

Planning Quotes

- 05.04.1969 BG “For more than 30 years I have watched Martha’s Vineyard go downhill as a place of natural wonder and haven. Now they are talking of runways for jets. Is there no end of destruction of all that is natural and worthwhile?”. James Cagney.
- 1969 It is “time for us to do something about planning and stop living by crisis” Anne Hale, Interim Chair of DCPEDC
- 05.21.1971 “Nothing will maintain the natural character of Dukes County as much as implementing the proposed greenbelt system.” – Metcalf & Eddy, Vineyard Gazette
- 11.21.1971 “At this point in time, market forces are such that much land on the islands is ripe for development. On both Nantucket and Martha’s Vineyard, new large-scale tracts are, generally speaking, completely out of character with the patterns of growth established on the islands over the centuries. The fragile beauty of the islands, once destroyed, cannot be retrieved. Neither can the lost opportunities for public recreation be reclaimed.
- Only immediate action can guarantee that future generations will find Cape Cod’s offshore islands almost as this generation has found them. And that is the purpose of the legislation.” Harvard Research Bureau study for Senator Kennedy
- 12.1971 “A main concern for the future of the County is the absence of a publically created organization with both county-wide jurisdiction and adequate powers and financing to effectively deal with the problems facing the County.” – Metcalf & Eddy, Comprehensive Plan
- 12.1971 “By the time strong county-wide or regional government with sufficient powers to deal effectively with the developer is created, Martha probably will have been raped. This was certainly the case in Long Island, Staten Island, along the New Jersey coast, and Cape Cod, where attempts to protect the environment and improve the year-round economy were found to be largely ineffective on a town by town basis.” – Metcalf & Eddy, Comprehensive Plan
- 12.1971 “It must be a shock to many of those who now visit the Vineyard in the summer seeking the peace and quiet of a rural environment to find the same over populated and congestion they supposedly left behind in their urban environment.” – Metcalf & Eddy, Comprehensive Plan
- 12.1971 “The County will become more and more tourist-oriented and dependent upon sources of capital from outside the County and, therefore, more and more influenced by the desires of large off-island investors, and changes in the national

- economy. The amount of gross dollars guaranteed by tourist trade will continue rising, and the percentage regained by year-round residents of the County will continue dropping.” – Metcalf & Eddy, Comprehensive Plan
- 12.1971 [Without enforced environmental controls] “urban spread or indiscriminate land use will be the order of the day.” – Metcalf & Eddy, Comprehensive Plan
- 12.1971 [How do you measure] “the value of animal, bird, and fish life, heath grass, the natural habitat, and the music generated by the relentless ebb and flow of the tide, the smell of clean air, and the quiet... it is on these latter values that the forecasts presented in the proceeding discussion will have their greatest impact.” - Metcalf & Eddy, Comprehensive Plan
- 12.1971 “Noise will be the rule” – Metcalf & Eddy, Comprehensive Plan
- 12.1971 “Bicyclists and pedestrians will take their lives into their own hands attempting to ride or walk along our roadsides.” – Metcalf & Eddy, Comprehensive Plan
- 12.1971 Recommend Goal: Single overriding goal: “To protect the County’s rural environment and its existing open space and developed facilities from: overpopulation and use; vehicular congestion and noise; loss and destruction of wildlife; and danger to human life, while erecting an economically and socially viable year-round society whose livelihood is dependent on the environment and facilities it seeks to protect.” – Metcalf & Eddy, Comprehensive Plan
- 04.23.1972 “The islanders argue that they can protect the island themselves. But the islanders have had two or three centuries in which to get going and time is what they no longer have.” – Boston Globe
- 08.30.1972 [The Kennedy Bill is] “a miniature socialistic lard set-up” [that would make land] “forever worthless to all but raccoons and conservationists” “home rule, though not perfect, is far better than puppet rule, which didn’t work in occupied France and won’t work here.” – Herbie Handcock, New York Times
- 05.10.1973 “There is not one inch of available land on the Island that is not being eyed by developers today” – Governor Sargent
- 06.01.1973 “It is now a race against the clock, and local conservation groups simply cannot raise adequate funds privately to preserve all which should be preserved.” – Senator Ted Kennedy, Boston Globe
- 1974 “There is a compelling and urgent message in this book, a message which we cannot ignore and from which we cannot escape. It is that unless we squarely face the issue of land use, we cannot expect to raise the quality of life in this country to the high levels we all desire” –Ted Kennedy Review of Anne Simon’s book.

- 01.07.1974 “Nowhere is the threat of reckless development more ominous than on Massachusetts’ historic and beautiful islands, Nantucket and Martha’s Vineyard.” – New York Times
- 02.18.1974 “These islands which belong to the nation as well as to Massachusetts are vulnerable to unplanned commercial exploitation. They have waited for legal protection long enough. They are still waiting” – Senator Edward Brooke, New York Times
- 12.20.1974 “In the absence of comprehensive effective and enforced environmental controls urban sprawl or indiscriminate land use will be the order of the day.” – Metcalf & Eddy
- 12.20.1974 “Roads and parking facilities in the centers of Edgartown, Vineyard Haven and Oak Bluffs by 1980 will be jammed and by 1990 will be beyond the level of tolerability.” – Metcalf & Eddy
- 1976 “Whatever else it has accomplished in its first two years, the Martha’s Vineyard Commission, anyone can see, has nourished its critics.” – Vineyard Gazette
- 6.18.1976 The legislation is designed “to perpetuate the exclusive life-styles of the inhabitants of these areas.”
- “will be a complex, complicated, confusing undertaking that is neither legally desirable or workable” Douglas Wheeler, Deputy Asst Secretary. “state land-use problem”
- Kennedy “This legislation simply means that the future of this area is in the hands of those who live there, not in the hands of profiteering developers”
- 06.05.1988 “Last year, it was called the 100 days of madness” – Cape Cod Times
- 01.19.1990 “The Island is growing, change is coming, and preparations should be made to meet changes with a sense of perspective and proportion.” – Vineyard Gazette, November 1965
- 07.05.1996 “If the dangerous and maddeningly provocative word “planning” must be used, there it is” “We all plan” “But the planning inherent in the very organization of the Vineyard Conservation Society means assisting and encouraging and not in any sense imposing something from the outside.” – Henry Beetle Hough, 1965
- 11.04.2004 “This is the time for us to do something about planning and stop living by crisis” – Anne Hale, 1969

Harris Poll 1988 VG 6.27.2013

US one of longest periods of sustained growth since WWII. MVC 10 years old, MVLB couple.

Affordable housing new – youth lots.

The poll found that a vast majority of residents believed the Island was being overrun by development, that its environment was threatened, that stricter controls were needed and that people were prepared to sacrifice, including by paying higher property taxes if needed, in order to put more controls in place. The poll found that residents, permanent and seasonal alike, had low confidence in Island government leadership. They mistrusted real estate professionals, whom they felt were contributing to rapid growth and a decline in quality of life. By contrast, they had high confidence in conservation and environmental groups. “Island in Troubled Water,” declared the headline in a special section published by the Gazette with the results of the Harris Poll. “Public Believes Island Life Faltering; Citizens Blame Reckless Growth.” Harris longtime summer resident.

Island not so divided – consensus. “By any measure, there is deep and abiding mistrust of developers and their record over the past few years. It is patently apparent that the public on the Vineyard feels nearly every aspect of life is being overrun by too many people,” Mr. Harris wrote. “This, then, is a strong message of desperation emanating from the people themselves.”