

COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT

This is our community vision statement. It reflects the broad views of the townspeople – how Dennis is seen now and how it will be viewed in the future. This statement is based on efforts to learn the public mind, including forums and opinion surveys, timetable for completion, estimates of costs and their effect on the tax base.

Among the aspects of our future addressed within this statement are HERITAGE PRESERVATION and COMMUNITY CHARACTER, LAND USE and GROWTH MANAGEMENT, PRESERVATION of NATURAL RESOURCES, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION, OPEN SPACE, COMMUNITY SERVICES and FACILITIES, AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

This statement is intended to be a blueprint for another chapter, a future chapter, in the history of Dennis. It aims for continuity of development. Many of the expressions of community vision declared within this document speak of preserving the town's character. What are some of the items of the character of Dennis?

- This is a waterside place, a place surrounded by shoreline and defined by the water in, around and under us. Preservation of boating, fishing and shellfishing are vital to preserving the character of Dennis.
- As a residential town it is essential to preserve and promote its peace and quiet, spaciousness, its safety, and the ease of travel.
- Dennis is a town of natural and man-made beauty. To ensure that is not lost it is necessary to protect our natural resources and to give continuity to building design.
- Dennis is a resort town and it is intended to continue to be attractive to our visitors and part-time residents who help pay our bills and who expect our community to change, but to be unsullied by uncontrolled development.
- Dennis is a town with views and vistas seldom seen anywhere in the world.

Development consists overwhelmingly of single family dwellings. Recreational facilities – beaches, golf courses, parks, ball fields, etc., occupy much of the land already set aside for them. A population increase is envisioned in the next 20 years and will be taken into consideration. It is not intended that Dennis becomes a metropolis or a suburb, rather to preserve its small town character.

Change in community facilities and services are inevitable, expensive and not always welcome. Highways will change to improve safety and traffic flow. Alternatives such as better and more walk and bike ways, trolley or bus service should be encouraged. Recycling is here and welcomed. Public and private sewer systems must be designed to preserve current and future water quality standards. Harbor facilities are very limited in relation to the general desire for access to water. By the year 2015 these facilities may be development to their fullest capacity. Maintaining a viable marine ecosystem, retaining their natural beauty while accommodating both boaters and their boats is essential.

Dennis also faces the important issue of economic development. The existing business base must be supported and expanded. The nature of the business should determine what part of town it can locate in, according to appropriate zoning by-law. Issues such as what it should look like and how it will effect employment and transportation systems should be addressed. Pre-permitting and creating new areas of opportunity that not only help the business community, but also the town as a whole, are to be encouraged.

The purpose of this plan is to identify the changes that must be made. It is recognized that no plan will be perfect, but it must be adaptable to changes and improvements as necessary. Finally, it is the purpose of this plan to leave a clear vision for the future children and grandchildren who are fortunate to reside in the Town of Dennis.

The Goals, Policies and Minimum Performance Standards within this document are goals to be attained by the town. These Goals, Policies and Minimum Performance Standards do not have regulatory effect in and of themselves. These Goals, Policies and Minimum Performance Standards do not supercede existing town by-laws or regulations. Any regulatory changes will be developed by the responsible town boards and brought through the boards normal regulatory review process, including public hearings, etc.