

## **FAQs About Dennis Becoming a Green Community**

*We all see it every month; heating, cooling and lighting our homes and businesses is a cost we all face. Our town pays those same costs to light our streets, control our traffic, and, heat, cool and light Town Hall, our schools, our firehouses and police station, our libraries and other public places. Green Community designation can help bring those costs down.*

### **Why are we here?**

We are here to discuss Dennis “Going Green.” Our town is about to apply to become a Green Community under the Green Communities Act of 2008 which created policies related to energy supply and use with unanimous support in the Massachusetts Legislature.

### **What is the advantage of Dennis becoming a green community?**

If designated as a Green Community, Dennis would be eligible for significant grants for energy conservation. Dennis would join over 240 other communities throughout the Commonwealth who have become Green Communities. These include Harwich, Mashpee, Orleans, Provincetown, Truro, Wellfleet and Yarmouth here on Cape Cod. Dennis would be eligible for an initial grant of \$160,000 and future grants up to \$250,000 per year. These grants can help pay for project related capital expenditures, freeing up other revenue sources like tax dollars, and in turn, lowering the town’s energy related operating expenditures.

### **What do we need to do to become a green community?**

There are 5 steps Dennis must take to join our sister towns as a green community and we have already taken 4 of those steps:

- As-of-right siting for specific energy-related functions (check!)
- Expedited application and permitting process (check!)
- An energy baseline for two years of past energy use of all types and a plan to reduce that baseline by 20% over 5 years (check!)
- A plan for purchasing fuel-efficient vehicles (check!)
- Pass the stretch energy code at Annual Town Meeting on May 7th (that’s the final step!)

### **What’s the stretch energy code? How is it different than the building code?**

The stretch code is designed to reduce the energy and water costs for new residential and commercial buildings. New construction would have to be designed and built to meet slightly higher energy efficiency standards than the standard building code. The stretch code requires an overall energy performance standard, rather than prescribing specific features like the windows used or attic insulation required. Currently, the stretch code standards are very close to the base energy code.

### **If I decide to renovate my home, how will the stretch code affect me?**

Renovations and additions are not affected by the current stretch code.

### **What can I do to help Dennis become a Green Community ?**

Visit the Green Communities website [www.mass.gov/energy/greencommunities](http://www.mass.gov/energy/greencommunities) to learn more about the benefits of Dennis becoming a Green Community. Spread the word that Dennis is seeking Green Community designation and the advantages to the community, taxpayer, and environment it will

provide. Let everyone know that you want Dennis to be a green energy leader by attending town meeting on May 7th, and voting to adopt the stretch code.