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Martha's Vineyard Commission

Land Use Planning Committee

Notes of the Meeting of March 3, 2008

Held in the Stone Building, New York Avenue, Oak Bluffs. 5:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Richard Toole (Chair), John Breckenridge, Christina Brown, Pete Cabana, Chris Murphy, and Ned Orleans

MVC Staff Present: Mark London and Bill Venio.

1. Moujabber (DRI 607-M)

Present for the Applicant: Joseph Moujabber (applicant); Matt Iverson (attorney), Peter Pometti (architect)

Project Location: 10 Sea View Avenue Extension, Oak Bluffs Map 9 Lot 50 (0.18 acres – 7,841 sf)

Proposal: Addition to an existing 5-bedroom house.

- Richard Toole, Chair, noted that there were many people in the audience, but that while this was a public meeting, as are all Commission meetings, it was not a public hearing. The purpose of the meeting was to see whether the applicants were prepared for the public hearing, and whether it could be scheduled. He would not be taking public testimony tonight on the merits of the proposal, but might take suggestions as to what information should be provided at the public hearing.
- The applicants have submitted a revised plan, which they feel respects the defining characteristics of the neighborhood in that it:
 - Is about 2/3 the size of main house;
 - Has no projecting decks;
 - Has a bulk largely hidden behind house when seen from the ferry;
 - Has roof slopes and heights conforming to the guidance analysis; it is not possible to make the ridge height of the addition lower than the main house and still have usable space on that floor.
- The proposal has a small loft or tower that rises above the roof height, which the applicants suggest would be a small compromise in order to allow an ocean view from a small space within the addition. They might consider replacing the tower with a widow's watch.
- The applicants have had one informal meeting with the Cottage City Historic District Commission, and were concerned about possible differences in requirements between the Historic District Commission and the Copeland District Committee. The applicants agreed to return to the Historic District Commission for additional feedback, provided time permits before the MVC public hearing.
- Commissioners had the following questions about the proposal:
 - Since the topography steps down at the back of the site, would it be possible to have the floor heights of the addition at a level lower than the main house, thereby allowing the roof ridge to step down?
 - The tower seems like a space too small to use and too big to ignore. Is there a better way to accomplish the goal?

- It was agreed that the following additional information would be provided in advance of the public hearing:
 - Several perspectives (from the ferry, from the rear) showing the building in context with surrounding buildings, both as it is now and as it would be with the proposal;
 - Street elevations on Sea View Avenue Extension and Pasque Avenue, showing the building in context with surrounding buildings, both as it is now and as it would be with the proposal;
 - Site plan to include proposed landscaping and drainage.
 - Proposed lighting, mostly exterior but also addressing the possible exterior impact of the interior lighting from the large number of windows.
 - Energy and environmental building concerns, both during and after construction. The applicants will consult the Commission's new draft policy on this.
 - Construction process and schedule. How will demolition take place? Can existing materials be reused? Might they commit to avoiding major construction in July and August?
 - A relatively brief narrative describing the project and giving the applicant's explanation of how it meets the various requirements. This should include a discussion of traffic and parking, especially with respect to site access and parking, including safety concerns about backing out.
- **Christina Brown moved and it was duly seconded that LUPC approve the scope of the Transportation Impact Analysis, namely that the applicant would provide a detailed site plan showing access and parking, and a brief narrative discussing the project's impact on traffic and parking, emphasizing the issues of safety and impact on abutters. This was agreed to unanimously.**
- LUPC encouraged the applicants to get input from selectmen, town boards, and neighbors, in advance of the public hearing, so they could respond to any concerns as much as possible in their proposal.
- Kerry Scott, chair of the Oak Bluffs Board of Selectmen, asked whether it might be possible to hold the public hearing in or after May, so that the greatest number of seasonal residents could participate, provided this did not negatively impact the applicants. Mark London suggested that, if the hearing is scheduled before then, people who could not come in person could submit written testimony; all the information will be available on the website.
- A member of the audience asked how could the MVC ensure that any decision is enforced, given a history of non-compliance.
- A member of the audience asked whether current legal action by the applicants against the MVC was still pending; if so, could its withdrawal be made a condition of approval; if not, wasn't this an implicit threat. Mark London said that the action was still pending and he didn't believe that an approval could be made conditional on its withdrawal, though he noted that an applicant in another contentious case in Oak Bluffs had offered to do that. Christina Brown, Vice-Chair of the Commission, noted that the Commission was accustomed to there being various legal actions related to DRIs, and she assured everyone that they do not influence the Commission.

Adjourned 6:30 pm.