



# The Cape Cod Chronicle

Out of concern for potential negative impacts on our community's water resources, the Brewster Conservation Trust and the Brewster Ponds Coalition have approved a joint resolution calling for a review of the proposed housing development on the former Sea Camps Long Pond property. Both organizations have long been partners of Brewster's town government, but we feel a correction is necessary on this project.

In May 2024, town meeting approved a plan for the 66-acre former Sea Camps Long Pond property. While the plan protects 55 acres in conservation, it also proposes housing development on the remaining 10 acres, fronting on Route 137. The plan proposes up to 44 housing units and a wastewater treatment facility on the 10 acres. The proposed development sits on Brewster's drinking water recharge area (Zone II) and drains into Long Pond, which is part of the nitrogen sensitive Herring River watershed.

Recognizing our community urgently needs affordable and attainable housing, the joint BCT-BPC resolution calls for the town to study the best location for housing considering all relevant factors, with the hope of finding an alternative site, including the former Sea Camps Bayside property, before finalizing plans for the Long Pond parcel.

This approach is consistent with current town planning documents and long-established community priorities. The local comprehensive plan, the vision plan, and the housing production plan provide guidance for siting housing. All three recognize that our water supply area (Zone II) is not suitable, and that housing should be directed to areas of public

services, transportation, and economic activities. Up to last spring's vote, town meeting had approved 19 articles in the past 20 years to protect our water supply through land conservation.

In regard to the proposed wastewater treatment facility on the Long Pond parcel, BCT and BPC also urge town government to conduct a feasibility study of only those wastewater treatment options that will substantially improve water quality in the Zone II, Long Pond and Herring River watersheds. Specifically, the study should identify treatment options that not only meet the reduction of nitrogen required by the Herring River watershed permit, but also address phosphorus, the primary nutrient

impairing ponds, and chemicals of emerging concern (such as PFAS) which might contaminate our drinking water supply.

BCT and BPC urge our members and supporters to closely monitor the planning process for this development. We look forward to reviewing the scope of work for the feasibility study and subsequently analyzing its findings to ensure that we are protecting our water resources and providing a suitable location for housing.

*Charlie Sumner is president of the Brewster Conservation Trust. Susan Bridges is president of the Brewster Ponds Coalition.*

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