



Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

August 10, 2023

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eliza McClennen
President

Steven Koppel
Vice President

Bob Ciolek
Treasurer

Jack Looney
Clerk

Tom Cohn

John Cumbler

Margo Fenn

Joshua Goldberg

DeeDee Holt

Pat Hughes

Molly Karlson

Elyse Magnotto-Cleary

Blue Magruder

Wendy Northcross

Rick O'Connor

Kris Ramsay

Robert Summersgill

Charles Sumner

Taryn Wilson

Mr. Edward Augustus, Secretary
Executive Office of Housing and Liveable Communities
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Secretary Augustus:

I enjoyed your comments at the OneCape Summit and had hoped to have the chance to talk to you. As the Cape's leading environmental advocacy organization, the Association to Preserve Cape Cod's primary mission is the preservation of the environment. That said, we have a long history of working with a diverse group of partners, including housing advocates, to develop public policies that support, and are good for, the environment as well as the people of Cape Cod. APCC's work with Housing Assistance Corporation on the GrowSmart Cape Cod project (<https://growsmartcapecod.org/>) is our most recent collaboration.

Let's start by stating the obvious: We all agree that the Cape needs and benefits from a year-round population with access to stable and affordable housing. Not only does the well-being of our economy rely on the availability of local workers, but a year-round population will also be more invested in preserving the resources of Cape Cod. A second home-dominated visitor population is not as invested in preserving the Cape as those who consider here home. While we will always have both permanent and seasonal residents, the balance is shifting away from a sustainable year-round population and that needs to be corrected.

From that starting point of agreement, the proposed solutions diverge. Many have coalesced around some iteration of a "build our way out of it" agenda. Focused on building market-rate housing with some subsidized affordable housing, this approach succeeds only by building enough homes on the Cape to make it no longer the place most of us value. We believe there are alternatives to reliance on policies that promote enough new market-rate building to satiate the market forces that have distorted the current housing market.

What I have heard that I find interesting pivots off the intriguing comment made by Paul Neidzweicki of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce at the OneCape Summit. Paul characterized the Cape's housing issue as not a problem of too few houses, but as an occupancy problem. In other words, we have enough single-family houses; what

we need is to have more of them occupied on a year-round basis by working families for whom Cape Cod is home. That notion made sense to me, and combined with his statement that the Cape has enough detached single-family homes, I am able to see a path forward.

The answer to our housing problem, and therefore to our environmental protection challenges, lies in integrated strategy that promotes and enables:

1. the purchase of deed restrictions on existing houses that ensures long-term affordability for working families;
2. land use policies that encourage denser development of multi-family and rental housing in already disturbed and underdeveloped properties that have access to wastewater infrastructure;
3. zoning changes that break the development patterns that have resulted in poor water quality, traffic and high housing prices;
4. a major new open space acquisition effort that preserves the majority of the remaining critical habitat left unprotected; and
5. utilization of those portions of Joint Base Cape Cod that may no longer be needed to meet critical national defense needs or that are not within the sensitive lands of the Upper Cape Water Supply Reserve. Please see our attached letter to Governor Healey proposing a reconsideration of the utilization of JBCC property as a part of a comprehensive alternative approach to meeting the region's housing needs.

Simply put, more of the same housing and development approaches, no matter how well intentioned, will bring more of our existing problems. Now is the time to break the mold before insatiable market forces consume all the remaining open space and turn the remaining modest sized homes that can suit working families into unattainable palaces that sit empty for much of the year. APCC would like to work with you to develop many of these ideas for possible inclusion in your upcoming Housing Bond Bill. I look forward to hearing back from you and welcome the opportunity to work with you on these important matters of public policy.

Sincerely,



Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

cc: Governor Maura Healy
Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll
Secretary Rebecca Tepper
Secretary Yvonne Hao
Senator Julian Cyr
Senator Susan Moran



Representative David Vieira
Representative Sarah Peake
Representative Kip Diggs
Representative Steven Xiaharos
Representative Chris Flanagan