th.

Mr. Talerma thanked Ms. Senatori for the update and for the work done by her and the rest of the staff. He also observed that should the bridge economic impact study be completed before September, it would be beneficial to circulate it among BCEDC members before the next meeting.

Member Reports:

Greg Bilezikian mentioned that most of the former Christmas Tree Shop locations had been rented, and that he had recently purchased a new company. He added that Cape Cod had seemed to him quieter than usual over the past few weeks, and he was wondering if that might be an indicator of the upcoming tourist season.

Wendy Northcross replied that she expected the Cape would get busier once school closes for the summer, but she also observed that more people had been taking advantage of travelling internationally. She pointed out that the couple of years after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic had brought a surge of business from people who preferred to vacation locally, and that a loss of visitor volume for the current season might be an expected backlash from that. She pointed out that visitor attendance at her institution, the JFK Museum, was slightly down compared to May 2023 (around 20 fewer visitors), which signaled that attendance was slowly returning to pre-COVID numbers.

Ms. Northcross also shared with BCEDC members that she was now chairing the Local Comprehensive Planning Committee for the town of Barnstable. Ms. Northcross said that the LCPC had done a lot of community outreach over the two previous years, and that housing issues kept rising to the top of the list of concerns. Ms. Northcross observed that the LCPC had completed some plan edits and released them for public comment, but that they were encountering resistance from people who, while admitting the need for new housing, nonetheless challenged new zoning opportunities.

Amanda Converse mentioned that her organization had recently held a technical assistance workshop designed for local makers and other entrepreneurs who participate in pop-up events, whose needs tend to be very different from those of brick-and-mortar businesses. She added that the workshop was focused on marketing, and that the class had been sponsored by the Cooperative Bank of Cape Cod; the workshop was kept intentionally small, limited to only 15 participants, despite receiving over 35 applications. Ms. Converse also observed that there seems to be a lot of demand for marketing workshops and classes, including from traditional brick-and-mortar business, many of which are currently struggling with finding a marketing strategy that can be successful on a local and regional level, especially when competing with bigger businesses with a deep marketing budget. She mentioned that her organization was currently exploring different funding mechanisms for holding more workshops.



Ms. Converse added that for the last couple of years, her organization had been working on a grant program in collaboration with the Hyannis Main Street Business Improvement District, called the “Local Business Boost Program”. As a result, Ms. Converse’s organization was able to disseminate grants for \$6,000, alongside technical assistance and other forms of support for local businesses; Ms. Converse mentioned that funding for Hyannis was unfortunately drying up, but that a collaborative grant proposal had been submitted to the State, in collaboration with the Town of Barnstable, aimed at expanding funding outside of Hyannis, and specifically for those businesses negatively impacted by work related to the expansion of the sewer network. Ms. Converse mentioned that her organization was also partnering with the Town of Provincetown to activate the Local Business Boost Program there as well.

Tammi Jacobsen shared that Cape Cod Community College was embarking on their five-year strategic planning process, which included releasing an employer needs assessments survey, as well as three employer focus groups to be held in June and over the Fall. She mentioned that the employer needs survey and the focus groups served different purposes, with the latter involving more of an open discussion.

Alisa Magnotta mentioned that several towns had open RFPs related to housing, and that her organization was bidding on several of them. Ms. Magnotta echoed Ms. Northcross’ observations and explained that development of new housing is currently facing significant headwinds. She remarked that, as a whole, communities and institutions had done a good job throughout the region to highlight housing needs, and that several towns were changing their zoning as a result, in order to allocate town-owned land towards housing development. Ms. Magnotta was excited to report that her organization had won an RFP in Orleans for 77 housing units, which would comprise of a mix of rental and home ownership units, with home ownership for up to 200% AMI (Area Median Income); she added that the project is in partnership with other two non-profits, Preservation of Affordable Housing and Habitat for Humanity. Ms. Magnotta added that she was hoping that similar projects could take off in other towns as well.

Mr. Talerman mentioned that he and a small group of people had visited Washington the prior week to meet with the vast majority of the Massachusetts Legislative Delegation, including both Massachusetts Senators, to advocate for the need for funding the replacement not only of Sagamore Bridge, but also the replacement of Bourne Bridge. Mr. Talerman added that Senator Markey and Representative Keating had both visited Bourne at the end of the previous week, specifically to talk about the Sagamore Bridge; he noted that progress was being made, but that the project would not commence until at least \$1 billion of funding is allocated for the Sagamore Bridge, and further funding will still need to be secured for the Bourne Bridge.

New Business:

There was no new business.

Adjourn

Upon a motion by Alisa Magnotta, seconded by Greg Bilezikian, the meeting adjourned at 3:59 pm with a roll call vote.



Roll Call Vote

Greg Bilezikian	Yes
Amanda Converse	Yes
Tammi Jacobsen	Yes
Alisa Magnotta	Yes
Wendy Northcross	Yes
Robert Talerman	Yes

List of Materials Used/Presented

Draft minutes from 5/14/24 meeting; draft minutes from 6/7/24 Nominating Committee meeting; draft of 2024 Cape Cod CEDS; draft of 2019 Cape Cod CEDS, Year 5 Annual Report.