



## community development partnership

*Creating opportunities for people to live, work, and thrive on the Lower Cape*

### Harbor Hill: The Intersection of Housing and Business

**“There are a lot of people who want to live here and give back to and contribute to the community but can’t, because they can’t afford it.”**

Erik Borg  
Co-founder, Provincetown Brewing Company  
Resident, Harbor Hill



Erik working at the brewery before the COVID-19 pandemic

The culture, beaches and natural beauty of Provincetown attracts visitors from across the country. While many would love to live and work here full time, rising housing costs are making that increasingly difficult. In an effort to provide more opportunities for year-round rental housing, the town of Provincetown acquired Harbor Hill, a former timeshare development and converted the condos into market rate rentals. Erik Borg, a co-owner of Provincetown Brewing Company is one of the people who now has a stable, affordable home at Harbor Hill.

Erik is a Minnesota native, but moved to Boston for a job after college. While living there he made frequent trips to Provincetown. “We would go to Provincetown almost every weekend,” he says, “it’s really when I fell in love with the town.”

He soon started freelancing for the Provincetown Banner and eventually became a staff writer. “I really just wanted to become a part of the community and I thought this would be a good way to achieve that,” he says. Erik spent two years writing for the Banner before leaving Provincetown for a job in New York City.

While living in New York, Erik teamed up with his friend and future business partner Chris Hartley who had developed the concept for Provincetown Brewing Company. They envisioned a brewery and taproom in the town they both loved that was focused on the community. Although he enjoyed the city, Erik was still determined to move back to Provincetown. “While living there, Provincetown was very important to me. It connected me to a lot of my friends there,” he recalls.

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The brewery officially launched in 2018. Erik was still living in New York, but would travel to Provincetown to work on the business. With no physical location, they hosted an event in town to build awareness for their brand and raise money for various social causes. In the spring of 2019 the brewery found a permanent home on Bradford Street, and Erik moved back to Provincetown full time. “Moving back and starting a new business was really a leap of faith,” Erik says.

Finding an affordable and stable place to live was an immediate problem. For his first couple of months Erik was living in a friend’s basement while he searched for something better. “I would barely even call it an apartment,” he jokes. At the end of that first summer he moved into an off-season rental.

Erik knew that his current rental was not a long-term solution, and continued to look for a more stable housing arrangement. That is when Trevor, his friend and co-worker at the brewery, informed him about Harbor Hill. “It was really a coincidence that the timing worked out how it did. Trevor had just started the housing application when I needed to start looking for a new place.”

Erik moved into Harbor Hill last spring and felt immediately at home. Like many others who bounce between rentals in Provincetown, Erik had moved multiple times that first year, making it impossible for him to set down roots and call a place home. “I was finally able to decorate and really make the place my own,” he recalls.

The move to Harbor Hill has also allowed Erik to stay focused on building his business. According to him, “Starting a business is a lot of work. Not having to constantly search for housing has taken one piece out of the equation and allowed me to focus on the brewery.”

Since day one, Provincetown Brewing Company has made it their goal to be an integral part of the community. Before opening their doors, they made a commitment to give a portion of their profits to local and national causes that are important to them, which they call draftivism. Since opening they have donated to The Provincetown Commons, Rainbow Railroad, Provincetown Conservation Trust, The Generations project among others. When it came time to design the bar they wanted a taproom that become a community hub.

Even though COVID-19 restrictions have made larger social gatherings at the brewery impossible, Erik and Trevor have worked to connect the community online by hosting a weekly virtual trivia night and a weekly morning talk show. According to Erik, adjusting to the pandemic came naturally to them. “Luckily for us, we are a new business so we didn’t have any strong habits that we needed to break,” he jokes.

Erik is extremely thankful to have found a place at Harbor Hill, but recognizes that the lack of affordable housing is an ongoing issue in town. “It’s an expensive place to live,” he says. “There are a lot of people who want to live here and give back to and contribute to the community but can’t, because they can’t afford it. It is almost an existential problem.”

Many of Erik’s friends are still paying high costs for housing, or are forced to move seasonally. “Luckily some of my friends have found a place at Harbor Hill. It’s nice to have them nearby,” says Erik. Although Harbor Hill currently provides stable, year-round housing to over 40 members of the Provincetown community, it is still just a small step in addressing the affordable housing crisis in town.