



Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

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The Honorable Maura Healey

The Honorable Kim Driscoll

State House

24 Beacon Street

Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Healey and Lt. Governor Driscoll:

The Air Force's termination of intelligence activity performed at Joint Base Cape Cod eliminates the primary service mission of JBCC. The leak of sensitive intelligence from a service member at JBCC is a national security disaster that has raised many questions that can only be answered within and by the Department of Defense. It does, however, highlight the need for the Commonwealth to take a hard look at the highest and best uses of the land at JBCC to determine the best use of this asset and to revisit the lease extension quietly issued by your predecessor at the end of the last administration.

With the mission change announced this week, the rethinking of the use of JBCC provides a generational opportunity to solve some of the Cape's most difficult economic and environmental challenges. The Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) respectfully requests your Administration to formally evaluate retaining remaining essential JBCC functions such as the Coast Guard while utilizing the underdeveloped, already disturbed areas of the base to develop much-needed housing to help address the Cape's lack of affordable housing. That action should be paired with strengthening the current faux protections of the Upper Cape Water Supply Reserve on the northern 15,000 acres with a permanent conservation restriction.

Established in 1968, APCC is the Cape Cod region's leading nonprofit environmental organization, working for the adoption of laws, policies and programs that protect and enhance the Cape's natural resources and quality of life.

While APCC is not a housing advocacy organization, we recognize that the utilization of the already disturbed, underdeveloped, and underutilized

portions of JBCC provide an opportunity for redevelopment that would go a long way toward infusing enough new units of housing into the market to make a difference. With the Commonwealth as the landowner, there is a chance to develop in a way that protects a mix of new rental and ownership units from being swept up into the red-hot real estate market, maintaining true affordability and filling a much-needed void in the housing market.

There is an opportunity here to plan a vibrant carbon neutral community with heating and cooling provided by redevelopment of the wastewater treatment plant at the base to include anaerobic digestion and power provided by renewable energy. There is clearly a case to be made here that using a portion of JBCC for housing is the single most transformative step that can be taken to address the housing needs of the region with minimal environmental impact and a positive net effect on the climate.

The opportunity to implement real and permanent protections to the 15,000 acres that comprise the Upper Cape Water Supply Reserve is the most significant open space preservation project remaining on Cape Cod. The reserve protects and provides water to five Cape communities and is the largest remaining contiguous forested area remaining outside of the National Seashore. The reserve is also vulnerable to misuse and destruction as evidenced by the Massachusetts National Guard's ongoing pursuit to clear cut forest to create the proposed multipurpose machine gun range. This area deserves lasting protections and now is the time to create them.

The behind-the-scenes and largely hidden from public view 50-year lease extension to the year 2099 that was pushed through in the closing months of the Baker Administration represents a major roadblock to optimizing the highest and best use of that land for housing and water supply protection.

APCC filed a public records request with the National Guard regarding the lease extension process and digitized the almost 2,000-page paper response provided by the Guard. A review of the record from the Guard's own words reveals an overt effort to obtain the lease with minimal public process and before the start of your Administration. The lack of a public airing of the alternative uses of this land robbed the region of the chance to discuss the best ways to protect the Cape's water supply, address our housing needs and maintain critical military functions at JBCC. We call upon your Administration to review the lease extension to see if this lost opportunity can be reclaimed.

APCC realizes that what we are proposing here reflects a major undertaking that challenges some of the accepted norms governing Cape Cod. That said, the climate, water, and housing



challenges we face require transformational thinking. We are simply not going to solve these existential problems without being willing to challenge and alter the status quo. We look forward to starting this conversation with you over the coming months.

Sincerely,



Andrew Gottlieb,

cc: Rebecca Tepper, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Melissa Hoffer, Climate Chief
Yvonne Hao, Executive Office of Economic Development
Senator Elizabeth Warren
Senator Edward Markey
Congressman William Keating
Senator Julian Cyr
Senator Susan Moran
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Mashpee Select Board
Falmouth Select Board
Yarmouth Select Board
Barnstable Town Council