

TOWN OF BARNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL ELECTION 2023

BarnstableWatch CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for stepping forward to serve the Barnstable community by seeking a seat on our Town Council in the fall 2023 election.

About BarnstableWatch

BarnstableWatch is a community organization initially founded to protect our housing stock for use as homes for locals rather than use by non-resident investors as more profitable short-term rentals. BarnstableWatch supports Cape rental traditions, not the 'Anything goes-Anywhere-All the time Airbnb approach.' Since its foundation, BarnstableWatch followers have asked for information about planning and zoning more broadly. BarnstableWatch therefore follows local public bodies and shares information.

About This Questionnaire

BarnstableWatch provides this opportunity to each candidate running for a Town Council seat in the fall 2023 election to provide 250-word responses to four planning and zoning-related questions below. The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide information that residents interested in planning and zoning may assess for themselves.

Please use this word document to respond to each of the four questions on the following pages. Please include your name and precinct number on each page. Please respond in 250 words or less, and via typewritten text (not handwritten). Please send your responses by 5:00 p.m. on Friday October 6, 2023 to BarnstableWatch@gmail.com.

BarnstableWatch will print all responses (up to 250 words), unedited, and without commentary, or endorsement, at www.BarnstableWatch.com. If you choose not to respond, BarnstableWatch will simply note that fact on its website.

BarnstableWatch will send all responses (up to 250 words) to its email list of many hundreds of residents across the Town of Barnstable. BarnstableWatch will not characterize responses or encourage its followers to vote for or against any candidate. If you choose not to respond, BarnstableWatch will simply note that fact in its mailing.

Thank you for responding to help voters make informed decisions.

CANDIDATE NAME Betty Ludtke_____

PRECINCT NUMBER 3_____

Question No. 1

Thank you for being direct and concise in 250 words per question.

1. Context: The Town Council recently changed zoning in Downtown Hyannis to enable dense building development and increased building height by right. It did this in the name of housing. Despite housing needs, and the Town's consultant statement that the Town could regulate short-term rental use of new housing units in this zoning framework, the Town Council chose not to do so.

Question: To increase year-round housing supply for locals, do you support regulating incremental housing units, made possible by zoning changes to increase building density and height, to be used as year-round housing, i.e., restrict use as short-term rentals? Why or why not?

Answer. Yes. I attended an informational session hosted by the Nantucket select board to introduce their proposed Short-Term Rental (STR) articles. Nantucket proposes to not allow STRs in apartment buildings and I believe Barnstable should do this too. In response to the need for workforce housing, the Town of Barnstable is actively approving and constructing large apartment buildings. In fact, the Town zoned to encourage these types of structures in downtown Hyannis. It would be completely counterproductive, and truthfully absurd, to then allow these same apartments to be used for STRs. It is unacceptable that the Town of Barnstable tabled our own proposed STR ordinance in November 2020 and has yet to come forward with a new proposal.

CANDIDATE NAME Betty Ludtke_____

PRECINCT NUMBER 3_____

Question No. 2

Thank you for being direct and concise in 250 words per question.

2. Context: When the Town of Barnstable asked people what kind of housing they want more of, the number one answer people gave was more single-family homes. On the other hand, a housing advocacy organization states that "[s]ingle-family zoning is the 'heart of the housing crisis' in its call for zoning changes. The Town Planning Director calls single-family zoning a "burden" on the community, and said the Accessory Dwelling Unit zoning change was a "babystep" to "pushing back" on the "legacy" of single-family residential zoning.

Question: Do you support keeping single-family zoning in those areas of town now zoned for single-family use? Why or why not?

Answer: Yes. I am aware of the push for multifamily housing by right in areas currently zoned as single-family housing and I am against it. While we cannot ignore the very real and unconscionable impact redlining had on neighborhood development nationwide, it does not justify removing access for those who desire the single-family housing lifestyle from having the right to select that type of housing. I believe the right that was granted by the Town to include Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) in single-family zoned neighborhoods is a welcome compromise. It increases density reasonably, without changing the fabric of single-family communities.

. CANDIDATE NAME Betty Ludtke _____

PRECINCT NUMBER 3 _____

Question No. 3

Thank you for being direct and concise in 250 words per question.

3. Context: Across the country, cities and towns - including thriving tourist communities - protect existing housing stock for use as homes by locals. They adopt any one of a number of diverse ways towns can prevent or limit non-resident investors from using homes as more profitable short-term rentals. There are lots of ways for towns to limit or end the heartbreaking stories we hear each spring about locals getting kicked out of their rentals to make way for more lucrative short-term renters. Town Housing staff said this about incenting seasonal homeowners to rent year-round rather than short-term: "We have a large housing stock. It's just not being used to house our residents." The Town Council has taken no action in this respect to prioritize locals in the use of our housing stock.

Question: Do you support adopting some means to return some homes used as short-term rentals to year-round housing use for locals (other than by one means a local developer has sought, which is for the town to pay property owners via tax incentives not to short-term rent their property)? Why or why not?

Answer: Yes. We need to enact STR regulations now! Our regulatory efforts, halted in 2020, need to be renewed, improved, reviewed and brought to Town Council for a vote. The Town completed a survey assessment in November 2019 to gauge residents' thoughts on STRs. Read the survey comments to understand the largely negative impacts STRs are having on our neighborhoods. I am familiar with the recommendation for tax incentives you mention (Provincetown does that now) and believe it could be a part of our housing "toolbox", so to speak, but there is no substitute for enacting STR regulations now. That takes leadership.

CANDIDATE NAME Betty Ludtke _____

PRECINCT NUMBER 3 _____

Question No. 4

Thank you for being direct and concise in 250 words per question.

4. Context: The Town of Barnstable regularly says it needs more affordable housing units. In the recent form-based zoning changes in downtown Hyannis (about which its consultant said "...any near-term development is going to be on the upper end of market rate...that means they are going to be expensive units") the Town Council did not include any affordability requirement(s). In the Accessory Dwelling Unit-by-right ordinance change, the Town Council did not include any affordability requirement(s). When developers wanted a more profitable use of land at 850 Falmouth Road in Hyannis than the zoning code required, the Town Council said yes: The Residences at 850 in Hyannis is today advertised as a Luxury Apartment Community. It sits on land that had been zoned to be 100% affordable housing, with a preference for Barnstable residents and Veterans.

Question: Please comment on whether you would leave pricing to developers and property owners, or incorporate affordability into approvals?

Answer: If I had a nickel for each time, I've heard a developer say that doing anything different than exactly what they've proposed "just isn't feasible" I would be wealthy woman. I'm familiar with what happened with the Residences at 850 development and the story could fill volumes. I listened to the debate that agonizingly delivered a 13% affordable component to the new Hanover apartment building near BJ's. As a Town, we have a solid history of spot zoning to accommodate developers. It's time to revisit our Town Inclusionary Affordable Zoning Requirements and increase those from the current 10% level. What we did with our new downtown zoning closely resembles Mass General Law, Chapter 40R, Smart Growth, which requires a 20% affordable component, yet our Town requirement remains at 10%. Why? So yes, we need to increase our Town affordability requirement and include it in our approval processes.