

To: The Martha's Vineyard Commission  
Re: DRI DRI 34 M5: Flat Point Farm Subdivision Finalization, West Tisbury  
Public Hearing May 16, 2024

To the Members of the Martha's Vineyard Commission,

We have attended several WT planning board committee meetings and would like to use this opportunity to raise points that we were unable to share during those meetings. We, Sarah and Kate O'Sullivan, are owners of 148 Road to Great Neck, which is surrounded on 3 sides by the Fischer's farm. We have both been coming to what was originally our grandparent's house every year since we were born and have many cherished memories of childhood summers spent on the farm. Our property has been in our family for nearly 60 years and treasured across now four generations.

We are writing not to oppose the Fischer's development, but to express concern about the size and scale of the changes that the development would bring to the point, which have only become fully clear to us in the last meetings of the WT Planning Board and the Land Use Planning Committee. In previous meetings, the amount of change and the scale of additional houses/bedrooms has, in our opinion, been greatly downplayed. Here, we would like to clarify some points about what dwellings and buildings currently exist on the Farm and what will be potentially changing under the new proposed development, which contemplates up to 82 bedrooms distributed over 13 lots.

- The proposal to accommodate up to 6-bedroom houses on 11 lots and up to 8 bedrooms on the remaining lots, divided between a house and guest house, would increase the number of bedrooms on the property from roughly 20 (in our understanding based on comments by the Fischers' representatives) to 82. This is an increase of 400%.
- Of the four (4) original "kid lots" (4A, 5A, 6A and 7A)<sup>1</sup>, which will be subdivided to create the four (4) new buildable lots (4B, 5B, 6B, and 7B), only two (2) currently have houses. The plan would create a total of 6 buildable lots with approval for up to 6-bedroom houses on what is now undeveloped land.
- Lot B, referred to as the Barn Lot and measuring 6.3 acres, did not have any houses on it until Emily Fischer's house was built on it in 2022. Because the lot is greater than 6-acres, our understanding is that the West Tisbury zoning laws allow for the construction of both a house and guest house, which would not be subject to the 1,000 sq ft size restrictions. We appreciate that the Fischers have indicated that they would limit the guest house to 1,000 sq ft. Nonetheless, between the construction of Emily's house and the addition of another house, there would be dwellings accommodating up to 8 bedrooms where there were no houses prior to 2022.
- Lots C and D currently have very modest, older one-story cottages one of which is not occupied. We understand that the Fischers intend to sell these two lots, and we expect that the the new owners would raze these existing cottages and build up to the allowed 6-bedroom houses.
- The Oyster Shack lot (Lot E), as the name implies, has for many years had a very small, one-room structure with no indoor plumbing. In recent years it has been used as a dwelling but

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<sup>1</sup> See Form B Composite Plan, dated September 30, 2023.

was not originally designed for someone to live there. The new plan proposes building, between a house and a guest house, structures with 8 bedrooms total. Lot E is bordered on two sides by the pond, on the third side by the Land Bank Trail, and, on the fourth side, by our property. We were shocked and concerned by the proposal for development of two sizable structures on this lot, not only because of the impact on our property, but also given the location to the sensitive pond front. At a previous West Tisbury Planning Board meeting, it was proposed by a member that a restriction be placed on this lot to disallow construction of a guest house due to the sensitivity of this location. We agree and would ask that the potential development on this parcel be limited to one house, disallowing the construction of a separate guest house.

Our property is the only land not owned by the Fischer's that is entirely within Flat Point Farm, so we are far more affected by changes than neighbors who live further up the road. The road is a one-lane, two-direction dirt road, and we all use turn-arounds and creative reversing to accommodate the current traffic. This works fine now but adding approximately 60 bedrooms would inevitably add a significant number of cars and traffic. Even if, in the near term, houses with 20 bedrooms were constructed on Lots C, D and E only, this would dramatically change the traffic out to the point. We worry about the safety and traffic implications of having so much increased traffic on this small road.

We understand and are supportive of the Fischer's need to create plans for the future of their farm, and we understand that changes are inevitable. However, the current plan as proposed would be a dramatic remaking of the use and development of the property on the point, and we fear that this has not been properly made clear to the MVC.

Thank you for your consideration. Respectfully,

Sarah and Kate O'Sullivan