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Martha's Vineyard Commission Land Use Planning Committee Notes of the Meeting of December 13, 2010

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

Commissioners Present: Christina Brown; Linda Sibley; Ned Orleans; Chris Murphy; Brian Smith; Fred Hancock; and John Breckenridge.

MVC Staff Present: Mark London; Paul Foley; and Mike Mauro.

Note: the LUPC reviewed two projects on December 13, 2010: The M.V. Hospital Parking (DRI 324-M3) and the Bradley Square Demolition (DRI 612-M2). These are notes for just the Bradley Square project.

1. Bradley Square Demolition (DRI 612-M2) Pre-Application Review

Applicant: Island Affordable Housing Fund (Ewell Hopkins – Executive Director)

Project Location: 96 Dukes County Avenue and 8 Masonic Avenue, Oak Bluffs Map 11 Lots 193 & 195 (6,098 sf and 12,632 sf = 0.43 acres). The property may have been merged during the Bradley Square permitting process. Staff is investigation the status of the lots.

Proposal: To be permitted to demolish a 3,049 square foot historic building.

Presentation:

- Paul Foley gave a brief Staff Report.
 - The Building was built in 1895 as a mission to help Portuguese immigrants assimilate into American society.
 - In the 1920's the building became the Bradley Memorial Church, the first primarily African-American Church on the Island. The building has been largely abandoned for several decades.
 - The properties were purchased on June 29, 2007 for \$407,250 and \$497,750 for a total of \$905,000 by the Island Affordable Housing Fund, Inc.
 - The Island Affordable Housing Fund and Island Housing Trust were approved by the MVC in 2008 to renovate the existing Bradley/Denniston building to create a meeting room with one residential unit and an office and to build two new 5,000+ sf buildings with five and four residential units respectively. The project would have had a total of ten units with 13 bedrooms, one market rate commercial unit, one office unit, and one 710 sf meeting room.
 - A 40B Comprehensive Permit was required for the project.
 - The current status of the lots needs to be determined.
- Ewell Hopkins, Executive Director of the Island Affordably Housing Fund, said his goal is to determine the land value of the property. He was not aware of the historical restrictions before. He requested funding from the Oak Bluffs Community Preservation Committee (CPC) last year for historical preservation but was turned down.
- He is asking for the permission for the option to demolish the Denniston building if that is the course they have to take.
- Linda Sibley noted that MVC Counsel had recently told the Commission that there is a process whereby Applicants who have not acted on their approval can surrender their approval.

- Mark London suggested that they could sell the two lots separately. It might be to their benefit to sell the commercial lot with the right to build. They would have to return to the MVC for authorization to proceed with only that part of the project.
- Ewell Hopkins confirmed that they are marketing the property as three lots, one residential and two commercial.
 - [Staff Note: The property was merged during the 40b process and, according to the Oak Bluffs Assessors, is now one 18,730 sf lot.]
- Ewell Hopkins said that they had explored moving the house and he thinks it is viable if he could find a taker.
- David Wilson, of the Oak Bluffs Historical Commission, speaking extemporaneously said that the O.B. Historical Commission designated the building as “preferably preserved” which began a six-month demolition delay.
- Ewell Hopkins asked if the Town, IAHF, and MV Saving Bank came up with a plan could they get a conditional permission for demolition. He added that in his opinion IAHF cannot responsibly hold onto the property.
- Chris Murphy said there appear to be a couple of options. They could ask for a modification to the previous approval. They could request that we allow them to surrender the previous approval.
- Mark London noted that in some other communities, demolitions are not allowed unless there is an approved specific replacement plan.

More Information:

- The LUPC will need more information in the following areas:
 - History of the Building – We need more information on the historic importance of the building. The O.B. Historical Commission has designated the building preferably preserved and the previous proposal promoted the historical preservation aspect of the project.
 - Physical Condition of the Building -
 - Structural Integrity of the Building -
 - The status of the lot – The two lots were merged during the Comprehensive Permit process so there is only one 18,730 sf lot at the present time.
 - Property Values - With and without the building.

Adjourned 7:05 p.m.