9 Beecher Park Demolition
DRI 707

Martha’s Vineyard Commission
August 12, 2021
9 Beecher Park Demolition

Applicant: William and Melissa Callahan; Chuck Sullivan, architect
Owner: William and Melissa Callahan
Permits: Building Permit, Special Permit
Checklist: 8.1a (Demolition of a structure listed in MACRIS), 8.1b (Demolition of a structure more than 100 years old)

LUPC: 7/26/21
Site visit: 7/29/21
Hearing: 8/12/21
Project history

• Existing 2-story residence built in 1877 in the expansive Campground style, with several additions over the years.

• Significant as part of the Vineyard Highlands, an area laid out in 1869 as an alternative to the Wesleyan Grove Campground by a group of Camp Meeting Association directors fearful of the encroachments by the Oak Bluffs Land and Wharf Company on Wesleyan Grove.

• Overlooks Oak Bluffs Harbor and Nantucket Sound.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic/Cultural Significance</th>
<th>Built before 1800</th>
<th>Built between 1800 and 1850</th>
<th>Built between 1850 and 1875</th>
<th>Built between 1875 and 1900</th>
<th>Built after 1900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- History/Culture: Associated with individuals, organizations, events, activities, patterns, or developments
  - 4

- Design/Construction: Distinctive physical and spatial characteristics, style, designer, construction
  - 4

- Contribution to Context: Contributing or integral part of historic streetscape, grouping, or area
  - 4

- Integrity: Retains essential character-defining features or has later alterations with acquired significance or which are reversible
  - 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical Designation: Federal, State, Local</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Historic Significance</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Other Factors

- Location/Visibility: Visible from a public way, public space or coast/shore (where a higher score indicates relatively greater visibility)
  - 3

- Condition: Estimated order of magnitude of structure condition (where a higher score indicates relatively better physical condition of the structure)
  - 3

- Safety Conditions: Has the building been determined to be not safe and not secure? (where a higher number indicates greater safety and security)
  - 3

- Replacement Program: A permanent replacement program has been proposed (where a lower number indicates that a replacement program has been proposed and is reasonably assured of proceeding)
  - 3

- Other Review: The proposed demolition is subject to a special permit or other town review process able to require preservation (where a higher number indicates no other review)
  - 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Other Factors</th>
<th>7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
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</table>
East view
South view
South view
North view
Northwest view
Neighborhood context
Proposal

• Demolish the existing 6-bedroom house, and an existing garage (likely from the 1930s).

• Build a new 4-bedroom house, and a new garage with an office/bedroom on the second floor. The house and garage would be connected by a covered porch.

• The new buildings are intended as a year-round residence.
Existing and proposed footprints
Previous proposal
Planning concerns

Character and identity
Water and wastewater
Energy
Landscape
Character and identity

• The property is not within any local historic district, although the Oak Bluffs Historical Commission has purview over any building more than 100 years old and has approved the demolition.

• The new building will be similar in style to the existing building, but will be larger, with additional features such as dormers and windows.

• The applicant has stated that some paneling and framing may be reused from the existing structure.

• The property abuts an approximately 1.5- acre property that is owned by the East Chop Association and protected as open space.
Structural report
(Vineyard Land Surveying and Engineering)

• Foundation system
• First and second floor framing
• Exterior wall and roof framing
Foundation system:

- Consists of timber and brick pilings.
- Appears that the brick piles are original and timber piles were added in later years for support.
- Brick piles are in sound condition with no signs of cracking or deterioration.
- Wood piles are not failing, but are not supported on stable bases and do not have adequate connections to the floor frame.
- Cross-brace members have been added, indicates potential lateral strength issues.
- Dwelling is relatively stable on the existing foundation, but the foundation should not be relied upon for any reconstruction or major remodeling.
First and second floor framing:

• Primary support beams consist of approximately 2x6 (dimensional) fir with 2x6 fir floor joists.
• Joists and beam have all deflected significantly, contributing to unlevel floors and ceilings.
• Catastrophic failure has not occurred yet, but the beams are undersized for the current loading and would need replacement and reinforcing with any significant remodeling.
Structural report
(Vineyard Land Surveying and Engineering)

**Exterior wall and roof framing:**

- Exterior walls are constructed under traditional “balloon frame” style.
- Walls are not insulated and framing members are utilized around door and window openings only.
- Balloon frame techniques have largely been eliminated in recent years in favor of a more structurally sound stud wall system.
- Existing walls do not allow for standard insulating techniques with a standard wall cavity. Code-upgrade of the structure would likely result in the addition of wall framing on the interior or the exterior of the building for both strength and insulation standards. Such an upgrade would effectively require the reconstruction of all exterior walls.
- Roof framing consists of 2x6 (dimensional) roof rafters spaced approximately 30 inches on center. The framing is well below current loading and strength requirements. As with the wall system, the lack of depth of the rafters and roof cavity would make insulating difficult. The rafters would need to be reinforced with any code-upgrade.
Summary:

The existing house is not in disrepair and does not exhibit any major structural stability problems, however the structure needs significant structural upgrade in each of the load bearing components with any major renovation project. Most of the existing supports would be either removed or support members added with an upgrade, in which case most of the original balloon frame style will be lost within new wall and roof cavities.
Other planning concerns

**Water and Wastewater:** The property drains into Oak Bluffs Harbor. The new house will have a septic system, and an easement would be granted for a leaching field on the abutting property to the east that is owned by the East Chop Association. The applicant has stated that an IA system is not required since the groundwater separation is adequate. The number of bedrooms onsite will decrease from 6 to 5.

**Energy:** The applicant has proposed heat pumps, with a high-efficiency propane boiler for backup, and has stated that the building, fixtures, and appliances will beet the MA Stretch Code as required by the town.

**Landscape:** The applicant has not yet provided a landscape plan, but has stated that a large oak tree behind the current garage would be removed. The applicant does not intend to remove any of the other trees on the property, including a mature cedar on the south side of the house.