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June 30, 2021

Zoning Board of Appeals
Bourne Town Hall
24 Perry Avenue
Buzzards Bay, MA 02532-3441

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TOWN CLERK BOURNE

Dear Zoning Board Members,

I am writing in support of the Housing Assistance Corporation's proposed Cape View Project.

As you know, we have an affordable housing crisis on Cape Cod and the addition of 51 new units will help Bourne attract and retain a much-needed workforce so crucial to the sustainability of our communities and quality of life.

As in Falmouth, Bourne is well below the affordable housing goal of 10% and this project will help towards that goal.

The pandemic has exasperated the housing crisis and the boom in the real estate market has made it impossible for those of low to moderate income to be able to afford to live on the Cape. The median price home in Barnstable County is over \$600,000 which would take an income of over \$150,000 to qualify for a mortgage.


In the last few months, I have received calls from people who have been in the same year-round rental property for years. Because the owners now want to take advantage of this booming real estate market, they are selling their homes and asking their tenants to leave. The problem is, there is no place for those people to go. New housing is imperative to every Town on Cape Cod and Bourne has the opportunity to increase its housing stock at a critical time.

According to the Cape Cod Commission, Cape Cod has lost more than 3,000 year-round rentals in the past few years to seasonal and short-term rentals such as airbnbs. This is devastating to those who want to live and work on the Cape but can't afford to buy a home. Most of the people buying homes on the Cape in the past year are those who do not work here and we need people to work here.

Most Cape Towns can't even hire essential workers like first responders because of the lack of reasonably priced housing. In Falmouth, we had a tax override to hire 9 new fire fighters and couldn't hire even one because no one can afford to live on Cape with the salaries that we pay.

I urge you to work with Housing Assistance Corp. to make this project happen and for Bourne to become part of the solution to the housing crisis.

Sincerely,


Karen L. Bissonnette

Executive Director
Falmouth Housing Trust