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Martha's Vineyard Commission

Land Use Planning Committee

Draft Notes of the Meeting of July 27, 2009

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

Commissioners Present: Chris Murphy (acting Chair); Christina Brown; Ned Orleans; John Breckenridge
MVC Staff Present: Paul Foley; Mark London,

1. DRI 324-M MV Hospital Final Landscaping Plans

Applicant: Martha's Vineyard Hospital, Tim Walsh (CEO), Tim Sweet (Vice Chairman); Connie Bulman (Project Manager); Kris Horiuchi (Landscape Architect).

Project Location: 1 Hospital Road, Oak Bluffs, MA Map 5 Lot 18 (0.13 acres), Map 6 Lots 38 (1.43 acres), 39 (0.85 acres), 40 (0.38 acres), 41 (0.11 acres), 43 (0.29 acres) and Map 7 Lot 1 (9.8 acres). 12.99 acres total.

Proposal: A final landscape plan for each area of the site must still be reviewed and approved by the Full Commission before those areas are landscaped. Additionally, the Hospital must provide additional parking for at least 60 cars, either on or off site, before the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

DRI 324-M Conditions- Required Landscaping Plans:

6.1 As offered by the Applicant, a final landscape plan for each area of the site, shall be submitted to and is subject to the approval of the Commission before beginning the landscaping of that area. The areas to be landscaped shall be substantially as shown on the preliminary landscape plan but with provision of: denser vegetation, screening for abutters, protection of wetlands, softening of the visual impact of the building from the public way, tree canopy and planted breaks in parking areas, and preservation of existing trees where possible. [Note: modified by condition 6.4]

6.4 The final landscape plan shall also clarify the following items:

- the design and the grading of the Multi-User Path,
- the screening of all retaining walls and parking areas, and
- pedestrian paths for links from Beach Road to the main entrance, from Eastville Avenue to the side entrance, from parking areas to Hospital entrances, and from the Hospital to Brush Pond;
- signage;
- parking and access arrangements for abutters as outlined in the 1989 MVC Decision;
- explore the redesign of the intersection of Hospital Road and Beach Road, introducing a curve into the entry road in order to minimize the visual impact of the building.

Discussion:

- Paul Foley gave a brief review of the DRI 324-M Landscaping Conditions that still needed to be approved.
- Kris Horiuchi handed out the plans and said that the issue of signage will be dealt with at another time.

- She showed the preliminary plans that were shown at the time of approval. This time they are showing the landscape plans for the green roof and the courtyard garden.
- She said that they have developed a plant list which is on page 3. There are over 90 types of trees for screening, ornament, and shade. Many of the trees are native. There are a few ornamental species including dogwoods and stewartia.
- In the parking area they will be at least 3"-4" caliper width and 18'-20' in height.
- The evergreens that will be planted will be of a good size.
- The green roof is part of the sustainable aspect of the project, it is approximately 10,000 sf. There is a path and a terrace. They are using a system whereby the plants are planted in trays then brought in springtime when they are already growing. Therefore the garden will be a real amenity from the beginning.
- The entry area is balanced between evergreen and deciduous summer planting material. The garden is planned as a four season planting.
- Plans include color plate images to show the palette that is being proposed. They are focusing on substantial green around the building as well as a low maintenance and sustainable landscape. Therefore, for example, there will be no roses with high maintenance.
- The third area is the Courtyard Garden.
- This is a sheltered area that comes between the new hospital and Windermere. This area is designed to be attractive to those entering the complex as well as to look out onto from offices and as a nice place to come out and sit in. She has tried to introduce color and interest into the landscape plans.

Commissioner Questions:

- Commissioner Breckenridge asked if when we approved the bio-retention swale we approved the plants in them. Both Kris Horiuchi and Paul Foley answered yes.
- Commissioner Breckenridge noted that one of the key concerns is the view from Beach Road. He wondered if the red cedars will be okay with wet feet.
- Kris explained that these are engineered swales and they have put the cedars on the upland side of the swales.
- Mark London asked them to go through the items in the Decision one by one. The MVC is less interested in the roof garden and court yard, as nice as they are; they are not the regional issue of the view from the road.

Bike Path:

- Mark London said he thought the bike path was supposed to be a distinct and separate path.
- Commissioner Murphy asked if this is a problem. Do people walk from the street? Commissioner Orleans said that it is an issue if you come on the bus.
- Commissioner Breckenridge said that perhaps at the full Commission they could show us with highlights the pedestrian connections and the bike path.
- Kris said that they would provide a diagram.
- Tim Walsh said that they have the multi-user path sharing a short stretch with a driveway for one of their buildings with about 6 cars and a seasonal neighbor. He noted that originally they had two driveways and got cut back to one.
- Commissioner Breckenridge said that signage would help the situation. He asked if the red house is still part of the hospital and are those people sharing the driveway with the bike path. Tim Walsh answered yes.

- Commissioner Murphy asked if that is going to remain.
- Tim Walsh answered yes.
- Mark London noted that there are pedestrian sidewalks and then there is the multi-user path. Sure the vast majority of visitors are going to come by car but for the few percent that come by bus or bike it should be clear how they get in.
- Commissioner Murphy reiterated that he too thought the multi-user path was going to be a dedicated path.
- Tim Walsh said that they are calling it a multi-user path.
- Commissioner Murphy said that the term multi-user doesn't usually include cars.
- Mark London said he recalled that at some point the red house driveway would be shared until some day when that building becomes something else.
- Paul Foley also suggested that perhaps a diagram with the sidewalks in yellow and the bike path in blue would help to illustrate the way finding on the campus.
- Commissioner Breckenridge asked how many cars are in the red house. Is there an absolute need for parking there in the red building? Commissioner Murphy said that until recently Mrs. Downing (the neighbor) had been coming in from the hospital side.
- Mark London asked why we would not have them come in that way to cut down the conflicts.
- Commissioner Brown said she has been riding the bus a lot lately. The Hospital should make it very clear where the bus stops and how people get into the Hospital from there. Maybe there should be a painted lane. She suggested that they at least acknowledge that there will be some visitors who come by bus.
- Tim Walsh said that the whole road way is circular.
- Mark London said that most of the busses and drop-off are at the hospital. But some will be on Beach Road so we need a way to get them in safely. We should find a way to minimize the amount of vehicular use of that shared path. Why doesn't the neighbor come in from the hospital side rather than the Beach road side? If it looks like a road we have a problem. He thought that in the plans from the start that there was a sole dedicated bike path.
- Commissioner Breckenridge said that there is potentially a different way of looking at it.
- Commissioner Brown felt that overall the landscape plans look good. The hospital looks good. She hopes that when they come back before the full Commission that they will show us that it is inviting and clearly marked for pedestrians and bikers.
- Commissioner Orleans felt that if you have seen how the area is used by bikers you would find that most bikes go around the Hospital along the road.
- Commissioner Murphy said that the problem is not the bike path itself; it is the entrance to it. Most people don't even know it is there. Most bikers will stay on the road because it does not look like a bike path. We are trying to make a continuous off road bike path.
- Tim Sweet said that when they started this process the intent was to run the bike path through on a temporary basis. They took advantage of that during construction. He thought that the ultimate goal was to have it go along the road but separately. He thought there was a survey that showed there was enough room to run a separate bike path along the road. He said he doesn't know how they can accommodate the bike path through the hospital campus without some conflict. People are moving slow. There are only 6 parking spaces at the red house and one part time resident. He hopes the ultimate goal is a bike path along the road with a buffer.
- Mark London reiterated that if it is perceived as a road it will not be used as a bike path.

- Tim Walsh said he thinks that it is a mistake to bring the bike path into the hospital campus. This is a parking lot where the older folks on the island come. He feels it is a bad place to be telling people to bike through.
- Mark London said that the offer they made was to bring the bike path out to Eastville Avenue.
- Tim Sweet said that bikes go where they want to. He said that it's a compromise.

Plantings:

- Commissioner Breckenridge suggested that perhaps they should talk to Joan Hughes at the Conservation Commission and confer about the plant choices.
- Tim Sweet said that the O.B. Conservation Commission has already approved the planting plan. They did a comprehensive review.
- Kris Horiuchi said that there is going to have to be some management of the landscape. Its low maintenance not no maintenance.
- Commissioner Murphy said that they should be prepared to answer the items in Condition 6.4.
- Mark London asked if the number of trees on the plan are what they are going to be planted or are they the maximum trees that will be planted given the budget. Are you telling us that you have the budget to plant it all now? It would be a shame to not show plants on the plan due to a budget but we also want to know if they are all going to be planted. Kris Horiuchi said that she designed this plan based on addressing the array of concerns of screening and esthetics.
- Commissioner Brown asked if they are going to plant all of these plants on the plan now.
- Kris Horiuchi answered yes.
- Mark London said that doesn't exactly answer his question. He wanted to know where else plants might be planted in the future.
- Commissioner Murphy asserted that if we approve this plan as presented there is nothing that would stop them from planting more if they wanted to. Is this a minimum or an absolute?
- Commissioner Brown felt that approved planting plans are a minimum of what can be planted.
- Commissioner Murphy said that if that is the case then there should be wording.
- Tim Sweet suggested that it's hard to imagine where else you could plant more plants than what is already on the plan.
- Commissioner Breckenridge noted that some of the loudest commentary came from the abutters on Windermere Road. He asked what the Hospital has done to address their issues and concerns.
- Kris said that they have planted some trees at the end of the street.
- Commissioner Murphy suggested that is something that they will want to answer at the next meeting.
- Tim Walsh said that from the roof garden you cannot even see most of those houses.

The full Commission will vote on the landscape plans on Thursday August 13, 2009.