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Martha's Vineyard Commission

Land Use Planning Committee

Draft Notes of the Meeting of September 8, 2008

Held in the Stone Building, New York Avenue, Oak Bluffs. 5:30 P.M.

Commissioners Present: Chris Murphy (Acting Chair); Kathy Newman; John Breckenridge; Christina Brown, Susan Shea; and Pete Cabana.

MVC Staff Present: Paul Foley; Mark London; Christine Flynn

3. MV Savings Bank – West Tisbury (DRI 454) Pre-Public Hearing Review

Applicant: Martha's Vineyard Savings Bank, Bob Wheeler (V.P.), Bruce MacNelly (architect).

Project Location: 496 State Road, West Tisbury Map 16 Lot 99 (1.0 acres). Next to current MV Savings Bank property at 490 State Road Map 16 Lot 224 (0.92 acres)

Proposal: To construct a new two-story 3,500 square foot office building.

Applicant Presentation:

- Bob Wheeler explained that the project is on State Road in West Tisbury Business District next door to their existing branch.
- There is a ranch house on there now that is an antique shop.
- They are proposing a 3500 sf building for the Trust and Loan Department. (Goes over plans).
- The plan is to keep the exiting common entrance. They are planning additional parking in back.
- The existing building is set back with lawn and trees and they are planning a similar setback and treatment for the new building. They are going to try to retain a clump of trees on the way in to hide the parking. Rather than reproduce the rest of the business district they are trying to reproduce the farm houses and buildings you find on the rest of State Road.
- Between State Road and where the parking starts they want it to be all green. They are going to add a few vegetated islands in the existing parking lot to hide the parking.
- They plan some paving in the back entry but it would mostly be a permeable surface. (Approximately 10,000 sf unpaved and 2,000 sf paved).
- Vineyard Gardens has a lot of trees on the edge of the property. They are going to keep a 40 foot buffer along the back and west to protect the abutters. They will probably add some trees in the foreground. The plan is to densely plant the edges of the parking.
- They are trying to make this look like a campus.
- The new building is intended to look similar to a barn with the main branch being the farm house.
- Around the back they plan a one story conference room. BW: We have 10 people in the trust. First floor will be deposit operations with about 10 people.
- Bob Wheeler estimates that they will only have about 10 visitors a day in the new bldg. They have 38 spots in the existing branch. They are showing an additional 32 spaces on the new site. This will mainly be a permeable lot.
- Bob Wheeler explained that they wanted very much to bring an affordable housing component into the proposal. They wanted to move the building to the back but the ZBA said that could not be done under chapter 40a. They liked it but it could not be done under the current bylaw. They considered a second floor apartment but came to the conclusion that there were security issues.

- They will come up with some offer that will be in excess of the required mitigation.
- There are people who come to us with private issues and the thought of kids playing outside at the same time was just one scenario that would make that unappealing.
- They will comply with the demolition by law. If someone wants the house they can have it. He talked to John Abrams and this did not work for them.
- Bob Wheeler added that buildings under 3,000 sf are allowed by right whereas buildings over 3,000 sf require a special permit.

Discussion:

- The Key issues today are the LUPC needs to approve a traffic scope, we need to look at the wastewater, the landscape, the streetscape, and potential impact on abutters.
- For traffic the critical issue is the trip generation. The old use was 1800 sf of retail and the new use would be 3500 sf of office. We need to know the order of magnitude of new trips. Even if there is an increase of only 200 trips a day.
- Bob Wheeler said he felt the reality would be 20 trips in the morning, a few leaving at lunch, and 20 leaving at night with about 20 visitors' a day maximum.
- A commissioner felt that the entry to the current bank is very wide.
- Commissioner Brown suggested that the traffic study include the current and past counts of traffic on State Road. The current retail trips compared to the proposed.
- Paul Foley suggested that the traffic circulation in and around the site should be considered as well as possibly narrowing the entry and directing the traffic out the other side.
- Mark London said that the big issue is the increase in parking spaces.
- Commissioner Brown suggested that the MVC may want to suggest a phased parking lot where you reserve an area for grass parking and then moved that the LUPC approve a traffic study that includes these items. The motion was seconded by John Breckinridge.
- Bruce MacNelly asked if there was a traffic study done on the fire station and added that the State does require a pretty wide entry off a State Road.
- You might want to suggest some mitigation such as VTA passes to employees.
- Mark London added that they will do the traffic study but the MVC staff can help with trip estimates and the traffic counts.
- The LUPC agreed to the traffic scope as outlined during the meeting.
- Paul Foley said that we also have to look at wastewater but that Bill Wilcox was not here and had not yet had a chance to look at it.
- Bob Wheeler said that the building would be open 5 days a week and the bank is open that plus Saturday.
- He added that they are working with Kate Warner to put together as efficient insulation and as energy efficient as we can. We might consider an alternative source but don't know.
- Commissioner Brown said her initial impression was that the proposed building looks like the suburbs. You can only get to it by car, it is not pedestrian friendly.
- Mark London noted that they do have staff that will want to walk across the street. He had two questions about streetscape. The current building has a lot of lawn. The new one looks the same. It would be nice to see more vegetation and buffering. It doesn't all have to be manicured lawn.
- Bob Wheeler said they talked to John Powers their abutter in the back. He said that after a storm the timers on the lights do not work. They will try to fix that. They are aware of the lighting issues but they need to have the ATM area lit up from a security stand point. They don't now if they could do a motion activator.

The Public Hearing is scheduled for October 2, 2008