

WEST CHOP CLUB
162 Iroquois Avenue
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568

September 19, 2022 DRI Land Use Hearing

NARRATIVE:

RE: MVC DRI Application for proposed Tennis Fitness Center building. Map 1/Block E/Parcel 9

This proposed “tennis fitness” building is designed to meet the West Chop Club’s needs for a fitness center, tennis pro shop, and additional bathrooms in the vicinity of its main tennis courts. To date, the Club has been making do with very small and inadequate spaces within existing Club buildings that are also contributing structures to the West Chop Club Historic District.

Like most clubs today, membership has been requesting better facilities for fitness and exercise. This proposed building would provide the needed space and functions, and serve as a base for the current tennis pro staff. After carefully canvassing the membership, we have come up with as small a building as possible to meet these needs.

In addition, this proposed building will eliminate the need to expand permanently into the existing West Chop Club Historic District contributing buildings the fitness and pro-shop functions that the membership has been requesting. This will allow the Club to focus on maintaining and preserving these historic buildings in their current form and for their traditional uses.

This proposed building will also concentrate many Club activities on one side of Iroquois Avenue, leading to a decrease in foot traffic back & forth across existing car traffic on this street.

West Chop Club current Director of Tennis will be staffing the proposed facility. No additional employees will need to be hired or housed to run the facility. It is Club policy that all employees of the Club are housed by Club and no additional housing is needed in regard to this application. Similarly, no additional parking is anticipated in relation to the proposed facility.

Hours of operation of the proposed facility will not change from the current Pro Shop and Gym hours:

Current Tennis Pro Shop Hours: M - Sa 8 - 6pm. Sunday - open on limited schedule
Current Gym Hours: Monday - Sunday 8 - 6pm

In regard to the question of any architectural review of a new structure within the West Chop Club Historic District:

Federal Record 36 CFR Part 60 governs the National Register of Historic Places, and Section 60.2, covering the “Effects of Listing under Federal Law” states that

“Listing of private property on the National Register does not prohibit under Federal law or regulation any actions which may otherwise be taken by the property owner with respect to the property.”

Further, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, as the administrator of the National Register within Massachusetts, provides the guidance in their publication “Know How #3” that:

“Listing in the National Register in no way interferes with a property owner’s right to alter, manage, or sell the property when using private funds, unless some other regional and/or local ordinance or policy is in effect... Local funding and permitting do not trigger MHC review.”

We hope the information supplied here will be useful to the Commissioners.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy Shields". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Timothy (Tim) Shields