

October 2, 2013

Attention:

Mr. Paul Foley, Maratha's Vineyard Commission

From:

Dana Hodsdon,

I am a committee member of the William Street Historic District Commission and Tisbury Historical Commission

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen of Vineyard Haven.

Mr. Foley,

I object to the proposed size, style and shape of the Stop and Shop grocery store, its impact on Vineyard Haven, pedestrians, traffic and the community and I object to the image of the Town Parking lot viewed as being the Stop and Shop's.

There is no question that the Stop and Shop is convenient and supply's a need to the islanders and our seasonal visitors. However, the location is in conflict with heavy traffic during the peak season, during boat arrivals and prior to boat departures. The monolithic structure does not fit in with the scale or character of the town of Vineyard Haven, the island or the community at large and it impedes a number of water views that have been prevalent for over a hundred years.

The proposed facades would have the most prevalent visual impacts when seen from the decks of boats upon their arrivals and departures from the Vineyard Haven harbor and from the streets, sidewalks and surrounding residential apartments. The Stop and Shop should present elevations and perspectives that would enhance the welcoming into the harbor and Vineyard Haven rather than those representing a warehouse or a shopping mall facade. From recent down-loads, it is plain to see the architects are deliberately displaying the volumes in the same color without true scales in order to falsely depict the size of the proposed Stop and Shop. It is also apparent the Stop and Shop, from their drawings and remarks noted with the MVC, is thinking only to maximizing its space. There is a disconnect with this thinking since a singular, monolithic volume will not communicate architecturally within the existing context or relate to Vineyard Havens historical back ground. Along with its harbor, the Main St. retail shops or the community the stop and Shop must find a connection to the town. It has been suggested if the building were set back from the lot lines, with changes to the scale and shape, the design could become more approachable, inviting, and familiar. The required vehicle parking spaces could be achieved and their trucks would be maneuvered within the Stop and Shop lot successfully.

The impact to pedestrians, Main St. shops and home owners, in at least a quarter mile radius, must be taken into consideration. There have been no suggested remedies from the Stop and Shop concerning safe passage for pedestrians within the five corners, Norton Lane, Cromwell Lane, Union Street and the Main St areas. The need to address, cross walks, handicap access and intersections are of utmost importance. Then review how does such a monolithic structure impact pedestrians? How will the north side of the store being in a permanent shadow during the day effect people? Will the handicap really have to walk up or down hill to then proceed up a ramp or in an elevator with arms laden with groceries?

The Water St parking lot is NOT the STOP and SHOP parking lot! It belongs to the town of Vineyard Haven. It is by happenstance that the grocery store and the Town Parking lot are adjoining. The STOP and SHOP needs to develop the required parking within its own boundaries and police their own property. The Stop and Shop should not assume the town parking lot and any buildings, passageways or other town properties to be included as theirs.

I also am concerned for the Historic house on Cromwell Lane. Other houses from this area, over the years, have been demolished and or moved. A feasible alternative, to the demolition of this house should be developed and presented to the Selectmen and the Tisbury Historic Commission. It should be noted and then the follow through with its preservation. All private avenues should be explored including it as a gift and or purchasing property near by, moving and restoring it.

The Stop and Shop does not need to impact the Island with such a large store that can not guarantee to sustain itself. It is important the Stop and Shop stay within its own lot lines including necessary parking. A review of the impact of such a monolithic structure on the surrounding areas should be required.

I hope you and your committee take these issues seriously and act on not allowing the Stop and Shops' project to proceed as presently designed.

Dana L. Hodsdon

Hodsdon Inc.

Vineyard Haven, MA

Member of the William St. Historic Commission / Tisbury Historical Commission