



preserving and conserving for the future

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Guest Editorial to the Boston Globe

11/29/22

This guest editorial addresses the article dated, Sunday, November 27, *“On a Cape Cod golf course, the region’s housing crisis comes to a head”*, by Andrew Brinker.

Your article this past Sunday about a proposed apartment complex on a Hyannis golf course paints a conflict between meeting housing needs and protecting the environment. These goals are not mutually exclusive.

Housing

Needed housing can and should be built in a way that minimizes impacts on wetlands and coastal resources. Hyannis has acres of vacant or underused shopping centers, commercial buildings, and parking lots — all on sewer, away from these threatened resources and near public transportation and shopping.

The town’s most recent multi-family housing inventory (September 20, 2022) shows 637 units proposed, in permitting, or under construction *in addition to this project*, along with 356 units recently added. This is one of only two pending projects with over 55 units.

The bulk of this proposed complex would be leased at market rates, with only 10% affordable and another 3% below-market. As the article reports, the local workforce can’t afford market rents. Will this project really help the workforce housing problem, or is it just one more profitable development?

A Fragile Eco-System

We cannot continue to overlook climate change. This project would add a net 8.7 acres of buildings and paved surfaces including cutting down 600+ mature trees. Removing these trees will destroy their heat canopy and the clean air they provide, as well as the soils which sequester carbon. Building and paving over the natural topography will displace many of the reported 117 wildlife species — some of which are endangered.

The two brooks bordering the project form an estuary at the southern tip of the property that empties into Nantucket Sound, a mere 2,100 feet away. That estuary has been decaying for decades, and is subject to flooding and storm surge. The Barnstable Clean Water Coalition produced a video available on our [website](#) describing the potential impact of storm surge on this site.

The Regional Policy Plan adopted by the Cape Cod Commission — the agency established in 1989 to prevent the return of unchecked development that threatened to destroy the Cape’s unique natural and cultural heritage — states **“Cape Cod’s environment is its economy.”**



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Environmental Justice

This location borders underserved environmental justice neighborhoods. These neighborhoods currently have no open parkland and lie a long distance from beaches. And they would bear the brunt of these ecological impacts, as well as increased traffic and overflow parking due to the below-standard number of parking spaces.

The mission of Save Twin Brooks, Inc. is to preserve and protect the green space, watersheds, natural resources, and habitats of the Twin Brooks Golf Course and Stewarts Creek Estuary. We support development that minimizes impact on wetlands and coastal resources. We encourage reuse of the town's substantial inventory of underused and vacant properties to enhance the quality of life for our community.

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