

BREWSTER PONDS COALITION

TOWN PLANNER TALK

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MARCH 12, 2025

JON IDMAN



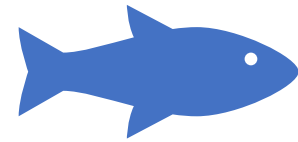
Introduction



Been with the Town about 3 years



Experience in local and regional planning,
building construction, real estate and
land use law



Harwich native

What is Planning?

A systematic, open, broad, collaborative, dynamic, and creative process that involves EVERYONE in the community

Helps define a community's vision and goals and path to achieve them

Allows informed decisions and choices through research, community conversations, and analysis

Provides a roadmap to help the community thrive, change and grow

Furthers health, safety, quality of life, and economic well-being for all

Placemaking- Engages residents, businesses, leaders and others in creating a community

Creates lasting & sustainable communities for present and future generations

Aims to avoid conflicts and build consensus on land use

What is Planning (cont'd)



Draws from wide range of disciplines and continues to evolve:
law, sociology, geography, engineering, etc.

Land use planning, regional planning, and urban planning used interchangeably depending on context

Practice Subcategories:
Economic Development,
Transportation, Natural
Resources, Historic
Preservation, Housing

Types (examples):

Strategic Plan: Short-term,
practical

Comprehensive Plan: Longer-
term vision, more aspirational

Brewster Planning Office

Mission:

- Support the Town's development and resource protection plans, policies, and regulations
- Focus on preserving and enhancing the economic, social, and environmental health of the entire community



Responsibilities:

- Support the Planning and Zoning Board's permitting and regulatory functions
 - Subdivision, stormwater management, zoning (site plan review, variances, special permits), Comprehensive Permits
- Support Planning Board's planning functions (like zoning amendments)
- Assist other departments with administration of development permits/ approvals and records requests
- Provide professional and technical planning analysis to other Town departments, boards, and committees
- Assist the public with information and to understand permitting, regulatory requirements & planning policies
- Support ad hoc committees like the Vision Planning Committee (LCP) and STR Task Force

Brewster Government Structure

TOWN CHARTER: Establishes roles within and structure of Brewster government

OPEN TOWN MEETING: Legislative (e.g., approving budgets, adopting by-laws, appropriating funds)

SELECT BOARD: Executive (e.g., policy-making, goal-setting)

SB Annual Strategic Plan informed by Town's various comprehensive plans (LCP, IWRMP, HPP, Open Space, CCSC, etc.)

Town Comprehensive Plans are generally approved by Town Meeting

TOWN MANAGER: Administrative (leads day-to-day affairs of the Town and implements Select Board policies/ goals)



Brewster Government Structure- Planning Office Role



Directed by the Town Manager, helps implement land use policies and initiatives, including through planning support for the Planning Board



Supports the regulatory functions of the Planning and Zoning Boards per state laws and Town bylaws

* Zoning Board is appointed by SB

* Planning Board is elected

Community Planning & Land Use Management (CPLUM)

 Reorganization in 2024: joined housing, planning, and building offices into one department

 Overlapping responsibilities and subject matter allow for coordinated, shared resources

 Take advantage of staff's experience, knowledge, skills and competencies

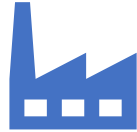
 Focus on delivering excellent service efficiently

 Team-based approach with common policies and messaging to the public

Water Quality Protection District (WQPD), Article XII, History



Overlay Zoning District=
Zone II & Pleasant Bay Marine
Watershed Areas w/in Town
Lies over existing residential,
commercial and industrial zones



**Originally adopted in 1982,
focusing on drinking water
quality protection (Zone II)**
Industrial Zone overlaps with Zone
II/ public wellhead areas
Established Water Quality Review
Committee (WQRC), Water Quality
Certificates, Performance Standards
Hazmat focus
Pleasant Bay Watershed added via
2008 major zoning amendment
28 WQCs issued over 40 yrs
80% of WQC properties
don't use hazmats



**Zoning & Town changes ~40
yrs**
Population growth
Structure of local government and staff
• Health Dept basically est. 1982
PB & WQRC now redundant re:
issuance of WQ Certificates
• WQRC advisory but handles post-
issuance 3 yr compliance reviews
Staff & WQRC redundancy re:
performance standards review (ex.
Nitrogen loading)
WQRC meets as needed (member
quorum)
WQRC administration = staff support



**Stormwater Management
Bylaw** (non-zoning) and
regulations adopted town-wide
in 2022

WQPD PROPOSED AMENDMENTS- PURPOSE



Current challenges with WQPD language clarity and internal drafting conflicts

Has made it difficult for staff, boards and the public to understand and apply the zoning

Review of WQPD zoning is a goal on Select Board's current annual Strategic Plan

Draft available on Planning Office Webpage



WQPD PROPOSED AMENDMENTS- PURPOSE (CONT'D)



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Water Resources Task Force (WRTF)

- WRTF membership: relevant board reps, consultant, BPC rep, town staff, incl. Town Planner
- Integrated approach to water quality planning in the Town

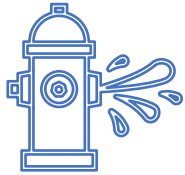
WRTF Charge: Review of WQPD zoning is a goal on Select Board's current annual Strategic Plan

WRTF drafts proposed amendments to improve clarity and efficiency

Amendments reviewed & supported by WQRC, BOH, and Planning Board

Placed on warrant for Spring Town Meeting

WQPD PROPOSED AMENDMENTS- SUMMARY



Clarify overlay district's purposes and scope
Clarify relationship of overlay district to other parts of the zoning bylaw
Clean up unused definitions and relocate them throughout Bylaw for clarity
Clarify the uses that are allowed by right or by special permit, or prohibited within district
Update uses (like boat storage and wastewater treatment facilities)
Clarify special permit criteria, including re: hazardous materials requirements
Clarify performance standards in the district including re: hazmats
Eliminate unnecessary process: Water Quality Review Committee (WQRC) & Water Quality Certificates WQCs
Relocate nitrogen loading standard to BOH regulations and jurisdiction
Amend Table 1 Use regulations as necessary (which align w/ the district uses)
Update WQPD map for clarity

Some Town Planning Challenges Moving Forward

- Preserve and create affordable and attainable housing, and housing choice



- Study, preserve and enhance pond water quality



- BASED ON ADOPTED TOWN PLANS, POLICIES & GOALS:



- Support the local economy



- Provide needed or desired community infrastructure, e.g. uses, programs and facilities on former CCSC properties

THANK YOU!

Please feel free to stop into the Planning Office anytime with questions or just to say hello (or even to ask where you can pay your tax bill, which is not uncommon).

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