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# Martha's Vineyard Commission

## DRI 730 M Southern Tier Modifications

### Staff Report – 2023-12-4

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

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- 1.1 **Owner:** Town of Oak Bluffs (Resident Homesite Committee)
- 1.2 **Applicant:** Affirmative Investments, Inc.
- 1.3 **Co-Applicant:** Island Housing Trust Corporation
- 1.4 **Co-Applicant:** Southern Tier, LLC
- 1.5 **Applicant's Agent:** Craig Nicholson of Affirmative Investments, Inc.
- 1.6 **Project Location:** 85 Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road, Oak Bluffs
- 1.7 **Proposal:** The addition of 15 housing units to a 45-unit 40B housing development previously approved in DRI 730. Also, the addition of 22 parking spaces, the elimination of advanced septic systems in favor of town sewer, and replacement of cedar building trim with Boral synthetic trim. Lastly modest changes to drainage and changes to the driveway entrance.
- 1.8 **Zoning:** R3 Residential
- 1.9 **Local Permits/Reviews:** Oak Bluffs Building Department, Oak Bluffs Fire Department, Oak Bluffs Board of Health, Oak Bluffs Wastewater Department, Oak Bluffs Water Department, Oak Bluffs Zoning Board of Appeals (under 40B, ZBA is agent for all other town boards and committees).
- 1.10 **State Permits/Reviews:** Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program
- 1.11 **Surrounding Land Uses:** To the North, the Project Site fronts Old Holmes Hole Road (Special Way). Beyond is the Land Bank's 240-acre Southern Woodlands Reservation. To the West, the Project Site abuts five residential properties. To the South, the Project Site fronts Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road (Island Roads DCPC). To the East, the Project Site abuts the YMCA campus (see DRI 600, 600 M and 600 M2) with the Martha's Vineyard Ice Arena being the closest structure (see DRI 49, 49 M, 49 M2, 49 M3, 49 M4, 49 M5, 49 M6, 49 M7 and 49 M8).
- 1.12 **Project History:** The Project Site is governed by DRI 730—approved by a February 9, 2023 vote of the Commission. The approved project consists of 45 housing units and 68 parking spaces. Wastewater was to be managed through NitROE systems. The project contemplated a Phase II whereby another 15 housing units and associated parking would be generated. Phase II was dependent on a link to the Oak Bluffs sewer system. At the time of the project's approval, it was unclear when the Oak Bluffs Wastewater Department would make improvements that would allow for additional capacity in the system to accommodate a project such as Southern Tier. On August 11, 2023, the Oak Bluffs Wastewater Department, via its Facilities Manager/Chief Operator, issued a letter to the Commission. The Letter states in part: "I have been involved in the Southern Tier Affordable Housing Project and have discussed the project with the Wastewater Commission, our engineers, Affordable Housing Committee and Craig Nicholson. We believe that the Wastewater Treatment Facility will be able to accommodate the additional flow from Southern Tier Affordable Housing Project, based on the current timeline for both projects. Connecting to Town Wastewater will be more cost effective than an I/A system as it is on the same parcel of land as our pump station and will allow for a gravity connection and remove wastewater effluent from an

environmentally sensitive area. It is our intent that Southern Tier Affordable Housing connects to the Town of Oak Bluffs Wastewater Collection System. Please contact the Wastewater Office with any questions.” A similar letter regarding the YMCA was issued to the Commission on the same day.

**2. ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY**

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- 2.1 DRI Referral:** Self-referral
- 2.2 DRI Trigger:** Modification of a previous DRI
- 2.3 LUPC:** October 23, 2023
- 2.4 Full Commission:** December 7, 2023

**3. PLANNING CONCERNS**

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**3.1 Wastewater**

- NitROE systems will not be installed at the Project Site. Rather, all 60 housing units will be connected to the Oak Bluffs sewer system.
- The Applicants anticipate approximately \$1 million in savings by abandoning the NitROE systems and connecting to municipal sewer
- The Oak Bluffs Wastewater Department told the Commission orally, Southern Tier, like YMCA, presents a needed addition to the Town’s wastewater system in that the upgrades will rely on consistent, year-round flow in order to function properly. Consistant, year-round flow is what the Oak Bluffs Wastewater Department expects from Southern Tier as well as the YMCA.
- The Project Site is in the Sengkontacket watershed
- The nitrogen load limit is 13.41
- The previous estimated load for the project is 29.1
- The previous overage was 15.72
- The nitrogen load is being recalculated to account for the sewer connection

**3.2 Stormwater**

- Some bioretention areas have been reconfigured
- One or more underground recharge systems have been resized to accommodate roof runoff

- The driveway entrance has been redesigned based on changes to the bioretention areas and recharge system in that spot

### **3.3 Environment / Habitat:**

- The additional units and parking spaces do not change the building envelope and do not encroach on NHESP restricted areas

### **3.4 Traffic and transportation**

- The volume of traffic could increase to some degree due to the increased number of housing units and parking spaces

### **3.5 Housing**

- A savings of \$210,000 is projected, according to the Applicants, through replacing cedar with Boral for all exterior trim work