

Cape Cod's underlying problem

If we are to effectively address any one of the concerns you listed as priorities affecting the Cape's quality of life, we need to consider these matters as parts of a whole. To rank them suggests that they are independent and mutually exclusive. And ranking them then leads to a prioritizing of our limited amounts of time, money and talent. We must take as a given that we are unable to address and resolve all of the problems that affect our quality of life at any one time.

Thus, rather than ranking potential threats to our water, land and air, we might focus our thought and discussion more on how these matters interrelate. We need to refine our problem-solving processes considerably if we are to more effectively share information and consider ways that changes in one context may lead to consequences, intended or perhaps unintended, that extend far beyond any particular area of focus.

The Cape's history during the past quarter century has been one in which we made many attempts to encourage dialogue and decision-making across disciplines. In the public sector, Cape residents formed a county assembly and then a regulatory commission having broad regional authority. And within smaller sections of the Cape, we established more focused working groups around matters like housing, water quality, open space, education, economic development and health care.

The question is not which one of these is most pressing, for they all are. Instead, we need to find ways to better communicate and connect the efforts that people are making in their areas of specific interest and expertise. As a region, we need to continue to modify and adapt the efforts we started when we first established organizations with hope that they would address and adapt to changes and events that affect our lives.

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