



community development partnership

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

Supporter highlight: Matt Cole on becoming the Board President and navigating a pandemic

“Many of the businesses out here have the CDP woven into their story.”

Matt Cole
President and CEO of Cape Associates
President, CDP Board of Directors

“The economic vitality of this region would be much different without the CDP,” says Matt Cole, President and CEO of Cape Associates and the CDP’s newly elected President of the Board of Directors. Matt first became aware of the CDP about seven years ago when Cape Associates was hired to do an addition on the home of Jay Coburn, the CDP’s newly hired CEO. “I met Jay and his husband John, and in the process learned a lot about the work of the CDP,” says Matt, “although it took me years to learn all that the CDP does.” Not much time passed before Matt was asked to serve on the CDP’s Advisory Council and later the Board of Directors. Now stepping into the position previously held by Ben de Ruyter, Matt is focused on ensuring the CDP continues to carry out its mission while at the same time looking for opportunities as well as unmet needs on the Lower and Outer Cape.



Matt, his wife Katie and their children

A native of Eastham, Matt is the grandson of Lester Langhans, Jr, who founded Cape Associates in 1971. After completing an engineering degree from Bucknell University, Matt moved to New York City where he worked in commercial construction for seven years. He returned to the Cape in 2008 to re-join the family business and start a family. He and his wife Katie settled in Orleans and they now have four sons, Hudson, Tucker-Michael, Brooks and Finley who was born last year.

Matt says that Cape Associates has been “pretty lucky” throughout the public health crisis. “We haven’t been affected much,” he says, “but we expect that due to the seasonality of our business with the bulk of demand occurring in the Spring that will change.” He continues, “When the pandemic hit in March we were deemed essential and so we focused on our big project deadlines and deferred some of the smaller projects until later in the season. We had a small handful of employees who elected to stay

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home but thankfully we did not have to lay anyone off.” Since Cape Associates was tech enabled, it was relatively easy for employees to make the transition to working from home. Matt thinks “leaner times are ahead.” In addition to homeowners who have been distracted from planning their home projects, towns have slowed down their processes for granting permits as regulatory meetings have been postponed or canceled.

Matt is passionate about many philanthropic causes and the CDP is no exception. “The CDP checks so many boxes around creating a vibrant community that allows families to live work and thrive here year-round,” says Matt. “In addition to addressing the multiple challenges that surround housing, there is a focus on workforce vibrancy.” Matt feels that the CDP is vital to the continued growth and sustainability of the region. “If the CP were not around the Lower and Outer Cape would have fewer affordable housing units, fewer small businesses and fewer successful businesses. In fact, many of the businesses out here have the CDP woven into their story.”

Early this year, when Matt agreed to become Chair of the Board of Directors, the world was in a very different place. “We are at a point where the work the CDP does is very critical and much needed. While we will have to balance a tighter budget there is, without a doubt, greater need for our services and the resources we can offer,” notes Matt. Looking ahead, Matt is optimistic, “We need to respond in real time to meet the needs of businesses and individuals. We will need to stay flexible and move quickly to support our community as well as find ways to increase that support through various funding means.”

We are excited to work alongside Matt as he leads the Board and look forward to the year ahead as we continue to work on supporting local businesses and addressing our housing shortages.