

April 8, 2009

To: Martha's Vineyard Commission

Re: Don Muckerheide project DRI 615
Dukes County Ave.

I am writing in support of Don's project. I am his immediate neighbor on the other side of Arch Ave. As I understand it, the building meets current zoning standards for height and parking. It will be larger in mass than anything else currently on the street, but will probably change the density less than the Bradley Sq. project will change the density on that site. It is higher than most buildings up here, but again, is not as different in height than the Bradley Sq. buildings are from the tiny buildings there.

I reviewed the on-line sketches of roof lines in our area, and think there are a few missing. There is a very high building across the street from me, Packish Landscaping, which does not have the standard roof. The building immediately across from Don does not either. I enclose photos of several non-standard Dukes County Ave. roofs.

Oak Bluffs is a town of odd juxtapositions. At the end of Dukes County Ave. is the Wesley House, huge in comparison with the campground cottages. On Circuit Ave., the other commercial area, there are massive buildings, like the arcade, next to very small house-sized buildings. I don't see that this is a problem.

One point in Don's favor is the current vs proposed buildings on the site. The current site is pretty much bare, and largely parking spaces and shop. The roof line of the old Pit Stop is varied to say the least. Where Bradley Sq. took a lovely wooded site with only one building and allowed it to be almost completely covered, Don's site would not change as much. I noticed the letter from the across the street neighbor, but his sunlight could be blocked at any time by any single building which meets current height standards. My view is blocked on one side now by my new neighbor because there used to be a tiny shack and it is now a compliant larger building. That's just what happens when the street attracts new owners.

One thing I really don't want to see happening is the Santa Fe-izing of Oak Bluffs. I would hate to see a project judged by how it mirrors another in size and shape.

Don's current building should be looked at as **one of the defining buildings of** Dukes County Ave. I didn't see any discussion of how Bradley Sq. should look like the Pit Stop or Tony's. Aesthetic bias?

I think we have room for all sorts of buildings here, especially as we are a commercial area. We have, certainly in the past 10 years, been the busier end of Dukes County Ave., with Tony's expanded success and Smoke N Bones. I think Don's project is in keeping with that level of activity.

Because I am so close, I would probably rather have had a very rich person build a quaint small gallery next door. So might the folks who live next door to Bradley Sq. But, the reality is that density makes for a more attractive business model in both places.

So, I support it because it meets the criteria for its zone, it has the required parking, and it is at least as worthy of approval as the Bradley Sq. project was for its site. It is in keeping with the increased business uses on Dukes County Ave., and its residents will give us all more clientele.

Sincerely,

Lucy Abbot