



## community development partnership

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

### Supporter Spotlight: Barry Bluestone – A life dedicated to activism and housing

***“The CDP is the organization that is foremost across the Lower Cape for dealing with the issue of housing.”***

Barry Bluestone

Founder, Dukakis Center, Northeastern University  
and CDP Advisory Council Member



CDP supporter and Advisory Council member Barry Bluestone is a renowned public policy, housing, and urban development expert who understands the connection between housing and jobs better than most. Barry is also a part-time Truro resident and is deeply committed to the work the CDP is doing to address the Lower Cape’s housing issues and nurture local economic development.

A native of Detroit, Barry grew up in a very progressive household during the automotive industry’s heyday. His dad was a member of the United Auto Workers Union and Barry spent his summers working at the Ford plant. He attended Mumford High School

which he describes as “60% Jewish, 39% black and 1% white.” The environment inspired him to become an activist at an early age, picketing a segregated swimming pool in a Detroit suburb and helping to form the only high school chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in the nation.

Barry’s activism came into full bloom while attending college at the University of Michigan during the 1960s. He was elected to student government, became founding president of the University of Michigan Student Employees Union fighting to have the university pay student employees the state minimum wage. He was an active members of the newly founded Students for a Democratic Society, and participated in the 1965 civil rights march on Montgomery, Alabama.

After completing his Ph.D., Barry was hired by Boston College to teach alternative economics where he directed the Social Welfare Research Institute. He then went to UMass Boston where he started the

---

3 Main Street Mercantile, Unit 7 Eastham, MA 02642  
P 508.240.7873 F 508.240.5085 E [contact@capecdp.org](mailto:contact@capecdp.org)

[www.capecdp.org](http://www.capecdp.org)



doctoral program for public policy. Then in 1999, Northeastern University invited him to develop a center for public policy. Barry founded The Kitty and Michael Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy, and became the founding Dean of the School of Public Policy & Urban Affairs. Over the next 15 years, he examined Boston's housing problem, analyzing the effects of economics, demographics, demand and production, foreclosures and homelessness. During sabbaticals from his various universities, he served in Washington as special policy adviser to Minority Leader Richard Gephardt; served as a senior fellow at the Boston Federal Reserve Board, and as a Visiting Fellow at The Boston Foundation.

Although Barry retired from Northeastern in December 2018, he remains extremely active in the housing policy sector. He volunteers at the Madison Park Vocational Tech High School in Boston. He has also worked with Cape Cod Young Professionals and Truro's Council on Aging to carry out surveys aimed at better understanding the challenges faced by both the young and senior citizens who wish to live on the Cape.

Barry has a home in Truro which has seen a 25% population decline over the past 9 years. "We need to find housing and jobs for young people," says Barry. He notes that municipalities know how to build for the very poor and the very rich, but when it comes to young people and baby boomers, we struggle. "The CDP is the organization that is foremost across the Lower Cape for dealing with the issue of housing," he says. "The work you do to educate the public, working town by town, offering a range of ideas to address the issue while looking at what is working well, is extremely important. I love that the CDP supports individual efforts in towns across the Lower and Outer Cape."

One of the biggest obstacles is overcoming the fear people have of what the creation of more housing may mean for their community and who lives in it. Barry acknowledges that it begins with understanding the changing demographics, figuring out the politics and showing people how it is going to benefit them. "One of the most important things is telling the story and getting the story out," says Barry. "I am excited about everything the CDP is doing in regards to creating affordable housing and educating the public. I believe it's the best thing we can do for the Cape."