

**ARCHITECTURAL NARRATIVE – 12-12-2023**  
**OCEAN VIEW - 16 CHAPMAN AVENUE, OAK BLUFFS, MA.**  
**PREPARED FOR THE MARTHA'S VINEYARD COMMISSION**

PROPOSED USE and DESIGN / HISTORIC DOCUMENTATION:

This is a mixed-use project that consists of new construction to replace a one-story restaurant that was destroyed by fire on March 3, 2022, and the construction of ten one bedroom, deed restricted, workforce / year-round housing apartment units on the second and third floors above the restaurant.

**Restaurant Use:** The site has been the location of food service since the Ocean View House began operating in the 1880's. After the hotel ceased operating in 1965, the restaurant use continued for another 57 years until the 2022 fire. The proposed restaurant will have 32 fewer seats in a reallocation of wastewater flow for the 10 apartments, resulting in 148 proposed seats compared to the 180 existing licensed seating. There will also be a reduction in staff from 14 to 12 due to the reduced seating. Currently there are at least four staff members that could be housed in the proposed apartments. The restaurant operations will remain the same as the previous restaurant. There will be no takeout window. All previous annual licensing with the town is still in effect.

**Workforce Housing:** The addition of workforce housing on this site is supported by the 2019 Oak Bluffs Master Plan and the 2017 Housing Production Plan. Chapter 5 of the Master Plan, 'Managing Growth and Change' - Section 5.1 states:

"5.1 Addressing Housing Needs - While market rate housing appears to be taking care of itself, there are a number of housing needs which have been widely recognized for some time: ... (including) • Workforce Housing – (defined as) year-round housing options for people ... (such as): Public safety personnel (fire, police, emergency medical), Health personnel (nurses, home health aides), Retail/service workers, and Tradespeople (plumbers, electricians, HVAC technicians, etc.)...."

One of the strategies for constructing Workforce Housing is also mentioned in Chapter 5 – Section 5.1 of the Master Plan: 'Mixed-use "top-of-the-shop" buildings in commercial areas (adopted by Town Meeting in 2018).'

Chapter 1 of the 2017 Oak Bluffs Housing Production Plan mentions the towns primary need:

"Oak Bluffs primary housing needs are more year-round rental housing units at all market levels..."

Chapter 1 also notes the following housing goals:

'Goal 1: Housing Options - Encourage the creation of greater housing options to balance the needs of all year-round residents more equitably, including low/moderate income households. This could include ...mixed-use 'top-of-the-shop' buildings in commercial areas.'

'Goal 2: Household Types - Foster the creation of year-round housing options, through adaptive reuse of existing buildings as well as new construction, that help to preserve and support population diversity and decrease the summer shuffle. These options should support the needs of...the year-round workforce...'

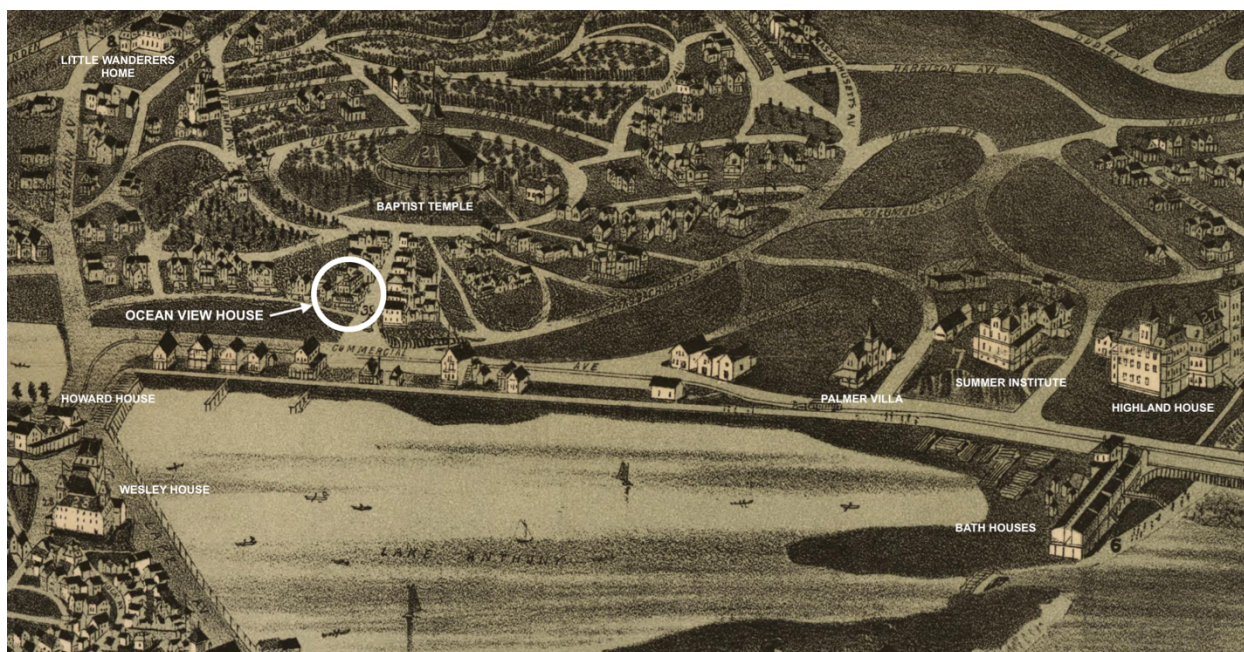
'Goal 3: Economic Vitality - Work together with other Island towns to support development of affordable year-round housing and infrastructure costs to support employees of regional resources, such as, but not limited to, the hospital, schools, and Community Services. Also, to support economic vitality of the community, encourage mixed-use —top-of-the-shop buildings in commercial areas.'

Construction of the proposed apartments has the following benefits:

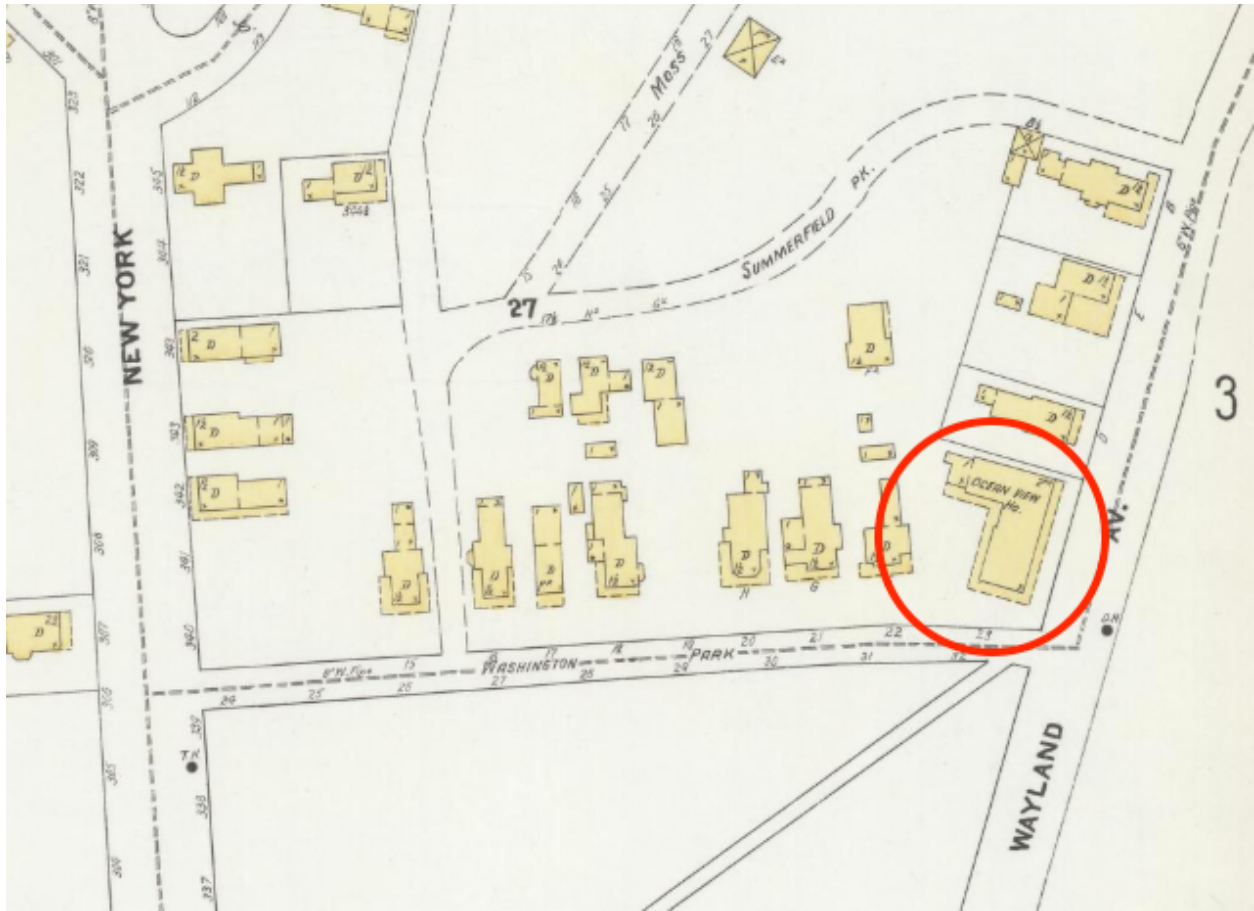
- This is a 'Smart Growth' location for housing density that takes advantage of existing town infrastructure, including roads, utility connections including wastewater, and walkable proximity to transit stops and shopping.
- The property is included in the extremely limited B-1 zone that allows apartments with town approval. Only 20 acres out of +/- 4,736 acres of land in the town are zoned B-1.
- Walking distance to the center of Oak Bluffs reducing auto traffic and parking availability for both restaurant patrons and apartment residents.
- Compact building design increases construction and energy efficiency.
- Private investment requiring no taxpayer money, monetary subsidies or inducements.
- Preserves open space by not requiring clearing of land.
- Increased property tax revenue for the town.

**Architectural Design:** The exterior of the proposed building is designed to be reminiscent of the three-story mansard style Ocean View House (Hotel) that occupied the site from approximately 1880 to 1965. The property is located in the Highlands section of Oak Bluffs, which was developed after Wesleyan Grove and the Oak Bluffs Land and Wharf Company started developing land to the east and south. There is a MACRIS history of the Highlands (Inventory No: OAK.B) that describes the development of the area, but there is no MACRIS inventory sheet for the former hotel as it predated the process.

The earliest image of the Ocean View House is 1890 when it was included in a birdseye view of the town (see below). Other significant buildings in the 1890 view of the Highlands include the Highland House, the Martha's Vineyard Summer Institute, the Baptist Temple, Palmer Villa, and the Little Wanderers Home. Below are documents and photos that illustrate the design of the former hotel and how it changed over +/- 80 years.



1890 Birdseye View of the Highlands



1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



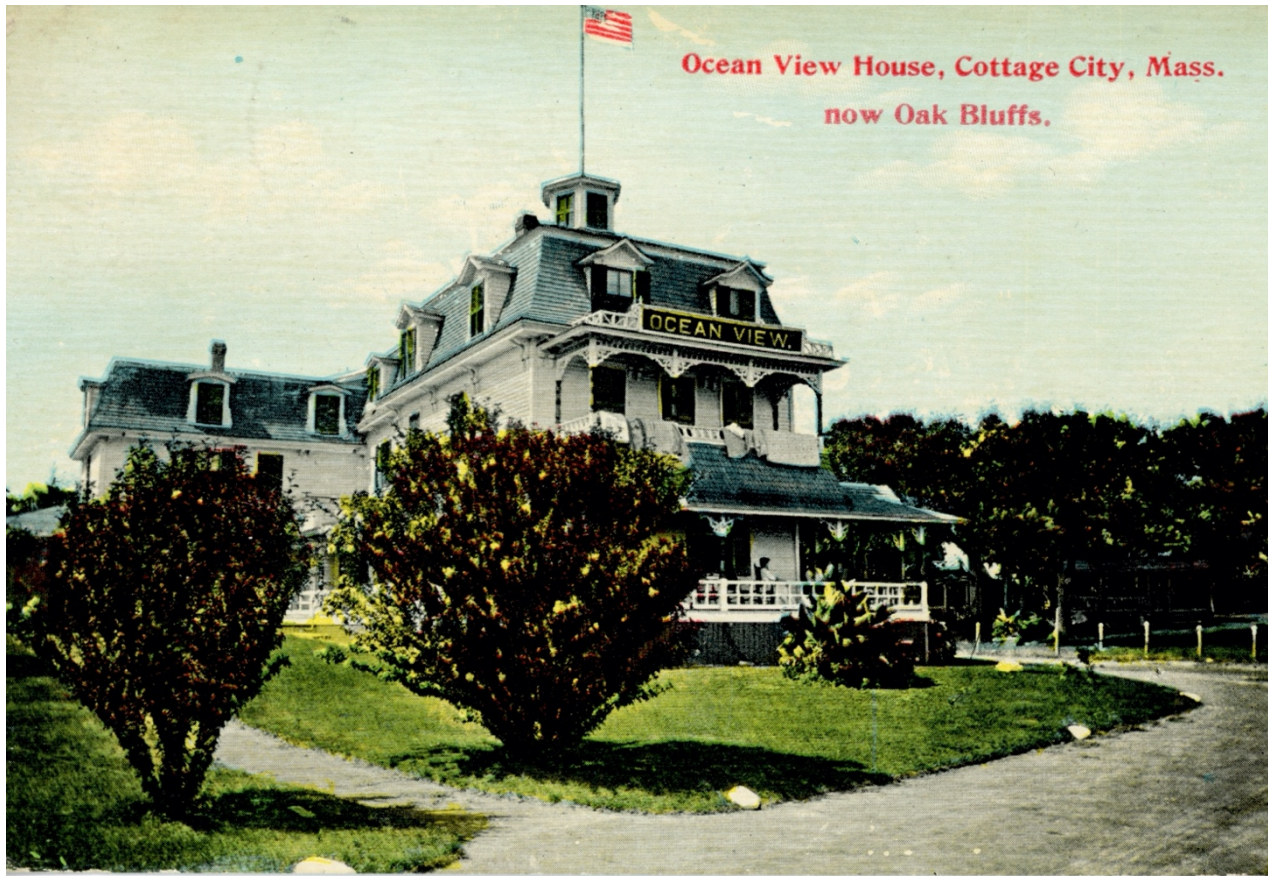
+/- 1890 View from Plymouth Park



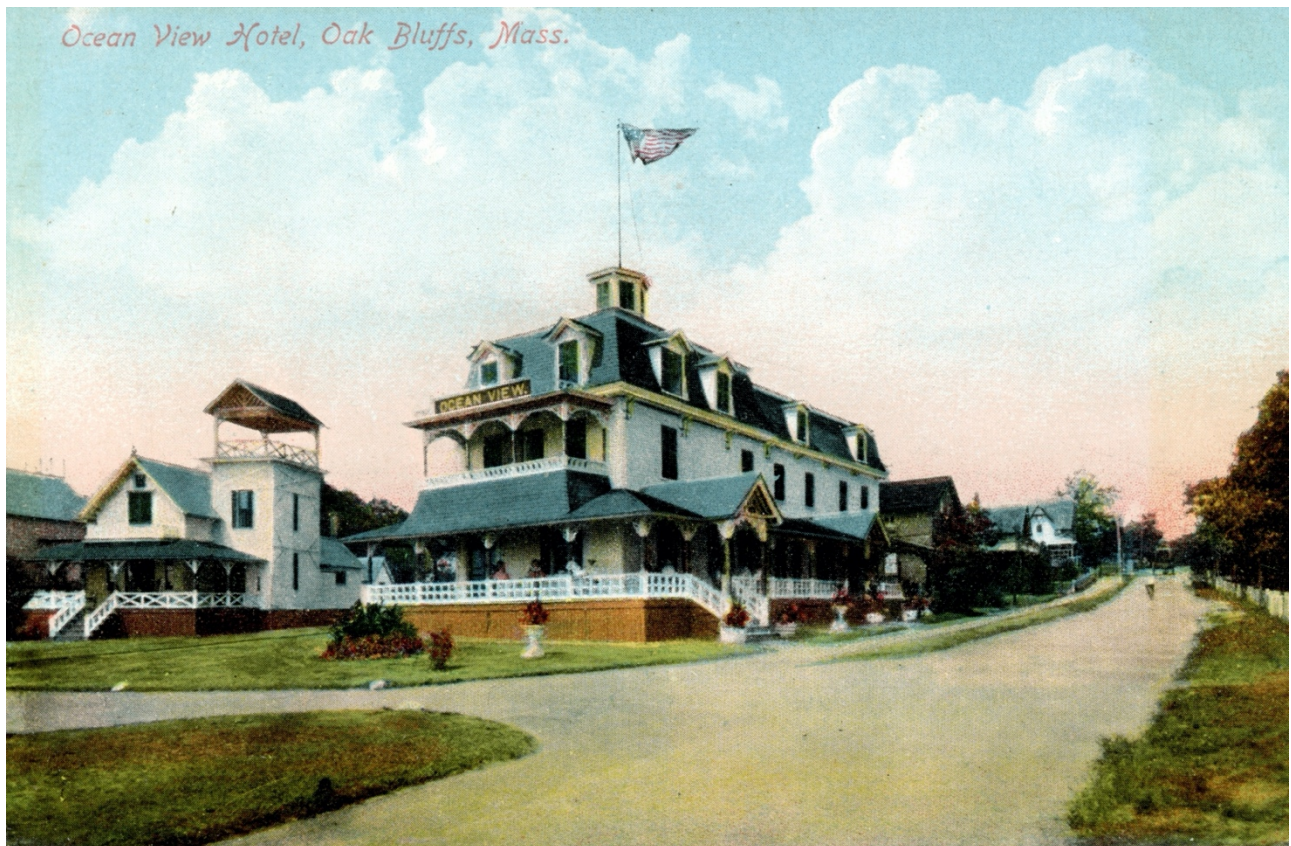
**1905 Postcard with Covered Second Floor Porch on East Elevation**



**+/- 1910 Postcard - View from Wayland Avenue**



+/- 1910 Postcard - View from Chapman Avenue



+/- 1910 Postcard - View from Wayland Avenue



1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



+/- 1933 Postcard – View from Wayland Avenue



**+/- 1940 Postcard – View from Chapman Avenue**



**+/- 1940 Postcard – View from Wayland Avenue**

## OTHER NEARBY STRUCTURES:



**+/- 1880's – View of Highland House from beach. Destroyed by fire in 1893.**



**+/- 1905 - Martha's Vineyard Summer institute. Near Highland House. Closed 1906.**





Originally Constructed in 1877 – Baptist Temple



PALMER VILLA.