

## CHATHAM FOR FAMILIES - 10/22/18

We all know that Chatham, as a vibrant, multi-generational year-round community is losing its young people at a rate that has to be called a crisis.

Here is an update for 2018, year-to-date, from the town clerk's office:

births: 22  
marriages: 69, many of them destination weddings  
deaths: 141

From 1990 - 2016, the number of 25 – 34 year olds shrank from 728 to 356 and the number of 35 – 44 year olds shrank from 808 to 399. Over 50%! That is our target audience.

Look also at the number of smaller, more affordable houses being torn down (4 on Main).

This is not sustainable. What are we going to do about it?

I ask that the BOS put pressure on itself, town committees, and town departments to set specific objectives and deadlines for implementing changes.

The community also has rights, the right to survive, not just as individuals out for themselves.

We can't reverse market forces but we don't need to let them govern the future of Chatham. Establishing a new Task Force is a good start, but the name proposed tells you nothing about its purpose. I would prefer calling it "Chatham for Families Task Force."

Just as important as the Task Force: the BOS needs to be pro-active itself. Some of the changes you could make almost immediately

### In EMPLOYMENT,

1. Set an example that we need livable wages in Chatham.  
Raise the minimum wage for all town employees to at least \$15/hour.  
Make \$15/hour a requirement for all contracts with the town.
2. Set realistic goals of local hiring both for the town and its contractors.

## In EDUCATION,

1. BOS could vote immediately to ask all Chatham members of the MRSD School Committee to insist upon Chatham retaining the Chatham Elementary School as a K-4 school. Without at least one Chatham vote, that can't be changed.

Retaining CES was understood as a promise by most of us voting for the Regionalization of Chatham and Harwich. It is critical to Chatham's allure to young families, as exemplified by Lindsay Garre Bierwirth and her family who moved here for CES. It is also critical to Chatham as a vibrant community.

2. Prioritize the upcoming recommendation of the Chatham 365 Committee for vouchers for pre-schoolers of Chatham residents. Provincetown and Wellfleet have already done this.

## In HOUSING

1. Chatham is not just slow to add affordable housing. We are destroying it. Look at the four rental units approved for demolition last week by the ZBA. We can't afford for that to be happening.

Ask for the relevant town committees for their recommendations on how to keep more of the housing we have as well as building more. Implement these recommendations. Consider:

A) A moratorium on demolitions until we have in place a plan to add more affordable housing?

B) A requirement of 1:1 addition of affordable for each new "unaffordable" building built?

C) Partner with an adjoining town, as suggested by then-Senator Dan Wolf, so that they pay for the land and Chatham pays for the building, as a partnership, recognizing that far more land for housing could be provided in adjacent towns for the same cost as Chatham.

## OVERALL

1. Require every Department Head and Committee Chair, within the next 90 days, to include reference to the need for Chatham to attract and retain young families as a priority. What have they done in the past year and what might they do in the year(s) to come?

2. Designate the recent \$2,265,000 payment from Harwich, and \$4,500,000 in payments to come, toward making Chatham the vibrant community it needs to be. Do not take the easy route and just pay down the debt.