

## The Noble Experiment

Most people on Cape Cod view the Cape Cod Commission as a beneficial institution. By stopping commercial expansion they have come to symbolize preservation, conservation and all that is perceived to be good about Cape

Cod. More and more people on Cape Cod are realizing that the prohibition of one thing has led to unforeseen consequences.

The CCC was a placebo we took in 1989 that soothed us into thinking that because they held back Home Depot for 10 years we preserved the area from total ruination. We bought the politician rap from Sen O'Leary that to freeze commercial growth would be to accomplish good. It sounded like such a...

Noble Experiment ...

No one paid much attention to all those years when towns were handing out hundreds of residential building permits every year.

We went blindly where few communities have gone before - stop the clock on business: business property, apartment complexes, commercial buildings, industrial buildings in the industrial zone, hockey rinks for children, and perhaps most important- employment generation, ...

No growth. No change of use and No big buildings of any sort without a 3 - 4 year obstacle course orchestrated by autocratic snobs armed with a Byzantine set of regulations- and yes, how their interpretation of those regulations change all the time.

So now our business streets, in their lockdown state, frozen out of improvements, safely over-regulated from being current in façade or function, are the remains of a failed (noble?) experiment.

And now our middle class can't afford to live here. Washashores have washed away the entry level families. We are left with the lower end and we have trouble housing them and we wonder why. It's because we don't have any apartment buildings.

Why ?

Because we can't build big buildings on Cape Cod. Guess Why ?

The Cape was a seasonal blue collar resort area which caught on with the big money crowd in the early 2000's. There were no regulations in placed to stop the gentrification upgrades, new subdivisions and trophy homes so we got overbuilt on the residential side.

Past tense. If you were here you recall the traffic around that time became as busy in January as it once was only in July. And it still is.

Electronics have enabled the Telegentry to maintain their businesses from remote. So the Cape is now a year round resort area to the high end of humanity, the ones with the big business and the free time.

If the Cape Cod Commission had been written correctly it would have stopped this from happening by focusing more on where most of the growth has come from for the last 40 years- residential homes. But like a set of coastal guns aimed inland, backwards from the start, it was not designed to protect us from what was to come.

So on we go year after year with the remains of the (noble) failed experiment: The rich and famous along our shores - (take a boat ride sometime, you'll be astounded at the number and size of the mansions, and the fact that you can't see most of them from inland) Some of the business streets that look like Nantasket Beach before they finally tore it down. The business people who are almost all ma and pa families who can barely afford the employees it takes to operate. The average entry level workers who are paying \$1,000 a month for a motel room with a hotplate.

Disallowing apartment buildings has forced any usable multiple unit property into service as dwelling units. Big old houses, dilapidated motels, even houses with multiple bedrooms are now our de-facto apartment buildings.

Most of them are substandard in human safety terms. Most of them are not sanctioned by the towns. Do you still wonder why we have a workforce and affordable housing problem?

Oh, by the way, I don't mean artificial 40B affordable housing shoehorned into the wrong places to enable a building to get past the regulations - I mean naturally occurring, basic housing which in any community in any country on the planet comes in the form of apartment complexes.

Except Cape Cod.

The melting pot of rich, business, illegal, working and retired people of Cape Cod are missing something - it used to be called the middle class. It used to be called the small business people that pay their own way and in doing so support the older and the younger.

But now it's called the upper poor. Guess what happens to the social security payments for the older and school funding for the younger when you disable the middle class that pays the most taxes ?

Is the mess we're in all the doing of the Cape Cod Commission? Of course not. But can we fix the remains of the noble failed experiment with their myopic dictatorship still in place- as is?