

Joan Bowen



Joan Bowen – Courtesy image, all rights reserved

As my husband Rich and I house-hunted over 45 years ago, we recognized Bedford as the community where we wanted to live. To two New York City dwellers, it appeared to be a welcoming place and that is what we found. Even before the boxes were unpacked, I joined the First Parish and the League of Women Voters. Through these connections as well as others as I served on town committees or affiliated with other organizations, I found ready access to information about our community. Our three children were educated in the Bedford schools, providing another source.

However, living in the same community for this length of time provides one with the opportunity to recognize changes in community life that may be threatening to valued elements of the past. Many of the thriving organizations of the seventies that provided active sources of information no longer exist or limp along with minimal volunteer support. The local newspaper that was Bedford-centric has changed dramatically with changing reading habits and corporate ownership.

This is where I see the potential of *The Bedford Citizen* as today's answer to ensuring that all Bedford residents have access to information about what is happening in our community. Information not only about what Town boards and committees are doing, but also the opportunities for involvement, learning, and entertainment. With the addition of the BeTC calendar to our coverage, *The Citizen* offers all of this to the Bedford community, today's electronic form of "word of mouth" communication.

The Bedford Citizen had its origins in an earlier attempt to initiate a local electronic newspaper. The founders — Kim Siebert MacPhail, Meredith McCulloch, and Julie McCay Turner — asked me to help prepare a charter and by-laws as the first steps

toward the formation of a board, incorporation, and recognition as a non-profit. I then served as the president of the founding Board as we initiated operations. Today my involvement is as a member of the Board, the Executive Committee, and as an occasional writer.

My professional work was centered on nonprofit management primarily of national organizations based in the Boston area. Now retired, I continue that work as a volunteer providing consulting services to Greater Boston area non-profits through the SOAR Management Consulting Group. My education includes a Masters in International Affairs from Columbia University and an MBA from Bentley University.