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Martha's Vineyard Commission

DRI #710 Redevelopment of Edu Comp Building MVC Staff Report – 2022-3-9 UPDATED

1. DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 **Applicant:** Xerxes Agassi (Delano and Company)
- 1.2 **Owner:** 4 State Road MVY LLC
- 1.3 **Project Location:** 4 State Road (Map 9, Block A, Lot 6), Tisbury
- 1.4 **Proposal:** Renovation and expansion of the former Edu Comp building, including residential and commercial uses.
- 1.5 **Zoning:** Business 1 (B1)
- 1.6 **Local Permits:** Special Permit, Building Permit, wastewater approval
- 1.7 **Surrounding Land Uses:** Other commercial and residential uses in the B1 district; Veterans Memorial Park to the south

- 1.8 **Project History:** The existing Colonial brick building was constructed by the Sawyer Construction Company around 1929 as a headquarters for the New England Telephone Company, when common-battery technology was introduced to replace the older crank system. The building had both public telephones and a terminal room and switchboard, with room for 12 operators. The new system meant that callers could reach the operator by lifting a handset, rather than having to turn a crank. According to the Vineyard Gazette at the time, the building was designed “to conform as nearly as possible to the type of architecture to be found in the locality,” and resembled the former homes of whaling captains on the Vineyard. According to Martha’s Vineyard Magazine, the Island’s first transatlantic call, to England, took place from the building the year after it was constructed. According to a brief history by Chris Baer, the Vineyard converted to dial phones around 1963, and teams of operators were no longer needed.

The building housed the popular Island Youth Center (run by MV Community Services) in the 1970s and 1980s, with pool tables, a snack bar, and other amenities, but relatively little has been written about the building during that period. The building was remodeled in the 1980s and was the location of Edu Comp, which moved into the building in the 1980s and closed its retail operations in 2020. In 2020, the town selectmen considered using the building as temporary classroom space during the renovation of the Tisbury School, and as a future town hall. The building has recently housed offices for an architect, writer, interior designer, and tutoring service.

- 1.9 **Project Summary:** The proposal is to gut-renoate the existing 7,920 ft² building and construct a 13,062 ft² addition to the south (total of 20,982 ft²). The renovated portion will have three floors, and the addition will have four floors, with the top floor about 31% smaller than the floor below (2,482 ft² compared to 3,589 ft²). As proposed, the bottom floor (extending across both portions) will have three office condo units totaling 2,933 ft² (including storage space) as well as bike storage and garage space at the rear of the building. The exterior of the addition is intended to match the existing brick structure.

The site slopes away from State Road, so the northern portion of the bottom floor will be below grade, although the front of the site will be excavated to create a storefront and entry facing the road. The areas along the sides of the building will also be excavated to allow for additional access and windows.

The upper floors will have 14 one- and two-bedroom residential condo units totaling 11,931 ft², including one affordable unit restricted to 80% Area Median Income, and up to 13 workforce housing units. The units would range in size from 571 ft² to 1,513 ft², with a total of 22 bedrooms. The roof would serve as a garden terrace (possibly with a small pool and spa), and to house the HVAC and other mechanical equipment. The top floor would include private terraces for some of the units, and the roof would include a private deck for one of the fourth-floor units.

The table below shows a summary of key changes to the proposal since the public hearing on Oct. 7.

	ORIGINAL	REVISION 1	REVISION 2
Commercial units	7	3	3
Residential units	15	14	14
Affordable units	2	1	1
Workforce units	3	3	Up to 13
Bedrooms	22	22	22
Total floor area	24,720 ft ²	21,280 ft ²	20,982 ft ²
Parking spaces	17	21	22

The latest floorplans and elevations are available [here](#).

2. ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 **DRI Referral:** Tisbury Building Department
- 2.2 **DRI Trigger:** 3.1b (New construction over 3,500 ft², including mixed use; mandatory review)
- 2.3 **LUPC:** Aug. 9, 2021
- 2.4 **Public Hearing:** Oct. 7, Nov. 4, Dec. 2 (continued without testimony), 2021; Feb. 17 (continued without testimony), March 17, 2022
- 2.5 **Site Visits:** Oct. 13, 2021; March 9, 2022

3. PLANNING CONCERNS

- 3.1 **Wastewater:** The property has paid a betterment for 652 gallons of wastewater flow per day (GPD) to the town. The applicant applied to the town in 2021 to connect to the sewer with the 652 GPD, and an additional 1,926 GPD, for a total of 2,578 GPD. The town is working to upgrade its treatment capacity, but the town Wastewater Treatment Facility is at or near capacity.

The Tisbury Wastewater Department issued a letter of conditional approval to the applicant on Sept. 16, 2021, stating that the town Wastewater Commission had approved the change of use on Aug. 30, 2021, with the following conditions:

1. *The applicant has to complete the MVC review process and return to the Wastewater Commission for final permission to connect to the sewer system, or request an extension.*
2. *The applicant will provide to the Wastewater Department a copy of the MVC Decision.*
3. *The applicant will provide to the Wastewater Department detailed plans for the on-site collection system, including the location of the proposed Duplex E/One grinder chamber and grease traps.*
4. *The applicant must pay any outstanding penalties, betterments, or fees to the town prior to any service connection.*

The 22 bedrooms would require an allocation of 2,420 GPD, and the proposed office uses would require 218 GPD, for a total of 2,638 GPD, which is 60 GPD more than the conditional approval. The Tisbury Wastewater Superintendent stated in November that the additional 60 GPD is also conditionally approved. The initial

120-day conditional approval expired on Dec. 30, 2021, and the Wastewater Department later extended the approval an additional 90 days, to March 30.

The proposed rooftop garden would help reduce nitrogen loading on the property.

3.2 Island Housing Needs: As proposed, all of the residential units would be designated as year-round, with up to 13 used as workforce housing. Martha’s Vineyard Hospital has [stated](#) its intent to lease some of the units for hospital workers (likely three, accounting for the plan revisions), and the applicant has signed an [MOU](#) with Vineyard Wind, which intends to lease 7-10 of the units as housing for future wind farm workers, pending approval of both the current DRI and a proposed Vineyard Wind maintenance facility on Beach Road, which is being reviewed as DRI 81-M3. As proposed, none of the workforce tenants may sublet their units as short-term rentals, and any market-rate units may not be sublet for less than a week at a time or more than 60 days in total per calendar year.

One affordable unit would be restricted to households earning up to 80% of the Area Median Income, and would be exempt from condo fees. The affordable unit would be furnished, with two bedrooms. Further proposed restrictions on the affordable unit have been developed in consultation with staff (see below).

All residential units will be handicapped-accessible via the side entrances on the ground floor and an elevator to the upper floors.

Floor	Unit Type	Unit Count	Unit #	Square Footage	Parking	#	Notes
1	Commercial	C-1	C-1	1,042	1	TBD	959 SF + 85 SF Storage
1	Commercial	C-2	C-2	987	1	TBD	996 SF + 85 SF Storage
1	Commercial	C-3	C-3	878	1	TBD	733 SF + 79 SF Storage
TOTAL	Commercial	3		2,907	3		

Floor	Unit Type	Unit Count	Unit #	Square Footage	Bedrooms	Bathrooms	Parking	#	Notes
2	Residential	R-1	R-2A	648	1	1	1	TBD	
2	Residential	R-2	R-2B	1,248	2	2.5	1	TBD	
2	Residential	R-3	R-2C	838	2	2	1	TBD	
2	Residential	R-4	R-2D	795	2	2	1	TBD	
2	Residential	R-5	R-2E	684	1	1	1	TBD	
2	Residential	R-6	R-2F	693	1	1	1	TBD	
				4,906	9	9.5	6		
3	Residential	R-7	R-3A	640	1	1.5	1	TBD	
3	Residential	R-8	R-3B	1,447	2	3	1	TBD	603 SF Private Terrace - 221 SF Mezzanine
3	Residential	R-9	R-3C	837	2	2	1	TBD	
3	Residential	R-10	R-3D	752	2	2	1	TBD	
3	Residential	R-11	R-3E	684	1	1	1	TBD	
				4,360	8	9.5	5		
4	Residential	R-12	R-4A	581	1	1	1	TBD	128 SF Private Terrace
4	Residential	R-13	R-4B	571	1	1	1	TBD	259 SF Private Terrace
4	Residential	R-14	R-4C	1,513	3	3	1	TBD	529 SF Private Terrace
				2,665	5		3		
TOTAL	Residential	14		11,931	22		14		

Affordable Housing: Staff review and recommendations

The proposed project includes 14 residential condo units and three commercial condo units:

- It is not clear if the market-value units will be rented or sold.
- The applicant has offered to designate one onsite residential rental condo unit as Affordable Housing, income restricted at 80% AMI in perpetuity.
- The applicant has also offered to comply with the following criteria:
 - The Affordable Housing unit shall be exempt from all condominium and homeowner association fees (insurance costs should be included).
 - The Affordable Housing unit shall comply with all Affirmative Fair Housing Laws and Universal Design Standards.
 - The recipient shall be income-certified by the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority (DCRHA).
 - The recipient shall be selected by DCRHA via a public lottery process.
 - All DCRHA administration shall be at the applicant's expense.
 - The Affordable Housing tenant shall be entitled to all benefits available to other residential owners/renters.
 - All maintenance of the Affordable Housing unit shall be the responsibility of the applicant.
 - The applicant shall submit an affidavit to the MVC annually to ensure compliance.
- The applicant has also offered to lease one of the workforce units as year-round housing to a local business, with a ten-year income restriction of 100-150% AMI.
- Staff recommends that the workforce unit lease and income be certified by DCRHA annually at the applicant's expense, and that an affidavit be submitted to the MVC annually to ensure compliance.
- The monetary mitigation for the 1,386 ft² of new commercial construction (unit C3 and storage for units C1, C2, and C3) is as follows:
 - $1,386 \times 2 \text{ (Office Use)} \times 8 = \$22,176$
 - Staff recommends waving the monetary mitigation for the commercial space in exchange for the applicant's offer for the year-round workforce housing unit.
- The applicant's offer for one Affordable Housing unit and a ten-year income-restricted workforce housing unit is consistent with the MVC's DRI Housing Policy.

3.3 Economic Development: The project would create three office units in Vineyard Haven, in the vicinity of Main Street and decrease the commercial space on the site from about 7,900 ft² to 2,900 ft² (about a 63% reduction). Hours of operation would be consistent with other businesses in the area. The side entrances to the commercial area will be handicapped-accessible.

The town planning board has discussed whether the proposed reduction in available commercial space is appropriate for the B1 district, and whether more of the existing structure could be designated as commercial instead of residential.

Economic Development: Staff review

- The proposal is to convert the existing Edu Comp building to mixed use, with 14 residential condos and three commercial condos within Tisbury's B-1 Business District.
- The proposed residential units will have a beneficial impact on the surrounding businesses, particularly retail shops and restaurants.
- The three commercial condo units will be used as office space.
- It is not clear if the commercial units will be for sale or rent.

- The anticipated number of new jobs created, and hours of operation, for the three commercial units are not known at this time.
- The property is on town water and has paid a betterment to be on the town sewer at the applicant's expense.
- The proposed renovation and new buildings will meet all fire and building codes.
- The project will not have a significant impact on town services such as police and fire, since the development is located in a densely developed mixed-use / commercial area.
- FY 2020 Assessed Value: \$1,618,400
- FY 2020 Property Tax Revenue: \$15,670
- The project will generate new additional commercial and residential property taxes for the town of Tisbury.
- The project will create a small number of new temporary jobs in the professional services and construction industries.

3.4 Traffic and Transportation: The property is located in the vicinity of shops, public transportation, bike paths, and other amenities, which would reduce the need for local automobile trips. The site would have 22 parking spaces (including the four garage spaces, two handicapped spaces, and a delivery space) to the rear and long the west side of the addition, with 1.3 spaces per unit. The applicant has stated that the estimated traffic generation would be 124 trips per day, or about 10% less than the existing conditions. This does not account for possible tenancy by workers at the Vineyard Wind maintenance building and Martha's Vineyard Hospital (see section 3.2 above), which could reduce vehicle trips if tenants walk or bike to work.

The applicant has noted the option of providing reverse-commute parking passes to condo tenants, with timed passes only for the time their vehicles will be onsite. For example, tenants who commute to work on a regular basis could opt for a nighttime-only pass, which would increase the number of parking spaces available during the day.

The existing driveways along State Road will be reconfigured and will continue to provide ingress immediately to the west of the building, and egress immediately to the east. The abutting property at 10 State Road to the west was required to record an [easement](#) with 4 State Road as part of the MVC approval of DRI 622 in 2013. The easement was recorded, but does not align directly with the existing driveway for 4 State Road, and does not include egress. An informal agreement between 4 and 10 State Road had allowed 10 State Road to continue using the existing driveway, and to exit through 4 State Road. However, efforts by the current applicant to formalize that arrangement were unsuccessful and the applicant plans to enforce the recorded easement, which would require the owner of 10 State Road to remove several trees along the property line. The removal of trees would trigger Checklist item 8.2b (with concurrence), since it would involve ground disturbance within a recognized archaeological site.

An [informal agreement](#) between 4 State Road and 5 Beach Street to the east had been in place to allow 5 Beach Street to access parking spaces via 4 State Road, and to allow the 4 State Road exit to cross over a portion of 5 Beach Street. Efforts to formalize that agreement were also unsuccessful, and the applicant plans to realign the exit driveway so that it no longer crosses 5 Beach Street. This will require the owner of 5 Beach Street to reconfigure their vehicle access and parking. The realigned exit driveway at 4 State Road will slightly reduce the existing landscaped area at the front of the building.

The proposed access and circulation are shown as Option 2 in the [parking plan](#).

In terms of pedestrian traffic, the project will create 14 residential units and three office units, which will lead to an increase in foot traffic in the immediate area, including the intersection of Main Street and State Road. There are currently two crosswalks at the intersection. The applicant has stated that the site will also

be utilized to encourage access to Veterans Memorial Park to the south, which may further increase foot traffic. Two sets of stairs currently provide access to the park from the parking lot. The plans call for the access points to be improved, including an ADA-compliant ramp/bike path.

- A storage room for 18 bicycles will be located on the bottom floor of the building.
- Businesses located in the building would be required to provide VTA passes to employees.

A traffic analysis by Fraser Poly-Engineering Services (FPES) on behalf of the applicant was still pending as of March 9, 2022.

Traffic and Transportation: Staff review

Existing Traffic: Traffic counts along State Road were conducted from August 16-23, 2021. The average daily traffic at State Road east of Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road during that count week was 17,737 vehicles. The AM Peak Hour was from 10-11 AM and carried a volume of 1,352 vehicles, while the PM Peak Hour was from 4-5 PM and carried a volume 1,335 vehicles.

August 16-23, 2021	ADTV	Direction	
Count Location:	(Average Daily Traffic Volumes)	EB	WB
State Road East of Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road	17,737	9,046	8,691
AM Peak Hour (10:00 - 11:00 AM)	1,352	684	668
PM Peak Hour (4:00 - 5:00 PM)	1,335	751	584

Existing and Proposed Trip Generation: The existing land uses on the property consisted of a 3,200 ft² educational retail establishment, an 800 ft² architect's office, and a 200 ft² author's office. The total daily generated existing trips that would be expected from these uses was 153 trips.

To project future trip generations, MVC staff worked with the applicant in identifying potential uses that would occupy those spaces. The following land uses were evaluated and are also shown in the Table below:

- 14 Apartments are expected to generate roughly 93 daily trips.
- 1,042 ft² of TBD Office Space is expected to generate roughly 11 daily trips.
- 987 ft² of Interior Design Office is expected to generate roughly 11 daily trips.
- 878 ft² of Real Estate Office is expected to generate roughly 10 daily trips.

Existing Land Uses		Total Generated Trips			Total Distribution of Generated Trips			
		Daily	AM Hour	PM Hour	AM In	AM Out	PM In	PM Out
EduComp	3,200 sf	142	22	9	11	11	4	5
Architect Office	800 sf	9	1	1	1	0	0	1
Author Office	200 sf	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Existing Trips		153 Trips	23	10	12	11	4	6
Proposed Land Uses		Total Generated Trips			Total Distribution of Generated Trips			
Apartments	14 units	93	7	9	1	6	6	3
TBD Office	1,042 sf	11	2	2	1	0	0	1
Interior Design Office	987 sf	11	2	1	1	0	0	1
Real Estate Office	878 sf	10	1	1	1	0	0	1
Proposed Trips		125 Trips	12	13	4	6	6	6
Proposed Trips -vs- Existing Trips		-28						

The proposed land uses would generate 125 daily trips. These numbers show a reduction of 28 trips generated from the current existing uses.

Sight Distances: From the exiting driveway at 4 State Road and looking to the left, the clear sight distance is approximately 300 feet. Looking to the right, the clear sight distance is approximately 300 feet. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) safe stopping sight standard requires a distance of 360 feet for a passenger vehicle to complete a safe left turn from a two-lane highway at 30 mph. At a speed of 20 mph, the safe stopping sight distance is 240 feet. The sight distances for this proposal are adequate.

Safety: The potential for pedestrian/vehicular conflict at the State Road/4 State Road intersection is minimized by the clear sight lines along the sidewalk. Vehicles entering and leaving the site and pedestrians passing by the site have ample views to ensure safety.

Similar to conditions for pedestrians, potential bicyclist conflicts with vehicles entering or leaving the site is minimized because of favorable sight line conditions.

Bicycle and Pedestrian: There are no bicycle paths or routes on State Road in the immediate vicinity of 4 State Road.

There are sidewalks on both sides of State Road at the location of the proposed improvements. The property is also situated directly between two crosswalks. One crosswalk connects to the sidewalk in front of the Martha's Vineyard Savings Bank, while the second crosswalk connects to the Mansion House. The applicant has also proposed brick walkways to delineate pedestrian pathways into and out of the building, including an ADA accessible ramp at the side of the building.

Public Transportation: The Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority (VTA) provides bus service along State Road in front of 4 State Road. Transit Routes 1, 2, 3, and 13 provide access to the area.

Access and Circulation: Existing access to the 4 State Road parcel is via a one-way, 10-foot wide driveway from State Road. To the rear of the existing building, there is an opening that provides access from the parking lot of the adjacent 10 State Road building. 4 State Road has had an informal agreement with 10 State Road allows 10 State Road visitors to exit via the Edu Comp outbound driveway.

The applicant has shown that the proposed parking area would have adequate space for the turning radius of a typical 29' delivery truck such as those used by FedEx.

Parking: The revised proposal has a total of 21 parking spaces. There are 17 outdoor parking spaces, all of which will be visibly demarcated by cobblestones. There will be four parking spaces in a garage area under the building. Bicycle parking is also available onsite.

The ITE *Parking Generation* manual does not have parking demand calculations for the proposed uses. The uses that could be evaluated are not nearly the same and would dwarf this proposal, therefore an evaluation was not conducted.

The proposed project lies in the B-1 District. The B-1 District is exempt from the general parking requirements under Tisbury Bylaw 07.07.

Recommendations: This proposed multi-use project that promotes and connects all modes of transportation would be an enhancement to the area. The traffic operations, parking, and safety issues

associated with the proposed development at the 4 State Road site are not of a magnitude that will cause unmanageable conditions.

The following recommendations are offered to enhance traffic operations at the 4 State Road site:

1. Ensure that pavement markings at the existing driveway are located such that drivers and pedestrians have maximum sight distances.
2. To ensure the 17 outdoor spaces will be properly used, some method for demarcation of the stalls should be devised.
3. The possibility of consolidating and sharing driveways at 10, 4, and 5 State Road should be reviewed in greater depth through an access management study or agreement.

3.5 Character and Identity: The current brick building with metal roof stands prominently at the intersection of Main Street and State Road, and is architecturally distinct from the surrounding wooden buildings. The addition to the south will be similar in style to the existing building, but with shorter windows, four floors instead of three, and stone exterior on the bottom floor. The addition will not be visible when facing the front of the building directly. The existing metal roof and rooftop masonry will be repaired to match the original. The proposed building is about 165% larger than the existing building, and would be one of the larger [buildings in the immediate area](#). The project site abuts Memorial Park to the south (with proposed access by foot and bicycle) and the site is partially screened by vegetation from that direction. [Revised renderings](#) of the building, including as seen from Veteran's Park, have been provided.

The applicant has stated that a mature flowering tree at the front of the site will remain, although plans for the recessed entryway and regrading of the exit driveway will impact the root system.

In terms of local planning objectives, the 2015 Tisbury Vision Plan identifies such goals as protecting the scale and character of Vineyard Haven, and ensuring that new buildings “fit harmoniously into the existing town fabric.” The plan also includes a goal of connecting and integrating “neighborhoods, parks, and open spaces through a network of safe walking and biking routes.”

3.6 Cultural Resources: The site is within a sensitive archaeological resource area known as the Vincent Site, and the applicant authorized Public Archaeology Laboratory (PAL) in Rhode Island to conduct an intensive archaeological survey, as requested by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), following the applicant's submission of a Project Notification Form. The survey was conducted on Oct. 19, and a [Management Abstract](#) from PAL was provided in early November. (Similar surveys for the adjacent properties at 10 and 18 State Road were conducted in the 1960s, 2007, and 2010.) The Management Abstract states that the survey revealed 410 artifacts, mostly located within fill or disturbed soil, including artifacts that are likely part of the Vincent Site, but no “potentially significant archaeological deposits”.

PAL recommends that the final plans limit below-grade disturbance to less than a certain depth, and if any impacts are proposed below that level, additional excavation be conducted. The recommendations also include providing final plans to PAL and MHC for review and comment. MHC further [recommends](#) that “the project be modified to include construction only within filled and/or disturbed soils where feasible” and that updated plans showing shallow construction be provided to MHC and PAL for assessment. Further:

If construction is required below existing filled and/or disturbed soils, then the MHC recommends that supplemental intensive (locational) survey (950 CMR 70), including systematic, machine-assisted soil stripping under' the direction of the project archaeologist, be conducted by the PAL within deeper portions of

the project impact area, including areas required for any foundation footing excavation, utilities and/or septic system components.

3.7 Stormwater and Drainage: The existing paved driveway and compact dirt/asphalt parking area will be replaced with pea stone set on sand hardener (MVC staff considers both surfaces to be semi-permeable), while roof area will increase by about 3,600 ft². Accounting for the semi-permeable surfaces, the impervious surface area on the lot would decrease from about 14,000 ft² to 13,000 ft². There are currently no stormwater facilities on the property. A [stormwater management system](#) designed for a 25-year storm would direct roof runoff into a StormTech chamber under the parking area to the rear of the property, via nine catch basins around the perimeter of the building, including one near the main commercial entrance below grade. The walkways along the perimeter of the building will include linear trench drains that also connect to the subsurface chamber. The plan includes a concrete, stone-clad retaining wall at the rear of the property to help limit erosion and spill-over into Veterans Park to the south. Staff has recommended exploring natural vegetation as an alternative to the retaining wall.

3.8 Energy: The applicant has proposed mini-splits for heating and cooling, electric hot water tanks within each unit, and electric clothes drying, with propane for cooking and possibly for fireplaces. The applicant is also exploring options for a backup generator onsite, which may require approval from the Tisbury Conservation Commission, depending on the location. The applicant proposes eight electric vehicle charging stations.

The applicant will contribute \$25,000 to the Vineyard Power Redevelopment Fund to support community-based solar and battery storage systems on the Island, which would enhance grid resilience and provide low-income ratepayer benefits to the community. Vineyard Power has [provided](#) additional information about the fund, and a letter of support for the project.

3.9 Noise and Night Lighting: A lighting plan shows low-level down-lighting along the driveways and at the front of the site (19 locations), recessed downlighting above the side entrances (3 locations), wall-mounted up-down lighting along the sides of the building (33 locations), decorative wall sconces (5 locations), gooseneck decorative downlighting (10 locations) at the front and back of the building, and lamp stands in the parking area and along the path to Veteran’s Park (6 locations). Spec sheets for all but the lamp stands have been provided, and the applicant has stated that the lamp stands will match others maintained by the town.

HVAC condensers will be relocated from the side of the building to the roof.

3.10 Landscaping: The applicant plans to retain most of the existing vegetation, including the cherry tree on State Road, and existing vegetation to the rear of the lot, and to add new vegetation to the front and sides of the building. A conceptual [landscape plan](#) by Donaroma’s Nursery and Landscape Services, dated Aug. 5 and 6, 2021, shows a pea stone driveway and parking area set on sand hardener with cobblestone edges, cobblestone aprons at the beginning and end of the driveway, brick walkways, a new fence at southern end of the property (either split rail or wrought iron), an in-ground automatic irrigation system, and proposed species, including for the rooftop garden.

3.11 Zoning: The bottom floor of the building as proposed appears to qualify as a first floor and would therefore comply with Tisbury zoning bylaw 05.12, which states that residential uses are not allowed on the first floor of buildings in the B1 district. (The first floor as proposed would be the commercial units.) The MA Building Code defines “Story above grade plane” as follows:

Any story having its finished floor surface entirely above grade plane, or in which the finished surface of the floor next above is:

1. *More than 6 feet (1829 mm) above grade plane; or*

2. *More than 12 feet (3658 mm) above the finished ground level at any point.*

The first floor of the renovated building would have an average height of 8.77 feet, which is more than the six feet required under the MA Building Code. This accounts for portions of the building on the north and west sides that would still be mostly below grade.

- 3.12 Construction Management:** The applicant anticipates construction beginning in early or mid-2022 and lasting about 18-24 months. Construction of the commercial units would begin only after the commercial users are identified. Staging and parking for construction would take place onsite. The existing building would be gutted, followed by site work, pouring of footings and retaining walls, and framing. At that point, additional staging would occur within the building footprint. The applicant has stated that abutters will be able to access their properties during construction.
- 3.13 Input from town boards:** The Tisbury Planning Board, which has continued its public hearing for the project, submitted a letter in November outlining its concerns related to traffic, wastewater, character, and drainage. The board requested an independent traffic study with peer review, and has since begun working with the MVC on a combined traffic study that will incorporate several proposed developments in the area. The board noted that assigning large wastewater allocations to residential projects may hinder future business development in town, that the project will create visual impacts on abutters and the neighborhood, and that a second opinion may be needed in terms of evaluating the drainage plan.
- 3.14 Public correspondence:** Ten letters from the public have been submitted, mostly from abutters who have raised concerns that the project is too large and out of character with the Island, and that it does not have enough parking or affordable units. Other concerns focus on the ingress/egress, whether additional commercial units are justified given the availability of commercial space on Main Street, whether additional sewer flow should be allocated for the project, and how the project will affect drainage in the area. Martha's Vineyard Hospital and Vineyard Power have written letters of support noting the proposed workforce housing and energy mitigation efforts, respectively.