

# Planning for Density Zoning in and around Osterville Village

OVA meeting

Feb. 7, 2023

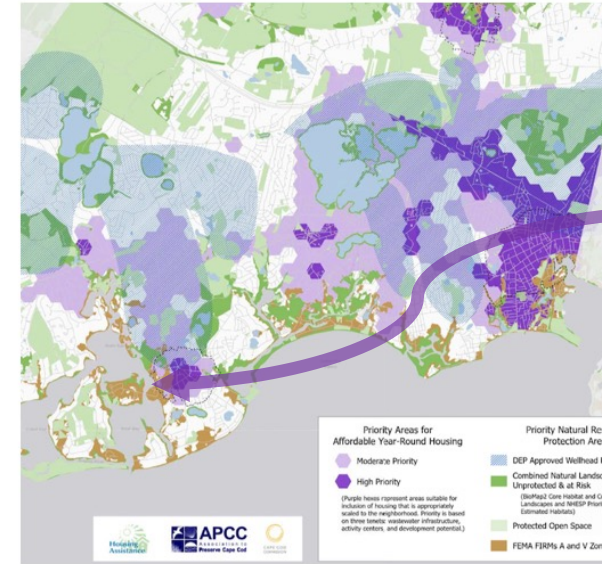
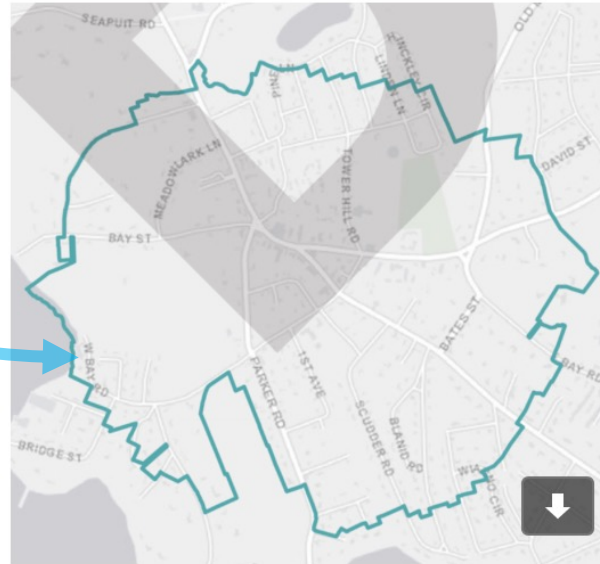


We can also do better than government telling you it plans to densify your neighborhood, your street, your village, your town...

- Because Town Planners believe zoning where you bought your home is a “burden”
- Because the CCC wants density
- Because housing advocates argue the Cape should build its way out of the housing challenge  
(p.s. here, our primary non-profit housing advocacy organization, HAC, fronts/partners on nearly everything, including policies that are anti-housing for locals, with entities economically interested in density – the realtor lobby, builders, the chamber. Look it up.)
- Because changing zoning to be a welcome mat for developers to densify is free and easy

Cape Cod Commission's  
Density "Community  
Activity Center" Osterville  
map

(there is a map for Hyannis  
and Barnstable Village too)



Osterville's Density Dots  
in draft Housing  
Production Plan

**Left/Top:** Cape Cod Commission Map of Osterville as a so-called "Community Activity Center", where it encourages zoning changes for mixed-used and multi-family density development. Osterville, in the Cape Cod Commission's view, is the same as the other villages deemed to be a "Community Activity Center" Hyannis and Barnstable Village, for zoning purposes.

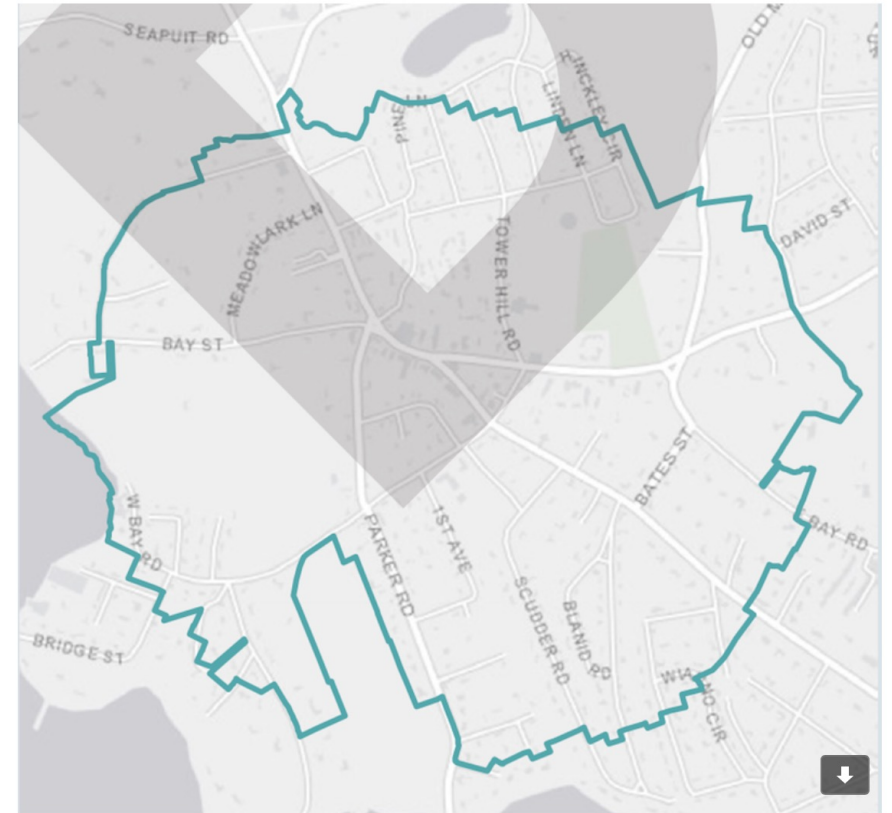
**Right/Bottom:** High-density development targets (Osterville is the purple cluster on the lower left) on the map used in Town Planners' January 2023 presentation of the draft *Housing Production Plan* to the Housing Committee. The map has the Cape Cod Commission seal on it, and Town Planners seem to be adopting it as their own.

## FIRST, check out the Cape Cod Commission's Osterville map.

It encompasses 390 acres in and around the center of Osterville Village.

The Commission thinks current zoning needs to change in so-called "Community Activity Centers" to increase density and usher in mixed-use and multi-family by right. It says Osterville is one of those.

Barnstable Town Planners' January 2023 [presentation](#) of the draft *Housing Production Plan* to the Housing Committee called out the 1/2 mile radius around the Osterville Village Center as ripe for high density development zoning changes.



Were you ever asked your view of whether, and if so, the parameter around Osterville Village that ought to be densified?



Do you want to change zoning in this footprint to usher in building density, multi-family, increased building height, double deckers, or leave density decisions to developers?



**HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN ASKED YOUR DESIRE TO  
CHANGE ZONING WHERE YOU LIVE  
TO USHER IN DENSITY DEVELOPMENT?**

**SECOND, let's listen to what Town Planners  
and the Cape Cod Commission say about our  
current single-family zoning.**

SINGLE FAMILY ZONING  
IS IN THE BULL'S EYE



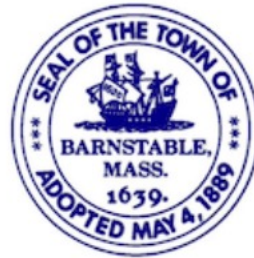
**Did you know it's a problem to solve?**

## IN THE TOWN PLANNING DEPARTMENT'S WORDS:



Single-family residential zoning is  
- a **“burden”** on the community\*

\*Zoning Subcommittee June 2020



ADU proposal is a **“babystep”** to **“pushing back”** on the  
**“legacy”** of single-family residential zoning\*

**AND THE CAPE COD COMMISSION?**



CAPE COD  
COMMISSION

**“Current zoning is broken”**

Are these "stray quotes", as characterized by a Councilor? No.



**THIRD, the barrier to changing our "burdensome" single-family zoning is lack of sewer infrastructure.**

**Over and over, Town Planning staff has said let's start with density zoning changes in Hyannis and then "move it" to Osterville and Barnstable Village.**

Density zoning in downtown Hyannis has now happened.

Town planners said in response to a question what they've been saying for years about the current zoning proposal being only about Hyannis: This proposal is tailored to Hyannis. Of course it is. No one has ever questioned that.

The answer is not relevant to the broader record of the plan to move density zoning elsewhere.

Now adopted

Downtown Hyannis is sewered. Town Planners have proposed zoning changes there to increase density, and in their words to the Housing Committee, to leave "density up to the developer". (These Housing Committee meeting minutes are not on the Town website; on [video](#) you'll hear Town staff explain "...density is up to the developer and really dictated by parking...there is less restrictions and it will be by right...".)

- Consultant said expect high end of the market pricing
- All can be Airbnb'd
- Will deepen parking problems

Town Planners worked on this zoning proposal for *years* with an all-business interest committee - often self-appointed and with no web presence or public visibility - long before beginning the public process. The Economic Development Task Force meeting [minutes](#) (that were not on the Town website until residents heard about it and asked for them...) show the Town Planner asking the all-business interest committee to "champion" this zoning change.

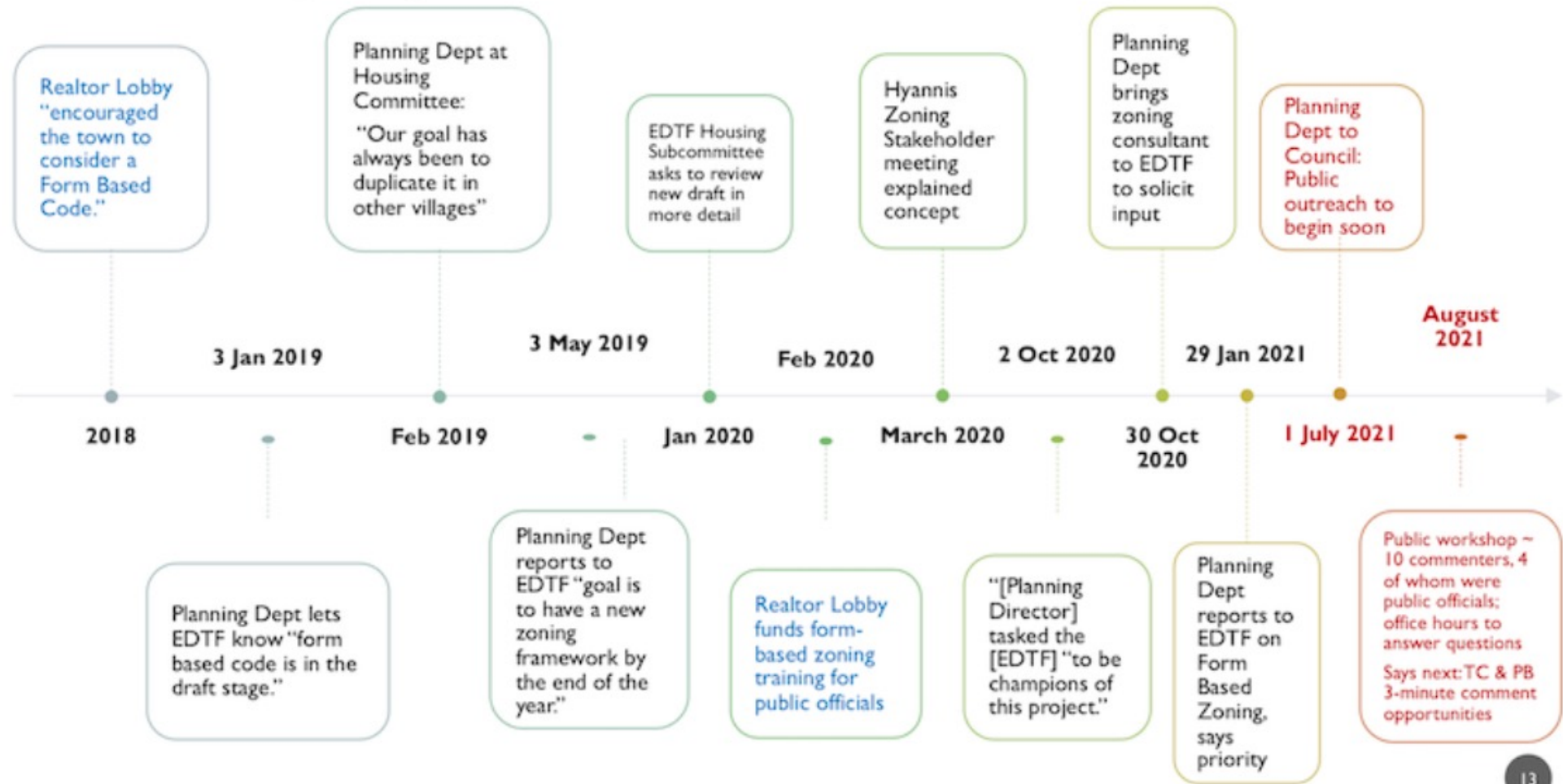
- Process drives outcomes
- Why do business interests come first in zoning here?



**How many of you think “leaving density up to a developer” in your community is the way to meet our community’s needs?**

## Process drives outcomes. Check out the level and duration of advance work with business-interests:

### Form-Based Zoning Development Process: Business Interests Ist. Years later, residents.



## Here are Town Planning staff, over the years, on their intent to move density zoning to Osterville (and Barnstable Village):

2019

### IN TOWN HALL WORDS



“

.....project is focused right now in the Growth Incentive Zone...a portion of downtown Hyannis. That's the focus of this area however our goal has always been to be able to replicate this in other areas”

“

“That would be our goal, we'd say, ok absolutely, now let's replicate this in the village center of Marstons Mills, in the village center of Osterville and Barnstable, we'll move it.”



2021

## IN TOWN HALL WORDS



“

This is a more modernized approach to zoning...has a lot of components that could be well-replicated in other locations...as well as the approach itself to form-based zoning...could be very effective in our other village centers...if we can find other opportunities to bring these modernized tools to other places in Barnstable I think it would be beneficial to our overall regulatory scheme and predictability of development town-wide



## Town Planner report to Town Council on working with CCC on density zoning framework for “Community Activity Centers” like Osterville

2021

INTOWN HALL WORDS



We'll make available a document we worked on with the Cape Cod Commission, a form-based code framework that talks about why this tool are a...good tool, a good option for regulating development in our Community Activity Centers on Cape Cod.\*

(Yes, Osterville is a “Community Activity Center”)



Is this report to the Council a "misinformation train" as characterized over and over by a Councilor? No.

**FOURTH, let's look at what the Cape Cod Commission says about zoning in Hyannis, Osterville and Barnstable Village.**

**It says all three are the same for density zoning change purposes.**

**Whose plan is it anyway?**



CAPE COD  
COMMISSION



CAPE COD  
COMMISSION

## **Cape Cod Commission categorizes Barnstable Village, Hyannis, Osterville as ‘Community Activity Centers’**

It says ‘Community Activity Centers’ should have zoning changes:

1. Zoning to allow higher density and multi-family housing
2. Inclusionary zoning by laws
3. Dimensional regulations that foster pedestrian activity and follow established development patterns



**How many of you weighed in on the CCC “Community Designation Center” designation or knew its zoning implications?**

## The following is from the Cape Cod Commission's December 2022 *Barnstable Housing Profile* (with arrow added for clarity):

### Community Activity Centers

Community Activity Centers are areas with a concentration of business activity, community activity, and a compact built environment that may be suitable for additional housing and a mix of uses. The vision for these areas is to accommodate these uses in a walkable, vibrant area, preserve historic buildings, and to provide diverse services, shopping, recreation, civic spaces, housing, and job opportunities, with adequate infrastructure and pedestrian amenities to support development. Seventeen Community Activity Centers have been identified across the region. Barnstable has three identified community activity centers, one in each of the villages of Barnstable, Hyannis, and Osterville.



How many of you had a say in whether Osterville (or any village) should be a CCC target for development?

**FIFTH, let's look at the connection of all this to the Town Planner's early decision - before any Council or community conversation - to end *Village Plans* in the *Local Comprehensive Plan* process.**

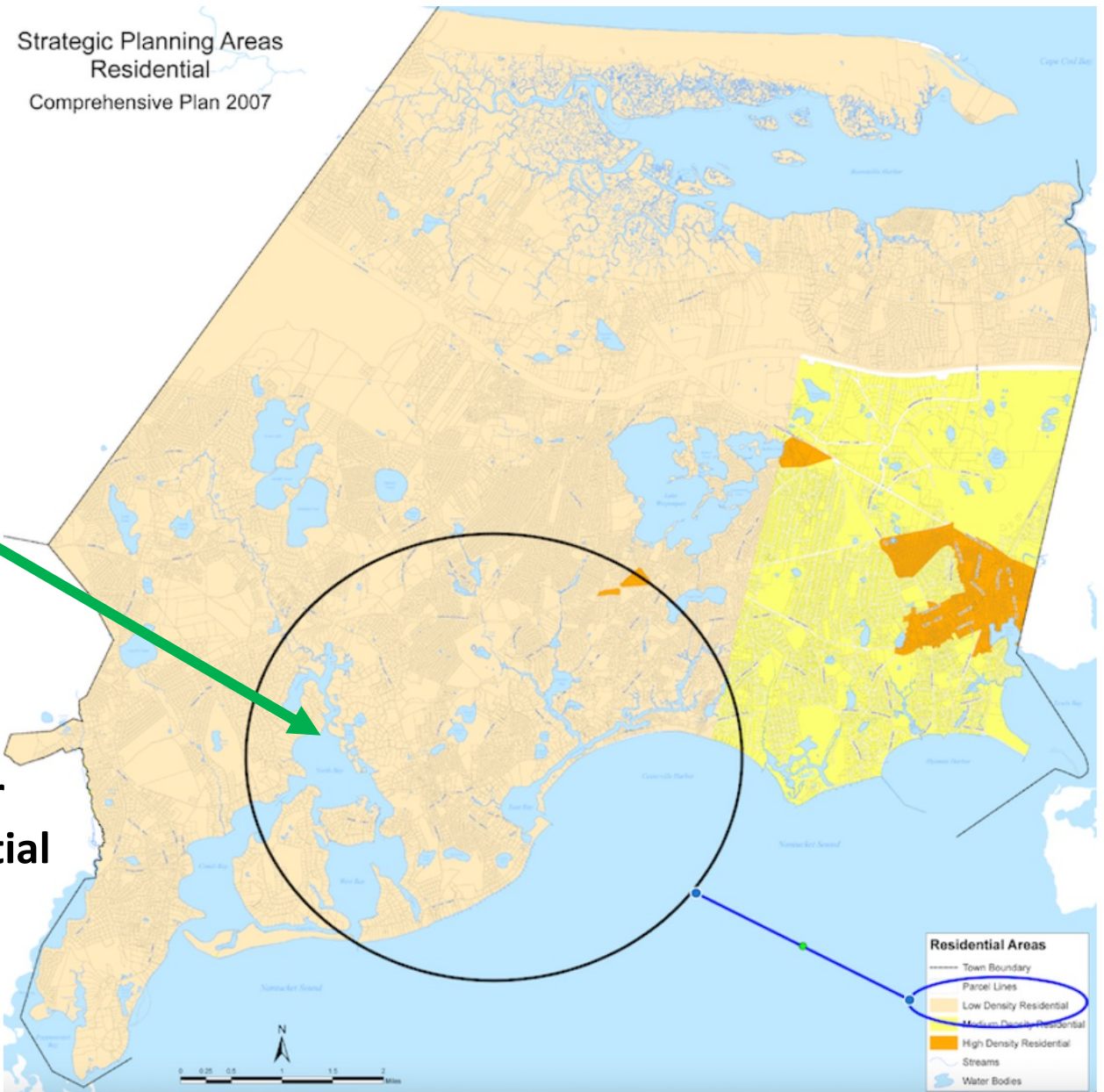
In the 2010 *Local Comprehensive Plan* process, back when village residents produced *Village Plans*, Osterville's *Village [Plan](#)* said thanks very much, we like our zoning as is. It's thoughtfully and sensibly designed: retail, restaurants and offices in the village center, housing all around, including lots of dense housing nearby (much more than in other places). Great. Perfect. Leave it!



**How many of you were asked whether you wanted to abandon Village Plans?**



Density zoning was not even a glimmer in anyone's eye for Osterville in the last planning cycle (compare this to the "High Density Priority" map above):



Density in the last planning process?  
Low Density Residential



How many of you have been asked whether  
you want to change to high density residential  
in the current housing production plan?

That was then.

In the *current Local Comprehensive Plan* cycle, the Town Planner announced the Town would now abandon village planning. This was before *any* Town Council or community conversation.

For the first time, village plans would be an *Output* of the Town Plan, not an *Input*.

The rationale (when pressed)? Sewers.



**How many of you were asked whether you were capable of considering the sewers you'll be asked to pay for in Village Planning?**

In Town Planner's words:

“


“We’re going in a different direction”\*

\* Planning Director reply to resident question at Zoning Subcommittee on Village Planning March 2021

“

“...Given ...the **objective to align this [LCP] process with the town wide Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan** and the impacts of that plan necessitate that we zoom out from the villages and really look at the impacts of the implications of that infrastructure town wide. ...If there are identified a need to update those village plans as a whole or bring additional planning processes forward really around any topic specific to each village I anticipate that being part of the recommendation of our Local Comprehensive Plan and an **outcome** of that strategic and targeted action.”\*

\* Planning Director reply to resident question at Planning Board, April 12, 2021

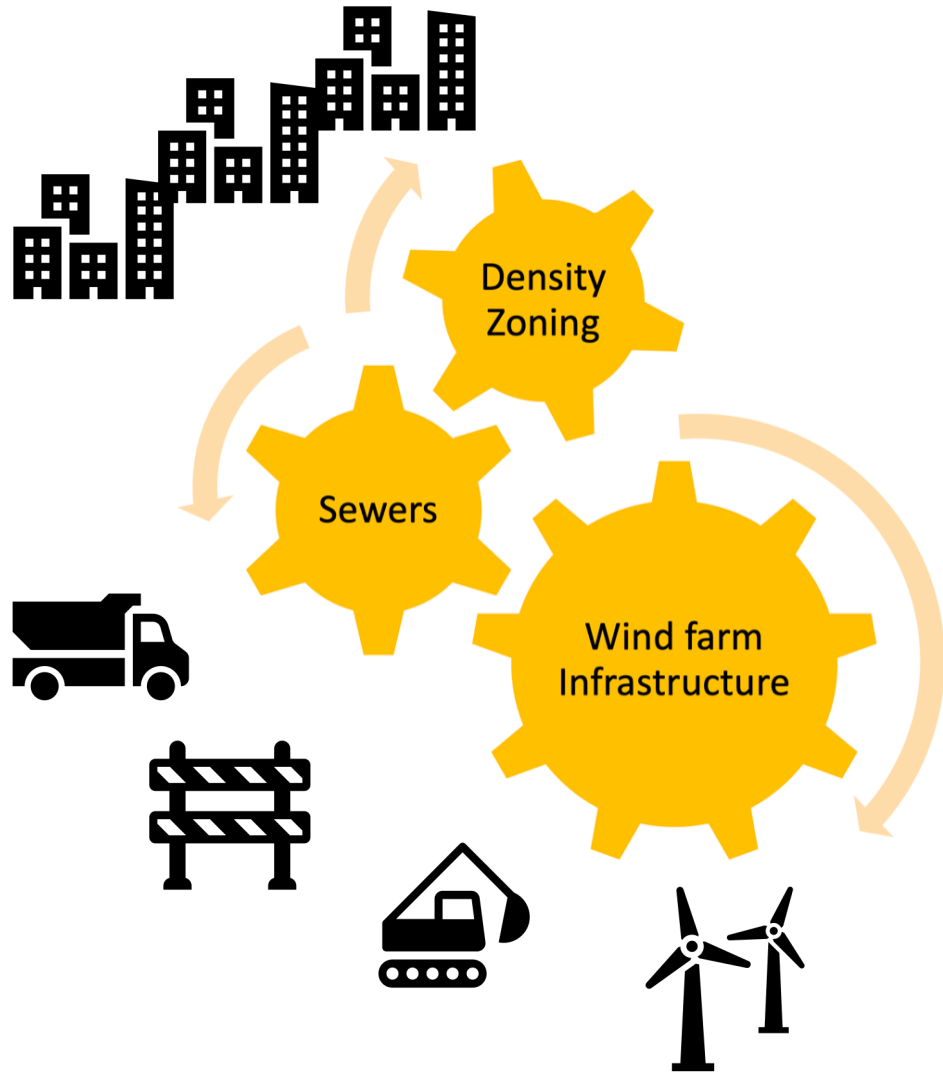
Changes to Villages Plans will now be an **OUTPUT** from LCP,  
rather than an **INPUT**,  
because.....SEWERS! 



Just about everyone wants clean power.

Deep community concern about the inappropriateness of Dowses as a wind landing isn't about that.

The density Town Planning is driving toward isn't a judgment on clean power, either.



## So, What's In The Wind?

Is it a coincidence that this Town, unlike all other Cape town management and governing bodies, *invited* developers to run high voltage infrastructure throughout Barnstable?

In the case of Osterville, the Town is also urging the developer to run power infrastructure right through our business districts and residential areas.

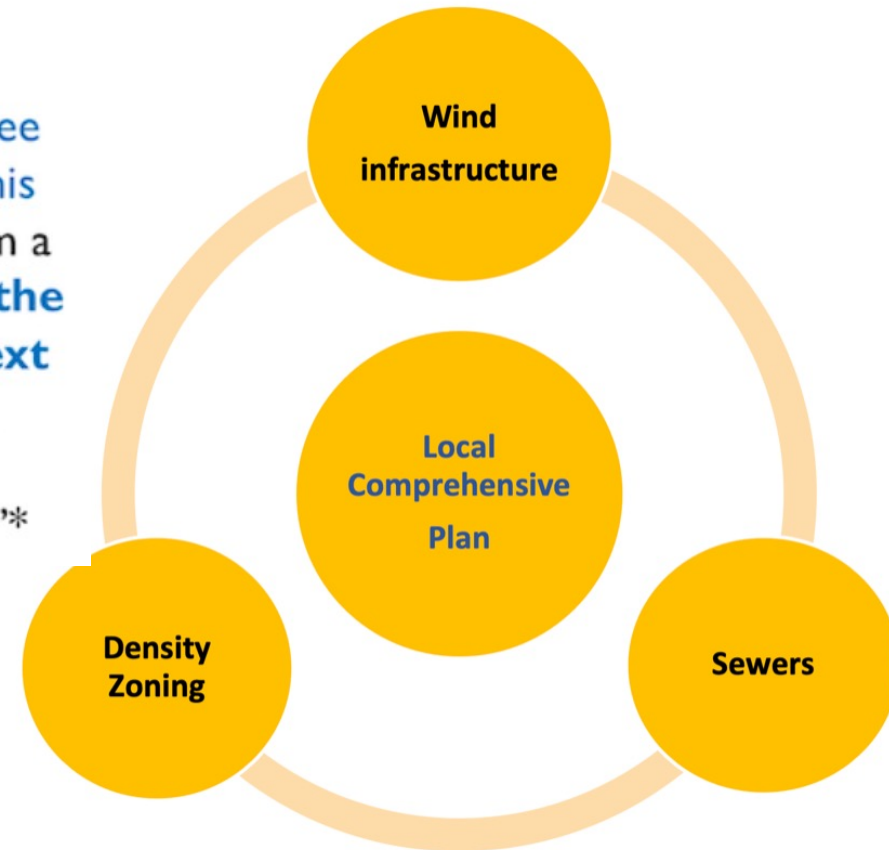
That's contrary to the current wind developer's prior criteria, stated in the public record as submitted to the state, to *avoid* business centers, high traffic areas and densely developed residential areas in Hyannis - and contrary to overwhelming community sentiment here.

Remember now, the basis for tagging Osterville as "High Priority" density development in the draft *Housing Production Plan* map - with the Cape Cod Commission seal on it that Town Planners seem to be adopting as their own - is: "wastewater infrastructure, activity centers and development potential."

The first *Local Comprehensive Plan* Committee meeting minutes affirm the Town Planner tying sewers - and "induced growth" - to the new process for the *Local Comprehensive Plan*.

Here's the meeting report :

“In regards to the wastewater plan: Elizabeth Jenkins wants the [LCP] committee to know that it is one of the main things that propelled her forward to make this committee. There is a need to respond to nutrient management challenges from a regulatory perspective. **The town adopted the current CWMP and is in the process of planning to sewer 12,000 parcels in Barnstable over the next 20-30 years. This has incredible implications for potential for induced growth and how we potentially grow and change as a community—it necessitates knowing how we want to do that and what we want to preserve.**”\*





**SIXTH, the Town Planners' presentation of the draft *Housing Production Plan* to the Housing Committee, echos the Cape Cod Commission *Regional Plan's* call for density zoning changes around Osterville Village.**

In [presenting](#) the draft *Housing Production Plan* (yet to be released) to the Housing Committee in January 2023, Town Planners identify as a strategy density zoning changes in and around village centers, like the Cape Cod Commission vision. It says that would be consistent with the *Local Comprehensive Plan*. It includes maps, funded by the Cape Cod Commission, that tag Osterville as "High Priority" for such development. The draft presentation suggests the Town is adopting the development maps as its own.

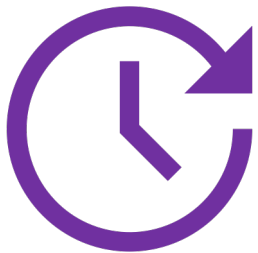


But wait!

Density zoning in and around Osterville Village is **not** called for in the current *Local Comprehensive Plan*. Yet, the image below shows the draft *Housing Production Plan* saying this:

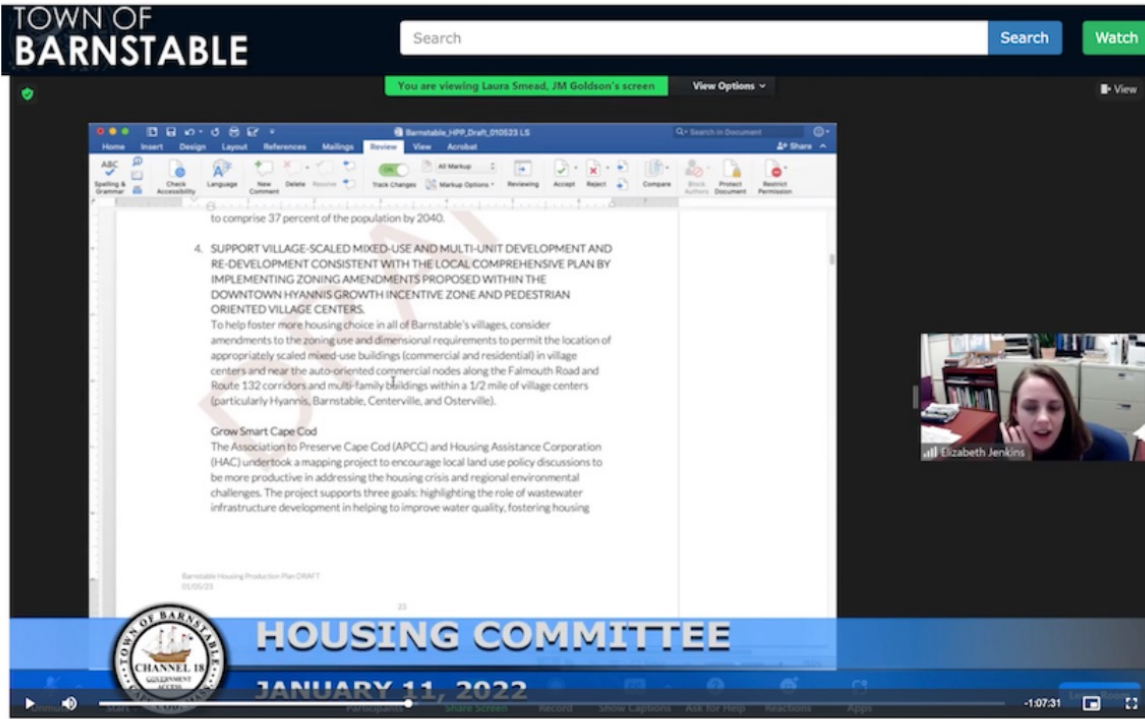


**"Support Village Scaled Mixed-Use and Multi-Unit Development...consistent with the Local Comprehensive Plan** by implementing zoning amendments within the downtown Hyannis Growth Incentive Zone *and Pedestrian Oriented Village Centers....consider amendments to the zoning use and dimensional requirements to permit ....mixed use...and multi-family within a 1/2 mile of village centers (particularly Hyannis, Barnstable, Centerville and Osterville).*" [emphasis added]



Are Town Planners actually projecting the outcome the next *Local Comprehensive Plan*, that is still in the public input phase and hasn't been written yet, in drafting the *Housing Production Plan*? This density and zoning change is a big departure from the current *Local Comprehensive Plan* and from the *Village Plans*.

From Town Planners' presentation to the Housing Committee on the draft Housing Production Plan in January 2023:

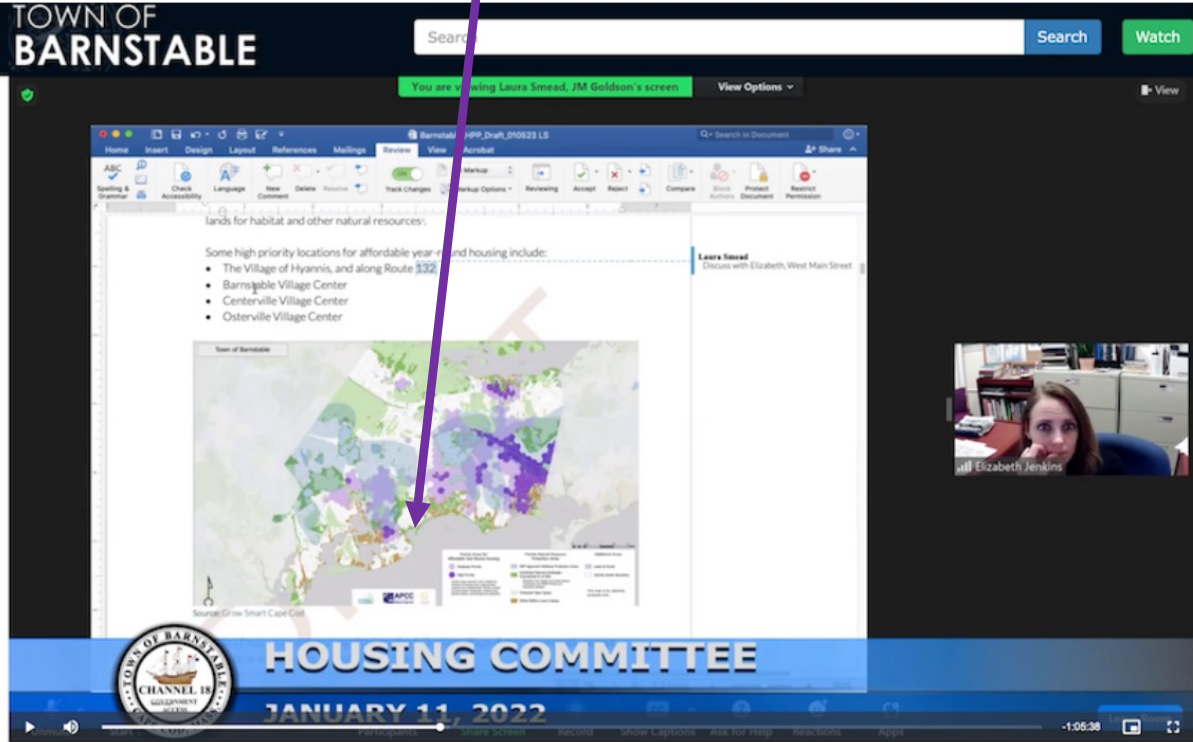


Priority Areas for Affordable Year-Round Housing

 Moderate Priority

 High Priority

(Purple hexes represent areas suitable for inclusion of housing that is appropriately scaled to the neighborhood. Priority is based on three tenets: wastewater infrastructure, activity centers, and development potential.)



same language as on previous slide, image to preempt “misinformation train” assertions...

**SEVENTH, the Town's - that's your -  
*Local Comprehensive Plan* can chart its own  
vision and future.**

**Actually, there is  
no requirement that Barnstable conform to  
the Cape Cod Commission's Regional Plan or  
its vision for its so-called "Community  
Activity Centers" like Osterville.**



The Town - that's you - can set its own vision, goals, density preferences and plan in place to reflect the desires of citizens. How many of you after all weighed in on the Cape Cod Commission's vision for your Village?

Whose plan is it anyway?

Here is what the Town - that's you - gets for conforming the Town Plan to the Cape Cod Commission Regional Plan:

**10. What does Commission LCP certification obtain for the town?**

Towns with Commission-certified LCPs will be given priority consideration for planning and technical assistance from the CCC. The technical assistance may help with a variety of topics and issues, as well as helping towns implement actions identified in the Targeted Action Plan in their LCP. Additionally, a Commission-certified LCP will afford communities the ability to enter into development agreements, to assess impact fees pursuant to the Cape Cod Commission Act, and offers a planning framework for proposed designations such as Chapter H and Growth Incentive Zones.

From the CCC

**What do you think?**

**Are these "benefits" worth following the Cape Cod Commission's density zoning preferences?**



**Did anyone ask you whether you wanted to conform to the CCC vision and plan?  
How about whether you believe the CCC benefits of compliance provide value?**



## EIGHTH, ACT!

2. Send your comments on the Town's soon-to-be released draft *Housing Production Plan*, and any density proposal within it. Whose plan is it anyway? Be on the lookout for recommendations to change zoning to increase density 1/2 mile around village centers, including Osterville. Send your comments to your [Councilor](#), too.
3. Watch and send your comments in on the *Local Comprehensive Plan* [here](#) and to your [Councilor](#).
4. Tell your [Councilors](#) whether you want the Town's *Local Comprehensive Plan* to conform to the Cape Cod Commission's *Regional Policy Plan* - and density zoning for its so-called "Community Activity Centers," including Osterville. Whose plan is it anyway - the Commission's or yours?
5. Send this to your friends, neighbors and family and ask them to speak up about changes in the works!
6. If you have information about anything here that is wrong or misguided, please speak up! We welcome corrections.

Thanks.

Questions and discussion.

[www.OVAtoday.com](http://www.OVAtoday.com)