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Martha's Vineyard Commission

DRI 738 – Big Sky Tents Building (Lot 40)

MVC Staff Report – 2023-2-8

1. DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 **Owner:** 7 South Line LLC (Jim Eddy, member)
- 1.2 **Applicant:** Jim Eddy, Big Sky Tent and Party Rentals
- 1.3 **Project Location:** West Line Road (Map 24, Lot 2.40), Airport Business Park, Edgartown
- 1.4 **Proposal:** Construction of a 27,000 ft² building to consolidate Big Sky Tents operations.
- 1.5 **Zoning:** B3 Light Industrial
- 1.6 **Local Permits:** Building permit, Airport Commission approval
- 1.7 **Federal Permits:** FAA Obstruction Evaluation Group approval for proposed solar panels
- 1.8 **Surrounding Land Uses:** Other business and light industrial uses in the Airport Business Park, including other buildings currently used by Big Sky Tents.

- 1.9 **Project History:** Big Sky Tents previously had three locations in the Business Park (10, 15, and 26 East Line Road) and has operated in the Business Park for 20 years.

The MVC approved DRI 717 in April 2022, allowing for the expansion of a 7,500 ft² building by 8,500 ft² (total of 16,000 ft²) at 26 East Line Road. Following approval, the building was expanded by 2,500 ft² on the second floor, but the approved two-story 6,000 ft² addition was not built.

The MVC approved DRI 365-M in 2021, allowing for the addition of four new lease lots at the Business Park, including Lot 40, which is currently undeveloped and where the proposed building would be located. The applicant acquired the lease for Lot 40 in September 2022.

The decision for DRI 365-M includes the following conditions:

1. *Lots 39, 40, and 44 must retain existing vegetation within at least 20 feet of North Line, East Line and West Line Roads, except where safety is concerned. This is in addition to the required 200' vegetated buffer along Barnes Road, measured from the property line.*
2. *Any structure or vehicles on the newly created lots shall not be more visible from Barnes Road than in the existing development.*
3. *Prior to the awarding of leases for any of the proposed lots, the MVC and Airport shall update the 1998 MVAC-MVC Development Agreement, which will then be included as an appendage to this Decision.*
4. *The Applicant shall provide an up-to-date map of the Business Park, with the square feet, acres, development status, and number for each lot, to the MVC within six months of approval, and the map shall be incorporated in the updated Development Agreement.*

1.10 Project Summary: The proposal is to develop a two-story, 27,000 ft² (14,000 ft² footprint), steel-frame building on Lot 40. The project will include office space, a customer showroom, bathrooms, dishwashing and laundry operations, storage for rental inventory, and parking for employees, customers, and company vehicles. The project will allow for the Big Sky Tents operations at 10 and 26 East Line Road to be consolidated at the new location. The buildings at 10, 15, 26 East Line Road have or would be vacated and made available for lease or purchase. The applicant has stated that the building would be sited to allow for future development on the 3.1-acre lot, which is the second largest at the airport.

According to the applicant: “In order to consolidate all of our existing equipment into a single warehouse, we would need approximately an additional 6,000 sf which is what I previously received approval for last April with the 26 East Line Road expansion. I am no longer moving forward with that expansion, and instead proposing this new 27,000 sf building. The remaining 3,500 sf of additional space we are requesting will be used for an expanded customer showroom, an employee break room, 1,000 sf with open space to the roof will be used for an indoor tent washing/drying facility. The remaining extra space will be used to accommodate our expanding inventory options.”

Project plans show East Line Road Extension, which runs along the eastern property line of Lot 40. The applicant has stated East Line Road Extension is not part the project. Specifically, the applicant stated East Line Road Extension, which is unpaved and eventually becomes Fire Road 53, won't be altered as part of the project. However, the road has been extended along the property line, apparently by the leaseholder to the east (Lot 39). It should be noted there are discrepancies in how East Line Road Extension appears on project plans and the actual shape and course of the road. The applicant has stated this merely reflects a rough sketch of the road on the periphery of the plan.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

2.1 DRI Referral: Self-referred, Oct. 11, 2022

2.2 DRI Trigger: Construction of 8,000+ ft² in the Airport Business Park (MVC-MVY Development Agreement)

2.3 LUPC: Jan. 9, 2022

2.4 Public Hearing: Feb. 2, 2023

3. PLANNING CONCERNS

3.1 Wastewater

The property will involve commercial dishwashing and laundry operations (to be relocated from 10 East Line Road in 2024), and will connect to the Airport Wastewater Treatment Facility. The applicant has stated that Big Sky Tents currently uses about 94,00 gallons of water annually, including about 86,350 at 10 East Line Road, and that it does not anticipate any increase in water usage as a result of the project.

3.2 Stormwater

According to the applicant, the project “will utilize reclaimed asphalt pavement (RAP) on the parking lot and retain existing vegetation in the surrounding areas to maximize water permeability.” A preliminary drainage plan shows downspouts, storm drains, and drywells to manage runoff onsite.

3.3 Traffic and transportation

According to the applicant, the project is estimated to generate 10-20 vehicles trips per day, plus 3-4 customer trips per day, from May through October. A parking plan shows 12 spaces for employees and customers at the front of the building, and 11 in back for additional employee and truck parking. Plans also show 10 loading dock spaces for box trucks, and a customer pickup area where customers can load and unload small amounts of rental items. The project would likely reduce traffic along East Line Road, where vehicles often have to travel between the two Big Sky Tents buildings, and direct more traffic to West Line Road.

The property will have two bidirectional access points on South Line Road. Plans also show an extension of East Line Road to run along the eastern property line, but without direct access to the property. The Airport Director has stated East Line Road Extension serves as access to a business on Lot 39 (Miller’s Professionals Inc). The Director also noted that East Line Road Extension links to Fire Road 53 and is therefore a firefighting access route. The applicant has stated that the project doesn’t include any modification to East Line Road Extension and that the road’s appearance on the plans is only as a rough reference point. The Applicant indicated East Line Road Extension isn’t on the project site lot, Lot 40—it’s on Lot 39. “We are not proposing use of the East Line Road extension as access to Lot 40 for the project currently on review with the MVC. Our contractors may use it, if necessary, during the construction phase in which case they would access Lot 40 from the pre-existing access road at the rear of Lot 40 (access road to the motorcycle pit),” the Applicant stated.

3.4 Energy

The proposal includes a 60kW rooftop solar system, which the applicant expects to supply all of the power needs for the building; electric heat pumps for heating and air conditioning; and pedestal ready infrastructure for electric vehicle charging once medium-duty electric trucks become commercially viable for the business.

3.5 Economic Development and Housing

The project will consolidate operations into a single building, allowing the company to grow and better provide its tent and party rental services, including for weddings and fundraisers, to the Island. The applicant notes that the project will invest more than \$3 million into the property and generate more than \$140,000 in annual rental income for the airport, while making two developed properties at the Business Park available to other businesses.

Big Sky Tents has seven year-round and 20-25 seasonal employees from May through October, and provides housing for up to 16 of those in two employee houses (up to eight people per house). According to the applicant, the project will allow for “continued moderate business growth without a directly corresponding need for additional employees.”

The MVC decision for DRI 717 (26 East Line Road) includes the following condition:

The applicant shall continue to provide comparable housing for at least 16 Big Sky Tents employees, either seasonally or year-round, with confirmation provided to MVC staff by June 30 each year. The housing shall be comparable to the existing housing that is provided, in terms of quality, cost, and tenant capacity.

3.6 Landscape and Lighting

According to the applicant: “Landscaping will include granite masonry retaining walls, garden surrounds and entrance stairs together with reclaimed asphalt pavement (RAP) parking areas for maximum water permeability. . . . The Property will retain vegetative buffers of not less than 20’ fronting on West Line Road and 30’ adjacent to the East Line Road Extension, as well as approximately 90’ buffers on the west and south facing borders of the property.” The applicant has stated that a business park official authorized plantings in an informal parking area long the project site’s West Line Road frontage. “We will put some rocks along the road to prevent people from driving on it and then we will replant with plants from the Airport-approved list,” the Applicant stated. Also, a preliminary landscape plan has been provided. Lastly, the Applicant has volunteered to put exterior lights on timers.

3.7 Character and Identity

The project is located in the vicinity of other business and light industrial uses in the Business Park, including other buildings that are currently used by Big Sky Tents. The building will have an L shape to accommodate loading from all areas, while shielding those areas from West Line Road. The elevation of Lot 40 is about 50 feet above sea level, which is about even with that part of West Line Road and 6-10 feet higher than Barnes Road. The adjacent Lot 39 to the east is mostly wooded and includes a small hill rising from about 50 to 62 feet that could help screen the building from Barnes Road. However, most of Lot 39 is slightly lower than Lot 40.

The building would resemble others in the Business Park in terms of design and materials, including cedar shingles facing West Line Road and beige aluminum on the other sides, but would be the largest in the Business Park. Elevations and floor plans have been provided.

Current building sizes in the Business Park (floor area based on assessor data):

23,000	14 North Line (1)
20,625	10 North Line (2)
19,645	11 A Street

16,800	14 North Line (2)
16,436	11 North Line
14,112	25 East Line
10,800	19 North Line
10,800	14 A Street
10,620	9 East Line
10,000	26 East Line
9,158	22 A Street
8,460	21 East Line
7,792	15 East Line
7,200	20 East Line
7,200	11 East Line
6,869	23 North Line (1)
6,264	19 East Line
6,250	7 North Line
6,000	10 North Line (1)
5,770	10 East Line
5,996	9 North Line (1)
5,400	8 North Line (1)
5,400	8 North Line (2)
5,400	8 North Line (3)
5,000	23 North Line (2)
5,000	7 A Street
4,200	18 East Line
4,000	9 North Line (2)
4000	9 North Line (3)
3,730	6 North Line
3,600	5 North Line
3,564	15 North Line (4)
3,200	6 A Street
2,800	18 North Line
2,671	18 A Street
2,600	15 North Line (3)
2,446	3 North Line (1)
2,400	12 East Line
2,200	15 North Line (1)
2,160	15 North Line (2)
900	3 North Line (2)