

Mashpee Commons Expansion-A Responsible Plan

At present we are at a turning point regarding Mashpee and its very nature. We need to work together in a responsible and respectful way. As it is now proposed, the Commons project is blatantly in opposition to good environmental planning and is unconscionable in terms of climate change. We need to find a way together to create a sensible and creative plan that serves the people of Mashpee and the environment. People come to Cape Cod for its beautiful beaches, marshes and pine barrens. On a summer day walking through the woods along the Mashpee River the spicy fragrance of pine sap fills the air, the pine covered pathways are dappled with sunlight and the soft breezes whisper through the trees. Woodlands like these surround the existing Commons and roadways in our area. As a visitor to the Cape I would come here to enjoy these things, escape the city, not to find more concrete, asphalt and clustered “cottages”, or the commercial sprawl that has sadly taken over other parts of the Cape. Further, the rampant destruction known as “clear-cutting” would wipe out thousands of trees so vital to the environmental health of our town. These trees that provide us with the air we breathe, that capture carbon, that cool us, that prevent erosion and create habitats for birds and animals to live in, need to be preserved in a responsible, constructive plan. We also need to consider wastewater, traffic congestion and air pollution and who will be responsible for these increased costs. We need to work this out in a respectful, considerate manner. We need to respect the environment and combat climate change in any way possible. We don’t get second chances here. It is imperative that we create a plan that honors our environment and works to stem the climate change that is upon us. We, and future generations in Mashpee will suffer if we lack the courage and foresight to form a better future today. The owners of the Commons live in a spacious, private area that is very restricted, with its own security, lots of green places, and “an abundance of trees”. The people of Mashpee deserve to have open spaces and enjoy our beautiful pine barrens. We also have a right to enjoy “an abundance of trees”.

“But man is a part of nature, and his war against nature is a war against himself.” Rachel Carson

**Terri Bilodeau
Mashpee**