

1133 Main Street

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To the Commission,

As an architect based on the Vineyard for more than 22 years, I have been involved in a similar quandary to the one Susannah and Brian Bristol are now facing at Soundside, 1133 Main Street in Vineyard Haven.

In that situation the owners wished to preserve their hundred year old house while renovating it to modern standards. The engineer's recommendation was to tear the house down and start anew. Instead we proceeded to gingerly strip the walls and ceilings to bare studs only to discover that the structure, including the foundation, was so inadequate that it all had to be replaced. Additionally, it was thoroughly mold-ridden. By the time all of the rotten wood, beams and walls had been demolished, we were left with a staircase and two fireplaces.

Therefore, in spite of our best intentions we had to build an entirely new building in the spitting image of the old. My forecast is that even if the Bristol's were to contemplate a fully historic renovation of Soundside, they would soon discover that the prudent decision is to start from scratch with the image and memory of Soundside to guide them.

Having been a guest at Soundside, I fully understand the parameters of the Bristol family's quandary and support their intentions to create a shingle style reflection of their revered family home.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey White Architect
West Tisbury, Massachusetts