

TO: Art Hultin, Chair, Truro Zoning Board of Appeals

July 8, 2020

Hi, Art,

We are writing on behalf of the Truro Energy Committee and the Truro Climate Action Committee. We would like to find a way to support net-zero emissions in the Cloverleaf project by working with the Zoning Board of Appeals. We appreciate that the ZBA is seeking the input of other town boards which have expertise that is relevant to the project, which is certainly true in our cases.

We regret not being permitted to join the process earlier. However, due to Truro's COVID restrictions, neither committee was allowed to meet. This prohibition interrupted the work of the two committees that had been underway on the project before the shutdown. With those restrictions lifted, last week both committees held their first meetings in four months.

Greenhouse gases are recognized as a major cause of climate change that requires action now. Massachusetts has announced a goal of net-zero emissions by 2050 with intermediate goals of a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030 and 75% by 2040. The Cape Cod Commission is currently considering a revision to the Regional Policy Plan to adopt a goal of net-zero emissions. Town Meetings for all towns on the Cape, including Truro, are currently considering articles adopting net-zero goals.

This means that by 2030 we may be required to reduce ALL of our greenhouse gas emissions to 50% of 1990 levels. If we do not build the Cloverleaf housing to a net-zero emissions standard now, we can expect to need retrofits that will cost many times the amount that it would cost to do it right the first time. As much as we welcome affordable housing units, it would be a large disappointment if predictable costs such as these were to render them less affordable, and thusly frustrating the goals of the project.

We recognize that there are some additional costs, amortized over the life of the building, to meet net-zero construction cost. These costs are offset by lower costs for heating and cooling and the avoidance of expensive retrofits within the project's first decade. Net-zero buildings will save money over the long run and render units more affordable. This is especially valuable to a population that most likely will not be able to absorb any of these costs in the future.

We also recognize that these requirements are new to us and to Truro projects. Any significant project in Truro going forward will now have to be reviewed based on these new requirements.

We have two requests:

1. Is the ZBA interested in a presentation by these two committees to initiate a discussion to consider net-zero planning for the project?
2. Can we find a way to work together to incorporate net-zero and related planning for the Cloverleaf project?

Please let us know if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Thank you,

Brian Boyle, Chair  
Truro Energy Committee

Carol Harris, Chair  
Truro Climate Action Committee

CC: Energy Committee members and Select Board liaison  
Climate Action Committee members and Select Board liaison  
LCPC chair, Town Manager, Town Planner