



# Martha's Vineyard Commission

## CR 5-2021 189 Katama Road Demolition

### MVC Staff Report – 2021-6-16

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

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- 1.1 **Applicant:** Stephen and Ellie Wise
- 1.2 **Owner:** James F. Reynolds, Trustee
- 1.3 **Project Location:** 189 Katama Road (Map 29, Block 125, Lot 21), Edgartown
- 1.4 **Proposal:** Demolition of a single-family residence more than 100 years old
- 1.5 **Zoning:** Residential 60 (R60)
- 1.6 **Local Permits:** Building Permit, Special Permit
- 1.7 **Surrounding Land Uses:** Other residential uses and forested land in the R60 District
- 1.8 **Project History:** The 2.5-story, 8,000 ft<sup>2</sup> house was built in 1890 in the Colonial style, with some renovations on the third floor in the 1970s. Edgartown assessor records grade the building as “excellent” in regard to construction materials and craftsmanship. The property also includes an outbuilding, tennis court, and pier. A 2017 home inspection report states that the main building’s foundation, beams, floor joists, vertical brick columns, walls, and roof are functional, but also notes some areas of wood decay along the first-floor sills, the need for replacement trim, siding, windows, and exterior doors, some water damage around the porches and chimney, a non-functional heating system, and other concerns. The home inspection did not check for lead paint or toxic materials. A later mold analysis identifies “excessive sustained direct water entry” to the building, with visual mold in one of the top-floor bedrooms, and warns against potential health effects and progressive damage to the structure.  
**Project Summary:** The proposal is to demolish the house and rebuild in a style consistent with other houses on Edgartown Harbor. At this time, the applicant is seeking input from the Land Use Planning Committee before presenting formal plans for the property.

#### 2. ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

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- 2.1 **DRI Referral:** Edgartown Building Inspector
- 2.2 **DRI Trigger:** 8.1b (Demolition of a structure more than 100 years old)
- 2.3 **LUPC:** June 21, 2021
- 2.4 **Public Hearing:** To be determined

#### 3. PLANNING CONCERNS

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- 3.1 **Water and Wastewater:** The property drains into Katama Bay, which is designated as compromised in terms of water quality. The current five-bedroom house has a septic system designed in 1990 for nine bedrooms. A 2021 septic system evaluation states that the current leaching pit is in excellent condition with excess capacity for seasonal and possibly year-round use, but recommends a new pump and high-water alarm.
- 3.2 **Climate Change Resilience:** The current building is within the Inland Zone of the Coastal District, and is surrounded on three sides by the Flood Plain District. Any new structure would be

constrained by those regulations (including height restrictions in the Coastal District), and would remain vulnerable to storms and sea-level rise. The applicant has stated that an existing seawall on the property is in good condition.

**3.3 Character and Identity:** The property is highly visible from Edgartown Harbor, with little or no vegetative screening in that direction. The project would be subject to Special Permit review by the Edgartown Planning Board.

**3.4 Habitat and Ecology:** Most of the 7.8-acre property is within Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) Priority Habitat, but that area excludes the easternmost 350 feet (approximately), including the current building.