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Martha's Vineyard Commission

DRI # 663 – Phillips Hardware Mixed-Use Building MVC Staff Report – August 29, 2016

1. DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 Applicant:** Donna Leon and Susan Phillips (Phillips Hardware); Chuck Sullivan (Architect/Agent)
- 1.2 Project Location:** 30 Circuit Avenue, Oak Bluffs, MA Map 8 Lot 272 (5,990 sf/0.1375 acre)
- 1.3 Proposal:** To demolish an existing 8,570 sf 1-3 story building (part of which was built in 1880) and reconstruct a 3-story 17,844 sf (with basement) building in the historical style.
- 1.4 Zoning:** B-1 Commercial. An interpretation of the current zoning appears to limit the upper stories to no more than three residential units.
- 1.5 Local Permits:** Building Permit; O.B. Wastewater Commission; Planning Board (Special Permit – granted relief for 10 parking spaces and Site Plan Review for adding more than 500 sf in B-1);
- 1.6 Surrounding Land Uses:** Downtown Commercial and residential; near MVCMA Campground.
- 1.7 Project History:** Part of the property was originally developed as the Oakwood Hotel in 1880. It was built next to the grand Victorian four-story Metropolitan Hotel which stood where the Post Office and Corner Store are now. Over time the property evolved. The Phillips Hardware store occupied the first floor in 1928 with the family living above. The Metropolitan burned down in the 1940's. Phillip's eventually expanded the footprint of the first floor to encompass most of the lot. The upper stories consist of the remnants of two separate buildings. On one side there the 3-story Oakwood Hotel and there is also a small second story above the back of Rosebud Balloon. The upper stories have been used for storage for the hardware store for several decades.
- 1.8 Project Summary:** To demolish an existing 8,570 sf 1-3 story building (part of which was built in 1880) and reconstruct a 3-story 17,844 sf (with basement) building in the historical style.
- The existing building has a footprint of 5,148 sf with two retail units. The larger of the two existing retail units is Phillips Hardware which has been in this location since 1928. The smaller retail unit is currently Rosebud Balloon.
 - The proposal is to reconstruct a full three-story building based upon the original style of the Oakwood on the upper floors on a slightly smaller footprint to accommodate accessibility.
 - The existing 289 sf dugout basement would be replaced with a full 4,923 sf basement accessed from the rear through the Reliable parking lot.
 - The three residential units would be accessed by a small lobby with stairs and an elevator off of the existing alley (to be widened) that is currently closed at night. A second stair would be on the opposite side of the building. The residential units would be rentals.
 - The proposed construction schedule is to complete the shell and the first floor this winter so that the hardware store can open for business by the summer of 2017. The upper stories would then be completed over the next to off-seasons. The Applicant has a two phase construction plan and agreement with Reliable for use of part of their parking lot for construction phasing.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 DRI Referral:** Oak Bluffs Planning Board
- 2.2 DRI Trigger:** 3.1a (Development of Commercial Mixed-Use over 3,000 sf); 3.4 (Demolition in a Commercial District); 8.2ii (Demolition of Building over 100 years).

- 2.3 Pre-Application meeting with staff:** August 17, 2016
- 2.4 LUPC:** August 29, 2016
- 2.5 Site visits:** To be scheduled at LUPC
- 2.6 Public Hearing:** Tentatively scheduled for September 15, 2016

3. PLANNING CONCERNS

3.1 Some Key Issues

- How much of the original historic Oakwood Hotel remains and should it be preserved? Can elements of it be preserved or re-used in the reconstruction?
- How will this ambitious downtown rebuilding proposal be accomplished without impacting other businesses?
 - During construction where will all building materials and equipment be stored?
 - How will noise, dust, and traffic be mitigated during construction process in order to minimize possible impacts to the surrounding businesses and residents?
- Will there be any impacts on public parking?
- New residences should bear in mind that there are existing businesses, including night clubs, in the neighborhood.

3.2 Environment

- **Vegetation:** None
- **Habitat:** Not a NHESP habitat
- **Landscaping:** The site is totally developed and is proposed to remain so with a slightly smaller footprint to accommodate access to the upper floors.
- **Lighting:** They are considering a motion-sensitive light in the back alley; a downward facing light for the apartment entry in keeping with the Victorian style. Other lighting will simply be to code such as exit lighting.
- **Energy:** The building will exceed the requirements of the Massachusetts Building Stretch Code.
- **Waste Management:** Trash may be incorporated into an enclosed structure in the alley.
- **Water:** Town Water
- **Wastewater / Stormwater:**
 - They have been approved for 12-bedrooms by the Wastewater Commission.
 - The applicants have said they will submit a storm water plan which will tie into the street system.

3.3 Transportation

- **Access:** The loading and unloading access to the project is on the west side through the Reliable Grocery Store parking lot on Kennebec Avenue.
 - Kennebec Avenue is a local one way street running parallel to Circuit Avenue with a narrow travel lane.
 - Kennebec Avenue at the Reliable Parking Lot section has a sidewalk and on street parallel parking on the west side.
- **Parking:**
 - The property currently has zero parking spaces and that will not change.
 - The Applicant will have to apply to the Planning Board to grant relief for the number of required parking spaces and will then pay annually into the Oak Bluffs Parking

Mitigation Fund based upon the number of spaces the Planning Board determines are required.

- **Traffic Summary:**
 - LUPC must vote on what type of traffic study, if any, is required.
 - Circuit and Kennebec Avenues are local one-way streets with pedestrian access.
- **Traffic Mitigation:**
 - The following mitigation measures may be considered:
 - Encouraging the residents and employees of the commercial spaces to use the public transit by providing free/subsidized bus passes.
 - Improving on-site bike parking facilities.
- **Mass Transit:** The project is two blocks from the V.T.A. Oak Bluffs bus hub and the Steamship Authority Pier.

3.4 **Affordable Housing**

- The proposed project is to construct a 17,844 square foot building (including 4,923 sf basement) that consists of an existing retail store and three new residential units with 12 bedrooms. According to the MVC's Affordable Housing Policy, the recommended monetary mitigation for a 17,844 sq. ft. structure is \$26,688.
- The applicant has indicated that one of the residential units will be used to provide staff housing in conjunction with the downstairs commercial unit. The MVC considers that an offer of housing for employees is more beneficial than a one-time monetary mitigation fee as long as the employee apartment is used for either year-round or seasonal employees at a fair rate.

3.5 **Economic Impact**

- Property tax revenue generated for the Town of Oak Bluffs should increase.
- The development of the proposed mixed-use project will create a small number of new temporary jobs in the construction and professional service sector industries.
- The hours of operation for the hardware store are Monday-Saturday 8:30 am – 5:30 pm.

3.6 **Scenic Values**

- **Streetscape:** The building is designed to recreate the historic size and style of Cottage City.
- **Building Massing:** The massing is designed to recreate the historic size of Cottage City.
- **Architectural Detailing:** The design of the building can be described as Oak Bluffs Victorian with a Mansard roof.
- **A.D.A. Accessibility:** The ground floor commercial unit will be A.D.A. accessible. Two of the three residential units will be A.D.A. accessible.

3.7 **Local Impact/Abutters**

- Construction could be challenging but the Applicants have been working with their neighbors (Reliable Grocery Store and Post Office Square Building) regarding access and staging.

4. **CORRESPONDENCE**

4.1 **Town Officials:**

4.2 **Island Organizations:**

4.3 **Public:**