

# TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

## FEBRUARY 16, 2021

### 1. COVID-19 UPDATES

#### Update from Dennis Health Department –

The Health Director Kristen Keller reports as of this morning, 2/16/2021, the number of active and probable cases in Dennis is 14. This represents a relatively significant decline since the beginning of 2021. Barnstable County is also reporting a decline in cases at this time, with 32 new cases reported over the weekend. Concurrent with the decline in cases regionally, the County is reporting a decline in hospitalizations and fatalities as well. Test positivity rates in Barnstable County have fallen below 5%, which suggests the outbreak of cases seen after the holidays is now coming under control.

Testing locations for symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals remain open in Falmouth, Hyannis and on the outer cape. Individuals must call ahead for an appointment. Specific information regarding registration for testing at these sites is available on the Health Department's website.

As of 2/15/21, the State reported 1,519,500 doses of vaccine had been shipped to the State and 1,143,430 doses had been administered exceeding the 1 million benchmark the State had established for administration of vaccine prior to the end of last week, despite the relatively limited number of doses received from the Federal government at this time.

Vaccination at State and regional clinics is by appointment only for any Phase 1 eligible individual and Phase 2 , Step 1 individuals which include those who are 75 years or older. To expedite administration of the vaccine to individuals in the latter group, and help overcome hurdles identified related to online scheduling requirements and transportation, the State has implemented a help line for registration, which can be reached by dialing 211. In addition, eligibility for the vaccine has been extended to allow 1 caregiver or companion to receive a vaccine if transporting an individual aged 75 or older to any MA vaccination site.

The County of Barnstable has also extended eligibility for one caregiver or companion to regional vaccine clinics located on Cape Cod as well. Consistent with information received from the State, the County is also continuing to report a limited supply of vaccine in the Cape Region at this time. Accordingly, they are requesting that those individuals who are able to drive to a Massachusetts mass vaccination site off Cape with the 75 + senior they are accompanying, to please consider doing that rather than attending a local, regional vaccine clinic.

Information received from both the State and the County suggests that the State continues to favor a process involving high throughput vaccination such as what has been made available at the State's mass vaccination sites for a number of logistics and reporting reasons. Regardless, the State is continuing to distribute vaccine to regional distribution sites, such as the County of Barnstable Health Department, and to local community health centers, including some locations on Cape Cod, though in lesser quantities.

In addition to planning at the State level, Barnstable County Health Department and Local Boards of Health, including Dennis, continue to engage weekly in planning efforts for local distribution of

vaccine as it becomes available from the Federal and State government. Outer Cape Healthcare has stepped-in to assist LBOH with vaccination of home-bound individuals and senior housing and the VNA is working

## **2. VETERANS HOME –**

The Cape and Islands Outreach Center will host a virtual ribbon cutting ceremony for the Dennis Veterans Home project on Friday February 19<sup>th</sup> at 11AM.

We hope anyone that would like to join will share in the celebration of this important community project by viewing through livestream on the CIVOC Facebook page.

Many thanks to CIVOC and all the many community leaders and supporters that assisted in making this vision a reality!!

## **3. DENNIS LIBRARIES PRESENT A STORY BOARD WALK -**

Cindy Cullen Dennis Public Library Director updates the Dennis Libraries are joining together to present a Story Walk during February school vacation week. Starting Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup> head over to Johnny Kelley Park to take a stroll in the clear air and read "Snow" by author Cynthia Rylant, beautifully illustrated by Lauren Stringer. The Dennis Libraries would like to thank the Recreation Department and DPW for helping with this special event.

Update - Great news, this event has been extended until March 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **4. MICRO ENTERPRISE FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM FOR THE TOWN OF DENNIS**

**FUNDING STILL AVAILABLE:** The Town of Dennis Micro Enterprise Community Development Block Grant still has funds available for forgivable loans to assist small businesses during these tough COVID times. See the attached flyer for application information.

[- Micro Enterprise Forgivable Loan Program for the Town of Dennis | Dennis MA](#)

## **5. SELECT BOARD EXTENDS COMMENT PERIOD ON HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN –**

On January 5, 2021 the Town of Dennis Select Board, Housing Trust and Planning Board held a joint meeting to receive the Draft Housing Production Plan Update. The Select Board would like to invite you to review the presentation and the Draft Housing Production Plan Update. The draft report and the results of the survey can be found at: <https://www.town.dennis.ma.us/select-board-administration/events/36201>

The Housing Production Plan Update will:

- Help the Town of Dennis meet its significant affordable housing needs and have more local input in the Comprehensive Permit process.
- Points out that special consideration be given to the needs of older residents, residents with disabilities, and those living in poverty, all of which Dennis has in relatively large numbers.
- Highlights the income disparity between Dennis and the rest of Cape Cod including:
  - In 2018 Dennis Median Household Income was the second lowest on Cape Cod.
  - Sixty-four percent (64%) of the households in Dennis pay more than 30% of their income on their housing costs.

- Emphasizes that the growth of the seasonal second-home market continues to outpace that of the year-round market. This market data as well as community feedback indicate that it is increasingly difficult to afford a home in Dennis.
- Recommends that the Town work to meet its annual goal of thirty-eight new affordable units through a focus on redevelopment and infill projects, through strategies such as encouraging development of Accessory Dwelling Units or adopting a Chapter 40R Smart Growth Overlay, among others.

**Update**

**The Select Board welcomes your feedback on the updates and the comment period has been extended through the end of February. Please provide any written comments to Laurie Barr (lbarr@town.dennis.ma.us) no later than Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup>.**

Thank you everyone, have a great rest of the week - please stay vigilant, wear a mask and be well!!

Respectfully,

Elizabeth C. Sullivan  
Town Administrator