

# THE MARTHA'S VINEYARD COMMISSION

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## Land Use Planning Committee Summary of June 19, 2000 Meeting Olde Stone Building

Members present: Christina Brown, Jane Greene, Michele Lazarow, Megan Ottens-Sargent, Linda Sibley, Richard Toole, Robert Zeltzer

Staff present: Christine Flynn, David Wessling,

Others present: See attached list

Meeting opened at 5:34 P.M. by Christina Brown

### Down Island Golf Club (DRI #515)

Ms. Brown, referring to the Staff's draft recommendations (see memo dated June 19, 2000), outlined her expectations for the meeting. The meeting was intended to review and comment on the Staff's recommendations as well as to suggest additional conditions of approval.

Commenting on the site plan, Ms. Greene requested that the site plan, if approved by the Commission, should show the existing driveway which will remain as the principal access to the golf club.

The Members then discussed conditions pertaining to club membership and local play. Ms. Greene requested definitions of "Island membership" and "winter membership". Ms. Sibley noted that the terms are to be defined in the Applicant's membership plan. She added that the membership plan should be submitted to the Commission prior to course construction.

Ms. Greene asked for a definition of "sanctioned team". Mr. Mechur was called on by Ms. Brown to clarify the term. He said that the reference was to high school golf teams but the Applicant would be willing to permit other youth groups to play on the course without a fee. Mr. Mechur pointed out that the draft condition was identical to a condition in the Vineyard Golf Club DRI decision. "If they're happy [with the condition], leave it alone", said Mr. Zeltzer.

Ms. Sibley insisted that the Vineyard Golf Club conditions of approval, if applied to the Down Island project, should be identical unless the Commission determines otherwise. The conditions, she said, "should not be carelessly different". To do so, she continued, runs "the risk of being unfair".

Ms. Greene, then, requested that "all" members should have equal access to "all" golf club facilities. Ms. Sibley recalled the Applicant's testimony that there would be separate locker rooms for equity and Island members. Ms. Greene differed, saying that she was concerned about "creating second class members". After a lengthy discussion in which all the Members spoke, Ms. Greene's opening comment prevailed.

Ms. Brown commented. She suggested that all golf course facilities rather than golf club facilities should be available to all members. After discussing the matter briefly, the Members agreed with Ms. Brown.

Ms. Ottens-Sargent took up the idea of a lottery to determine "Island membership". She recalled an idea suggested by Mr. Jason at the Commission's June 15<sup>th</sup> meeting. Ms. summarized his proposal. Ms. Lazarow favored a lottery too and emphasized that "Islanders" should not belong to more than 1 golf club. Mr. Toole also favored a lottery system but not an annual lottery. He suggested a "5 year lottery". Ms. Sibley described the lottery "as an interesting thought" and as "a community benefit" but was "conflicted by it". She then added that lottery losers should be placed on a waiting list. Mr. Zeltzer responded with comments about "fairness" and the possibility of a lengthy waiting list.

Ms. Sibley made the following motion that was seconded by Ms. Greene: That we [LUPC] not recommend to the full commission a "recurrent lottery". The vote was called and the motion did not carry. There was additional discussion about golf club membership.

Concerning "Course Construction", Ms. Greene requested that the Staff recommendation should be reworded as follows: That no construction activity shall occur on land which the Applicant possesses until a 100 per cent fee simple interest is held by the Applicant.

Ms. Greene modified the next listed recommendation by adding: Costs shall be borne by the Applicant [with respect to the cost of aerial photographs].

Ms. Greene suggested another condition that was agreed upon by the Members: That all native grass areas shall be as shown on "the Plan".

After discussing and accepting the Staff's recommendation for a construction impact mitigation plan, the Members discussed the condition as to importing/exporting soil. Ms. Sibley objected to the importing of topsoil since an organic golf course would require soil enrichment. There was a long discussion that ended with Ms. Sibley's recommendation that "recontouring of the land shall be as presented to the Commission [at the public hearing]". Ms. Greene added that "recontouring" shall not jeopardize archaeologically sensitive portions of the site.

The Members recommended to permit the Applicant to bring topsoil, "greens mix" and

other materials to the site. All material and equipment shall be transported to the Island by private barge and that transport activities shall occur between September and June.

As to the "dense vegetative buffer" condition, Ms. Greene, Ms. Brown and Ms. Sibley formulated this condition: That the Applicant shall provide a concentrated landscape buffer...in order to screen the clubhouse and parking area from the Featherstone property...

Ms. Sibley insisted that the buffer "contain evergreens". Members suggested junipers, cedars and pines. Ms. Sibley was willing to accept "non-native evergreen species". Ms. Brown said that she would consult with Mr. Donaroma.

Ms. Ottens-Sargent questioned the ecological significance of the "narrow corridors between the fairways". She wanted a condition that "requires the Applicant to preserve and maintain native woodland shown on the plan". Ms. Brown noted that the plan, in fact, shown "natural areas" that are not to be altered.

Ms. Ottens-Sargent asked the Staff to summarize (for the June 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting) the Applicant's testimony concerning the "buffer areas to be preserved". Ms. Brown clarified the topic by limiting the review to "the areas between the fairways". Ms. Sibley then added her concern about the Applicant's intention to enhance the transition areas between the managed turf areas and "preservation areas".

Ms. Brown led a discussion about the "performance bond" condition. Ms. Brown explained that a performance bond is usually entered into as a guarantee that a proposal will be completed as designed. She wanted the condition written so that there would be "a range of choices (i.e., remedies). Ms. Greene stated the choices as: either completion of the project or restoration. After a long discussion, Ms. Greene suggested that an insurance policy would be more effective than a performance bond. In the end, Ms. Brown sought the Staff's guidance and requested an update at the June 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

As to "Course Management", Ms Ottens-Sargent talked about the "organic" basis of the Applicant's management of the course. Members debated "organic" in the agricultural sense. Ms. Sibley recommended redefining "organic" so that the term excludes materials known to be toxic to humans and wildlife.

Ms. Ottens-Sargent called for additional studies. Stating that the cumulative effects of the organic products are unknown, she alluded to the types of studies that would have been done by the proposed Great Pond Center. (See Meeting House Golf Club proposal). Ms. Sibley responded by referring to the Applicant's testing/monitoring program. Ms. Ottens-Sargent then suggested the need for "bioaccumulation" studies.

Ms. Lazerow, in reply to Ms. Ottens-Sargent, discussed the Applicant's monitoring programs by referring to a chart from the application documents.

In defense of Ms. Ottens-Sargent, Ms. Sibley noted that the toxic effects of organic products need to be monitored and may be more important than the habitat monitoring program. Ms. Lazerow, however, doubted the long-term efficacy of the Applicant's "organic management plan.

She said that she is expecting the Applicant to return to the Commission in order to modify the conditions of approval. In light of similar "organic management" conditions imposed on the Vineyard Golf Club, the Members conducted a spirited discussion of horticultural practices.

Returning to the Staff's organic management condition, the Members discussed the the decision-making time period. The Members agreed that the Commission shall render a decision within 60 (rather than 21) days after receiving the Applicant's *Organic Golf Course Management Plan*.

Before closing, Ms. Sibley asked questions about the Staff's proposed nitrogen loading limit. The nature of her questions required responses from Bill Wilcox who will be present at the June 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:57 P.M.

Summary prepared by David Wessling