

To the Editor

May 6, 2026

I write as a former member and co-chair of the Walsh Committee that unanimously recommended in late 2023 the terms and conditions voters adopted in 2024 as Article 5. I am heartened to see the community rally around [those recommendations](#) this year. I am pleased many town officials express support, so far for the cap of 160 units, developed in phases.

The Walsh Committee sought to: maximize impact of the development for community needs, model climate-friendly sustainable development, create community recreational opportunities, protect water supplies for future generations, use land efficiently, integrate topography, and honor open space and habitat protections. We hoped that Article 5, ratified by voters in 2024, would be incorporated through effective zoning.

Regrettably, a high-powered campaign evident before town meeting 2025 and now, in 2026, apparently seeks to make it possible to turn Article 5 on its head. I am concerned that the current Walsh Overlay District (WOD) effectively enables greater development not only with respect to housing - but for commercial and industrial purposes well beyond Article 5.

Therefore, I support and advocate for Articles 39 and 40 - to rescind Walsh Overlay District (WOD) zoning and replace it with Walsh Residential District zoning. I also advocate to restore growth management through Article 38.

- **The two “Walsh” Citizens Petitions (Articles 39 and 40) are PRO-Housing, as was Article 5.**  
These articles will ensure what nothing else – not committees, not RFPs, nor contracts – can do to ensure Truro implement the intent of Article 5 - for up to 160 residential units, with limited “soft” commercial uses (day care, for example), with the rights of those adjacent protected, with commercial site review, and with essential environmental and water protections. They do not delay or block housing. On the contrary, if we pass these articles we will get to phased development much sooner.
- **The two “Walsh” Citizens Petitions Protect our Water, as does Article 5.**  
“Water first” has become more than an appeal or slogan. It really has become a necessity for all of Truro - and for Provincetown, too. Town officials know that water limits development in Truro and everywhere. Provincetown recently barred new residential construction and renovations because it is “built out” relative to available water. **That’s water from Truro’s Water Protection Zone under Walsh.** But if P’town has topped out, so has Truro. It makes it imperative to guarantee housing plans at Walsh never exceed 160 units. In fact, there are voters who believe we should not build anything on Walsh because of the potential threats to drinking water and groundwater, and multiple hydrology experts are worried even about building 80 units. [This is why we need guarantees - through zoning – and not promises.](#) (as well-meaning as they may be).
- **The real delays at Walsh come from a lack of plans - water plans being foremost.**  
Recently, the Provincetown Select Board reviewed its growth management plan and concluded Truro’s lack of a [water] feasibility study would delay their ability to even consider water needs at Walsh until at least 2028. This is a planning failure. Many residents have tried to bring forward that we have no water supply plan, no water infrastructure plan, no real plans or firm site(s) for wells, and no wastewater treatment plans. We have no voter-approved land transfers or appropriations for

anything related to water at Walsh. Much is being discussed, but no transparent or viable plan has been adopted.

- **Officials count on RFPs to limit Walsh Development to 160 units, suggesting “No Worries.” But Yes, Worry.**

RFPs (requests for proposals) are a means by which a town solicits bids. If a developer bids to the specs of an RFP, they are bound to what they bid. But only if the terms do not change on the Town’s side. Look at Cloverleaf - we started out with 24 and ended up with 43. RFP changes can be made – and additional RFPs can be made later. In other words, one RFP does not protect or limit future RFPs to expand development at Walsh if WOD zoning remains.

- **By Right zoning in WOD (and elsewhere) deprives the rest of us of our rights.**

WOD zoning relies on “by right” zoning - that allows development to proceed without requiring any variances, reviews, or even hearings. That means the public - and especially people who live adjacent - have nothing to say about what happens within allowed zoning. I know what this will mean - I live adjacent to the Walsh property. By Right zoning is devastating. Restoring “underlying” (regular) zoning protects our rights.

- **Under WOD zoning, Developers rule! Residential zoning on town-owned land puts voters back in charge.**

Some people are trying to convince voters that developers will control Walsh through “40B” requirements if we rescind WOD and replace it with Article 40. Not true. Walsh is town-owned land. The Town cannot be compelled into a “40B situation” – it has to assent to do that. As long as voters control how the Walsh property is zoned, voters will have what they approved in 2024 in Article 5.

Thank you for your consideration.

Eileen Breslin, Truro