



**Minutes  
Cape Cod Commission Meeting  
December 16, 2021**

Harold Mitchell, Chair called the Cape Cod Commission (CCC) meeting to order on Thursday, December 16, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. He announced that the meeting was being held virtually with all members participating remotely, using the Zoom meeting platform as allowed by Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, An Act Relative to Extending Certain Covid-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, signed into law on June 16, 2021. The Chair announced that all votes and actions at the meeting would be taken by roll call and that the members would be announced as roll call is taken. The Clerk called the roll for attendance and a quorum of members was established as follows:

Harold Mitchell	Present
Elizabeth Taylor, (Secretary)	Present
Stephen Mealy (Vice Chair)	Present
Fred Chirigotis	Present
Tom Wilson	Present
Richard Roy	Present
Joy Brookshire	Absent
Jacqueline Etsten	Present
Ernest Virgilio	Absent
Douglas Fromm	Present
Cheryl Andrews	Present
Kevin Grunwald	Absent
Richard Elkin	Present
Ron Bergstrom	Absent
John Harris	Present
David Weeden	Present (arrived at 3:09)
Michael Maxim	Absent

**Summary of actions/votes taken**

- The Cape Cod Commission voted to approve the minutes of the 10/7/21 meeting

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment for items not on the agenda.

**Cape Cod Commission meeting minutes of the October 7, 2021 meeting**

Upon a motion to approve the minutes of the 10/7/21 CCC meeting by Cheryl Andrews, seconded by Elizabeth Taylor, the motion carried. Roll call vote was as follows: Fred Chirigotis, Yes; Stephen Mealy, Yes; Elizabeth Taylor, Yes; Tom Wilson, Yes; Richard Roy, Yes; Jacqueline Etsten, Yes; Douglas

Fromm, Yes, Cheryl Andrews, Yes; Harold Mitchell, Yes; Kevin Grunwald, Yes; Richard Elkin, Yes;; John Harris, Yes; David Weeden, Late

## **Executive Directors Report**

Kristy Senatori gave the following updates:

### Climate Action Plan

- Continuing work on addressing climate change including:  
Climate Ambassador Program application deadline was 12/13; reviewing 17 applications;  
program will begin in January

### Meetings/Speaking engagements

- Continuing to coordinate with County staff on ARPA priorities. May need to seek other funding opportunities to move projects forward soon. (Assembly of Delegates approved an ordinance on 12/15 requiring ARPA expenditures utilize the ordinance process)  
Broadband assessment RFP received no responses; will reconfigure and reissue.  
Developed comprehensive Freshwater Initiative and Housing Strategy scopes of work; currently developing RFPs to contract with consultants.  
Participated in a round table discussion on childcare challenges, hosted by the MA Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education on 12/13

### Regulatory – continues to be very busy!

- MEPA has issued revised regulations to address environmental justice; we continue to work with their staff as this will impact our regulatory program  
Projects within 1 mile of EJ population will be EIR/DRI  
If air quality is impacted within 5 miles of EJ population will be EIR/DRI
- Potentially mention that we may need to make amendments to our regulations so that projects that may now be EIRs because of MEPA amendments but would otherwise not trigger DRI review and are not of regional significance, do not need to go through a full DRI process.
- Potential increase in DRIs, based on last couple of years, could be 40%
- Blue Sky Tower Monopole subcommittee held a hearing on 12/14, directed staff to draft a decision approving the project; will be before the full Commission in January
- Anticipate public process will begin on both the 35 Scudder Ave and the Wilkens Development Agreements early in 2022

### COVID-19

- Continuing to monitor developments related to the pandemic and current variants and any OML updates that may arise before the current extension expires on April 1st
- Will continue to meet remotely and staff continues to work primarily remotely at least through the holidays.
- Planning for a mid-January return to the office in a hybrid format.

### Staff Updates

Continuing to interview for a Regulatory Planner, Special Projects Coordinator, Community Development Planner, and Administrative Assistant.

Working on some Regional projects such as our freshwater initiative, housing strategies and announced that Abigail Bliss will be presented the 2020 Census Update and Chelsea Bennouna will be present information on the New Homeowner Survey.

Ms. Senatori recognized Steve Tupper who has been promoted to Deputy Director and Collen Medeiros who has been promoted to the Transportation Program Manager position and will continue to work closely with Steve Tupper

The Chair asked for questions from the members.

There were none.

The Chair introduced Ms. Bliss who will present the 2020 Census Update.

**2020 Census Update:** Commission staff will present initial findings from the 2020 Census results for Barnstable County, including population change, number of housing units, and racial diversity.

Using a power point Abigail Bliss gave the following presentation on the 2020 Census update. The presentation reviewed the data that is available now and mentioned that more data is coming. She stated that parts of the Cape were amongst the hardest to count in the nation and reviewed the percentages of Massachusetts self-responders and Barnstable County self-responders. She reviewed the Barnstable County population, past projections, year-round population, population changes from 2010 vs 2020 by town, race by subregion in 2010 vs 2020 and the demographic diversity by town in those same years. She reviewed the vacant housing units by town and the percentage of change between 2010 vs 2020 as well as the change in housing units. She finished with the 2020 census date release schedule.

The Chair asked for comments and/or questions from the members.

Dr. Andrews stated that Provincetown reported an increase of 489 housing units, and she is astounded by that number; she asked how that is determined. Ms. Bliss explained that the hotel motel dynamic adds to that as it relates to seasonality and there are other dynamics that will be reported that will allow us to better understand. Dr. Andrews asked how we got the information in 2010 versus how we get it in 2020. Ms. Bliss stated that she would research changes in methodology or definitions for housing units since 2010 and get back to Dr. Andrews. Dr. Andrews further explained that she wants to understand how a list is created for how many units that they have.

Mr. Grunwald commented that within the areas that were measured, the Outer Cape towns were grouped (Provincetown, Truro, Wellfleet, Eastham). Provincetown is an anomaly and seems unusual. He is not aware of places that have been converted into hotel units in Provincetown therefore it stands out. It would be helpful if we could look at the different towns within the Outer Cape. Ms. Bliss stated that she doesn't have that information but could note the question and look at Outer Cape dynamics moving forward.

Mr. Chirigotis stated that he is amazed that we have a 37.3% vacant housing rate given the need for housing. He is curious of the cost of the available housing that we have and how that is reflected in the age of the population that we have. He asked where younger families are going? Ms. Senatori stated that these are all great questions, but there is a lot of information that is outstanding, and we

are collecting more primary data. She said the Commission would hear from Ms. Bennouna on information collected on the New Homeowner Survey next. There is a second homeowner survey as well as other data that was collected to put all this information together. She noted that this data was collected during the pandemic more information is needed to have answers to these questions.

Dr. Andrews added that this is fascinating information and asked if we will be talking about it again. Ms. Senatori stated that once the information has been gathered and processed, we can bring it back in the early part of 2022.

Mr. Elkin asked when we can expect to see the new data? Ms. Bliss indicated that additional data including age will be available in March 2022.

The Chair thanked Ms. Bliss for her presentation and said that if there are further questions staff is available to discuss them and more information will be released in the Spring. He introduced Chelsea Bennouna who will present the New Homeowner Survey information.

**New Homeowner Survey:** Commission staff will present findings from the new homeowner survey of people who purchased a home in Barnstable County between April 2020 and mid-May 2021.

Using a power point Chelsea Bennouna gave the following presentation on the New Homeowner Survey. She began by reviewing the post card with the questions that were sent to homeowners on Cape Cod. The survey resulted in 403 responses, 61% of which are year-round and 32% are part time. The statistics include the age of the respondents, 2020 household income and the home purchase price. They also included the distribution of respondents homes by town and the type of dwelling, employment status, employment location and remote status, top industries of new homeowners, circumstances of the pandemic that influenced their decision to purchase a home on Cape Cod, most and least factors for purchasing a home on Cape Cod, the most and least used public facilities, use of on cape professional services and internet services usage and the ways in which respondent have been or anticipate using their new home.

The Chair thanked Ms. Bennouna for her presentation and asked for member questions, comments.

Ms. Taylor questioned the use of transportation or childcare relative to the fact that there is hardly any childcare on the Cape and transportation isn't the same as off Cape. She asked if that is factored in, or if other questions that would elicit an answer that such as 'if it were available, would you use the services' were asked? Ms. Bennouna stated that this survey didn't gather information about that but said that it could be investigated in the future.

Mr. Harris asked if the state was conducting a similar survey statewide? Ms. Bennouna stated that she is not aware of any other surveys like this one. Ms. Senatori added that some Regional Planning Agencies are looking to conduct surveys like this, but not heard of one being conducted statewide now. Mr. Harris asked how this data will be used to correct shortcomings in housing and transportation services, stating that there was no information collected that asks what a new resident might need. Ms. Senatori stated that this survey is providing more data to support our regional planning. What spurred the survey is the population shifts that we saw on the Cape during the pandemic and weather these are permanent or will the shift once the pandemic dissipates.

Ms. Taylor asked that as we continue to work on the surveys will we correlate this data back to age as you will get different answers from the different age groups. Ms. Bennouna stated that the final report is still being developed and we will have the ability to view the responses by age.

Ms. Etsten asked if we looked at rental units, stating that it seems that quite a few have been developed over the past few years, often as the need for moderate pricing is needed on Cape Cod. She asked if these are being occupied by Cape Codders or occupied by off Cape people that wanted to move to Cape Cod. Ms. Bennouna stated that in this survey only looked at homeowners and their plan to use the home as a rental. Ms. Etsten asked specifically about the multi-family dwellings that have been constructed in the last few years. Ms. Senatori stated that that wasn't the intent behind this survey but in one of our upcoming initiatives is the Regional Housing Strategy and questions being asked today will be addressed in the broader survey.

Mr. Grunwald thanked staff for their presentations adding that there is an incredible amount of data that can be useful. He added that it's scary to see that the Cape is getting older, richer, and more exclusive. As we refine the data it's important to inform the towns as it has implications on the types of incentives we provide for housing. He asked that we refine data for houses that sold for over \$500k, as it speaks to the trends and character of the communities.

Mr. Weeden appreciates Mr. Grunwald's comments and agrees that this is an area of concern. He added the fear that we only have 4% year-round rentals, and the trend is going toward short-term rentals. We will have to come up with a way to incentivize year-round rentals because the short-term rental is so profitable making the rental issue worse on Cape Cod.

Mr. Elkin stated that as it relates to the future housing policy it would be worthwhile to look at the houses that appeared in the current survey that didn't appear in the 2010 survey to understand the trends. Understanding what changes would give more insight into where we are going. He added that this is a survey of new purchases and if you buy a house, it makes no economic sense to rent it year-round which is different if you have an existing property which could help understand the year round and short-term rental data.

Mr. Wilson stated that he was surprised by the age of the buyer in the new home purchases because 80% said they never used senior services. Moving forward he would be interested in data on the use of senior centers and services. Harwich is considering building a Senior Center and there may not be a need for it. That information would be helpful.

#### **New Business:**

The Chair asked for comments on New Business.

#### **Meeting Adjourned:**

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn.

Upon a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:56 p.m. made by Kevin Grunwald, seconded by Richard Elkin, the motion carried. Roll call vote was as follows: Fred Chirigotis, Yes; Stephen Mealy, Yes; Elizabeth Taylor, Yes; Tom Wilson, Yes; Richard Roy, Yes; Jacqueline Etsten, Yes; Douglas Fromm, Yes; Cheryl Andrews, Yes; Harold Mitchell, Yes; Kevin Grunwald, Yes; Richard Elkin, Yes; John Harris, Yes; David Weeden, Yes

**Documents used/submitted at the December 16, 2021, Cape Cod Commission Meeting**

Cape Cod Commission Meeting Agenda 12/16/21

Draft Minutes of the 10/7/21 CCC meeting

Power Point Presentation prepared by Cape Cod Commission staff inclusive of all agenda items

APPROVED: January 13, 2022