

DRI 718, 7 Arlington Ave Demolition

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To: Lucy Morrison <morrison@mvcommission.org>; Alex Elvin <elvin@mvcommission.org>;

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Martha's Vineyard Commission
The Stone Building
33 New York Avenue
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

Dear Alex and Lucy,

My name is Ken Blacklow, and I am writing in support of the proposed Chun project (DRI 718, 7 Arlington Ave Demolition). I worked at the Commission as a graduate student intern in the summer of 1992 between my first and second years at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA). I was a graduate student in public management and land use planning. One of the big takeaways from that summer was the professionalism and dedication of the staff who work at the MVC. They took their jobs seriously and understood their role and value to regional planning. I know the Chun family has approached this project with the same thoughtfulness with full dedication to preservation, and they are deserving of your support.

I am a preservationist at heart. My family has been coming to the Vineyard since the 60's where we rented on East Chop until my parents bought their home in 1978. I was fortunate to spend my summer months as a child on East Chop. I am very familiar with the neighborhood, its history, people, and architecture. I value that context significantly. I consider East Chop my home and bought a house here with my family in 2005 where we continue to share the Vineyard tradition with our children.

I have known Eunu Chun for over 40 years (we went to high school and college together). I have known Lisa Kim since they met, over 27 years ago. They are people of the highest character and integrity. Eunu has been coming to the Vineyard for almost 40 years (39 to be exact), and Lisa for over 27 years. They both value the beauty and charm of the island, and particularly East Chop, which is why they purchased their house in the neighborhood. They have a deep appreciation for the history and character of the Chop, and that is why their home is designed to honor that history and character. I have seen the plans and believe it will be a welcome addition to the Chop and most certainly consistent with the look and feel of the neighborhood. I will admit, however, I don't agree with the implication that East Chop homes are of one "character." Any observer who walks the Chop can see all different types of architecture -- Katama style clapboard beach houses, A-frames, ranch homes, upside down cake houses, Cape style homes, octagons -- you name it, you can find it on East Chop.

Since the Chun family bought their home in 2011, they have loved it as it is. They spent countless hours/days/years trying to maintain the existing structure. To say it's been a Sisyphean task would not do their tireless work justice. The joists supporting the porch have rotted and the whole undergirding of the house needs to be replaced. The many different roof lines from the additions constructed by former owners cause serious ice dam issues every year, and the house has "settled" to such a degree that the

master bedroom floor acts as an unadjustable "sleep number" bed elevating their heads. You can literally put a ball on the floor of their bedroom, and it will roll to the other side of the room (picking up speed along the way) until it hits the opposite wall. These are just a small sample of the issues the Chun family have tried to manage over their years of ownership.

The Chun family has lived at 7 Arlington for 11 years. Prior to buying, they rented on the Chop for about 10 years. They are members of East Chop's community institutions: East Chop Tennis Club, East Chop Beach Club, and East Chop Association. They know East Chop, its history, character, and people. They are invested in East Chop's character as much as anyone. Eunu is also heavily involved with the Martha's Vineyard Museum. They are fully engaged East Chop and broader island seasonal residents. It's not like they bought the house to "blow it up" within a year or 2 and build a "mcmansion" (as the Sands family refers to their plans). Eunu and Lisa talked about renovating, but after much considered thought, deliberation, and fruitless restoration projects, decided to rebuild. They also want to spend more time on island, and a year-round home would allow them to do that.

Regarding the historical significance of the house, the Chun's house isn't in its original location or state of being. It was brought over from Mass Ave in roughly 1919 where it was once one house with the Sands'. After the single house was split into 2 homes (current Sands and Chun houses) additions were made to the Chun's house by prior owners to the point that it retains almost none of its original look when it was significant as one full home with the Sands' home. Any reference to a historical significance of the Chun family home was lost when it was cut into 2 separate homes and many additions were made to the house over the years. The Chun's plans are beautiful, character honoring, respectful, and value add to the Chop.

Finally, the Sands family wrote objections to the Chun's plans regarding their view. From my understanding, that is not what the MVC is considering. This DRI is about the historical significance of the house. I would like to directly address the Sands' concerns, and will do so at the appropriate hearing.

The Chun family have a deep appreciation for East Chop's history, are active community members, and have taken the utmost care to restore the house. After all their stewardship and efforts, they are left with no choice but to rebuild. Given that the original house was cut into two homes and does not resemble the original home, there is no reason for the Commission to stop this project.

Peace,
Ken
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"Any time you have an opportunity to make a difference in this world and you don't, then you are wasting your time on Earth." -- Roberto Clemente