

Section 3.3 Narrative Description of Design Approach

Multi-use Housing Development 3 Uncas Avenue, Oak Bluffs, MA

Narrative Design Approach

Location and Context. The property is located in a commercial area just a few blocks and short walking distance from downtown Oak Bluffs with all customary shopping including a super market and drug store. The existing buildings on Circuit Avenue and Uncas Avenue within sight of the subject parcel are a *smorgasbord* of commercial structures, including the adjacent restaurant and the Vineyard's only bowling center, a smattering of smaller retail buildings in various states of repair, a small office complex, a drug store and a full-service bank. The Oak Bluffs ferry terminal is within easy walking distance. It is safe to say that the area in general does not have any consistent architectural style. As a result, there is little coherent architectural context to draw from.



The Subject Property is in the Foreground

Abutters. The immediate abutter to the south (bottom right in the picture above) is the Barn, Bowl & Bistro developed by the applicant. The subject 3 Uncas Avenue parcel actually abuts on the Barn parking lot. The Barn complex is the major year-round restaurant for the Vineyard and houses the Island's only Bowling alleys. This is an outlier for the area. It is also a function facility hosting many events such as birthdays, weddings and corporate type meetings.

The abutters across Circuit Avenue to the north are an appliance store and a small office building.

The abutters to the east are an art gallery and full-service bank.

Design Approach. The last thing wanted was for the project to look like a typical apartment building, and monotony was to be avoided at all costs. Given the lack of any immediate architectural context, the approach was to draw on the wider Oak Bluffs architectural style called Carpenter Gothic, a picturesque format that employs fanciful scrollwork applied to the façade of the wood structures.

Interior Streetscape

The residential buildings contain two floors, with the top floor partially contained within gables and dormers. The height is generally 25 feet with tops of gables and intersecting roof elements extending as much as 4 additional feet. All ground floor units facing the street have private entrances, as would be seen in single family dwellings.

Claddings are a mix of familiar materials – shingles, clapboards and board-and-batten siding, separated by trim bands. Traditional double hung windows. Muted colors will be used in places. Overall, there will be a great deal of variety in the facades, with few repeating elements.

Siting: The site is flat and featureless.

Flood Plain and Parking. The site is not in a flood zone. A huge bonus to this configuration is the opportunity to provide automobile parking with one dedicated space for each dwelling unit.