



May 6, 2013

Carol Dumas, Senior Managing Editor
The Cape Codder
5 Namskaket Road
Orleans, MA 02653

Re: APCC Supports Funding Orleans Phase 1A

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC), the Cape's largest regional environmental advocacy organization, supports Orleans' effort to fund and proceed with Phase 1A of the town's Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan.

The scientific community has determined that the greatest source of our water quality problems comes from on-site septic systems, with 80 percent of the reactive nitrogen negatively impacting our coastal waters coming from those septic systems. APCC supports a regional approach to wastewater management. APCC believes that a regional approach will provide effective treatment at the least cost and with the least infrastructure, while offering the best opportunity for state and federal funding. APCC sees no disparity between the efforts being undertaken in Orleans' proposed Phase 1A and the Cape Cod Regional Wastewater Management Plan published in December of 2012.

APCC also sees value in including improved stormwater management, fertilizer controls and open space protection through acquisition and other means in the effort to address nitrogen impacts in our coastal waters. Unfortunately, when doing the math, relying on these efforts alone will not be enough to attain clean water —not even close. Such efforts must be part of a comprehensive plan that also includes sewerage. Building sewers and adopting stormwater management is not an either/or choice. Soft solutions such as stormwater improvements and fertilizer management might help the town save money in later phases, but not in Phase 1A. Delay of Phase 1A will assuredly cost the taxpayers more money, particularly in light of Orleans' current positioning for zero interest state revolving fund financing. Competition for these limited funds will increase as other Cape towns begin to complete their own comprehensive wastewater management plans.



The reality is that some locations in Orleans, because of density and hydrology, require sewerage. In the end, Orleans has to sewer the downtown or it will begin to see restaurants and other businesses disappear. Phase 1A also includes a pre-engineering study for a decentralized system for Meetinghouse Pond. Most residents appear to agree that Meetinghouse Pond is the next priority after the downtown.

There has been some discussion about possible impacts to Namskaket Marsh from development of a new wastewater treatment facility. APCC has been conducting water quality monitoring of Namskaket Marsh since 2006 and we are convinced that a state of the art treatment facility is not a threat to the marsh. The gravest threat to the marsh, in addition to sea level rise, is development and build out of the Namskaket watershed without wastewater treatment.



Please attend town meeting on May 13 and vote yes on article 11, and vote yes on question # 8 at the polls on May 21. These votes will keep Orleans on the path to clean water.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ed DeWitt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ed DeWitt

Executive Director