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Martha's Vineyard Commission

DRI #710 Redevelopment of Edu Comp Building

MVC Staff Report – 2021-8-6 **DRAFT**

1. DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 **Applicant:** Xerxes Agassi (has property under purchase and sale agreement)
- 1.2 **Owner:** 4 State Road 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 building was constructed around 1930 and was remodeled in the 1980s. It was the location of Edu Comp, which moved into the building in the 1980s and closed its retail operations in 2020. The building had also been the location of a telephone company. In 2020, the town selectmen considered using the building as temporary classroom space during the renovation of the Tisbury School, and 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 7,686 ft² building and construct a 16,800 ft² addition to the south (total of 24,486 ft²). The renovated portion will have three floors, and the addition will have four floors. As proposed, the first floor (extending across both portions) will have seven retail and/or office condo units totaling 3,156 ft², as well as bike storage and garage space at the rear of the building. The site slopes away from State Road, so the northern portion of the first 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 15 one- and two-bedroom residential condo units totaling 14,609 ft², including two affordable units restricted to 80% Area Median Income, and three workforce housing units. The units would range in size from 640 to 1,629 square feet, with a total of 22 bedrooms. The roof would serve as a garden terrace with private jacuzzi and spa, and to house the HVAC and other mechanical equipment. A portion of the roof would be reserved as a private deck for one of the units.

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:** August 9, 2020
- 2.4 **Public Hearing:** Not yet scheduled

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 has recently applied to the town to connect to the sewer with the 652 GPD, and an additional 1,926 GPD, for a total of 2,578 GPD. The 22 bedrooms would require an allocation of 2,420 GPD. The proposed commercial uses would require 158 GPD if they were all retail uses, or 237 GPD if they were all office uses, so the total requested allocation may need to be adjusted in the future depending on the commercial uses. The current application before the town only accounts for retail use, so is at the lower end. The town is working to upgrade its treatment capacity, but the town Wastewater Treatment Facility is at or near capacity. The applicant plans to meet with the sewer advisory board in August.
- 3.2 Island Housing Needs:** As proposed, five of the residential units (33%) would be designated as workforce or affordable housing and are intended for employees of the Martha's Vineyard Hospital. The two affordable units would be restricted to 80% of the Area Median Income, and would be exempt from condo fees. The affordable units would be furnished, with two bedrooms each. The affordable and workforce housing units would be available for long-term lease by the hospital, which the applicant has proposed will work with the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority to ensure income qualifications and other certifications as needed. The residential units will be handicapped accessible via the side entrances on the ground floor and an elevator to the upper floors.
- 3.3 Economic Development:** The project would create seven commercial units in Vineyard Haven, in the vicinity of Main Street. According to the applicant, the commercial space is envisioned as “a continuation” of Main Street, with a 7-ft-wide arcade-style hallway on the bottom floor of the building, with a storefront and entry facing State Road. Although the units are proposed as office/retail, the applicant has stated that the proposed uses may change in the future. The units are also designed to be combined by the tenant, which could lead to fewer units overall. Hours of operation would be consistent with other businesses in the area. The side entrances to the commercial area will be handicapped-accessible.
- 3.4 Traffic and Transportation:** The property will have 17 parking spaces (including the four garage spaces and two handicapped spaces) to the rear of the addition. The existing driveways along State Road will provide ingress immediately to the west of the building, and egress immediately to the east. The abutting property at 10 State Road (DRI 622) to the west has an easement to access its parking spaces, but the easement does not align directly with the driveway for 4 State Road, and does not include egress. The applicant has stated that the abutter's request for egress via 4 State Road could be accommodated, as long as it does not negatively affect the project. A traffic study has not been provided.
- In terms of pedestrian traffic, the project will create 15 residential units and seven commercial units, which will lead to an increase in foot traffic in the immediate area, including the intersection of Main Street and Sate Road. There is currently a crosswalk at the intersection. The applicant has stated that the site may also be utilized to encourage access to Veterans Memorial Park to the south, which may further increase foot traffic. Access to the park currently exists via steps leading down from the parking lot, but would be improved and potentially relocated.
- A storage room for 15 bicycles will be located on the bottom floor of the building.
- 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 head-on. The existing metal roof and rooftop masonry will be repaired to match the original, and the applicant has stated that a mature flowering tree at the front of the site will remain.

- 3.6 Cultural Resources:** The site is potentially a sensitive archaeological resource area, and the applicant plans to inquire with the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) about whether a project notification form and archaeological survey are required. An archaeological survey for the neighboring property at 10 State Road (DRI 622) was conducted in 2010.
- 3.7 Stormwater and Drainage:** The existing paved driveway will be replaced with crushed stone, increasing the amount of impervious ground surface on the site, although the amount of impervious area overall will increase due to the larger building footprint. There are currently no stormwater facilities on the property. Stormwater collection basins will be added for rooftop stormwater runoff as needed, with direct percolation into the soil. A drainage assessment conducted by John Lolley indicates that catch basins, along with permeable ground surface and existing vegetation at the rear of the site, would be adequate to handle runoff.
- 3.8 Energy:** The applicant has proposed mini-splits for heating and cooling, electric hot water tanks within each unit, electric clothes drying, and propane for cooking.
- 3.9 Noise and Night Lighting:** HVAC condensers will be relocated from the side of the building to the roof. As proposed, the proposed lighting fixtures would be LED “up-down” lighting along the lower portion of the building, as well as landscape lighting beneath trees and shrubs, gooseneck downlighting on the retail store front and over the garage doors, and brass lantern sconce lighting for the exterior doors.
- 3.10 Landscaping:** The applicant plans to retain most of the existing vegetation, including to the rear of the lot, and to add new vegetation to the front and sides of the building. A formal landscape plan has not yet been provided.
- 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 area.) 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.*

- 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.