

Town of Oak Bluffs**DRI: 659-M North Bluff Modifications****Revisions to Plans and Responses to MVC Questions****November 1, 2022**

In response to comments made at the 10/13/22 MVC Public Hearing, the Town has revised its plans to provide additional parking and move the tour bus parking area. See attached Traffic and Parking Diagrams and Design Drawings. The tour buses have been moved to the south side of the traffic oval. This allows the 2-hour parking area along Seaview Ave Ext. to remain, removing only 1 space for a new crosswalk, instead of the 10 spaces (during daytime hours) in the previous plan.

The view to the ocean will not be blocked by buses for the public and for the abutter at #26 Seaview Ave Ext. At the public hearing this location was preferred by that abutter over the previous location at Seaview Ave Ext.

The new location also allows buses to move easier in and out of the site, which was a concern raised by MV Sightseeing, the current tour bus operator. The buses can enter the site from Circuit Ave Ext., which is the current pattern. After dropping off and picking up passengers, they would then turn down Seaview Ave Ext. without having to circle the roundabout. (See 'Turning Study 2 – Tour Bus' (Page 8 of the revised North Bluff Traffic and Parking diagrams). Taking the wide-turning buses out of the roundabout also allows additional area at the north side of the roundabout to be allotted for active pickup/dropoff, amounting to 2 additional car spaces.

Bus passengers would have to cross the crosswalk going across the oval, but the congestion could be ameliorated by the tour bus companies gathering groups of passengers by the boats and having them cross together.

We have also changed the lane on the north side of the oval island from taxi stand to a mixed-use lane that may be used by taxis or for active pickup/dropoff. This would include ridesharing drivers.

Addressing comments that requested less landscaping and more parking in the ferry area, the revised plans add 3 additional 15-minute spaces in the north parking area. These are positioned to not have the parking be directly in front of the Island Queen gangway, to preserve the goal of improving the view of passengers coming off the boat. The project's overall reduction of impervious surface area has been preserved by reducing the proposed walkway widths at the far north point of North Bluff and at the new sidewalk connecting the boardwalk to the Seaview Ave. Ext. sidewalk. These walkways still maintain 9' and 6' clear widths, respectively.

In response to MVC’s question about whether a shade shelter will be in the plans, the Town will not be adding shelters. There are no existing shelters, and in the Town’s opinion adding shelters would detract from the existing character of the site, which is characterized by its open views to Oak Bluffs Harbor and the ocean. Shade structures would block these views. They would also introduce new issues such as maintenance and susceptibility to severe winds and weather, especially at this exposed location.

Responses to MVC questions from 10/21/22:

- 1. Please describe the alternate locations that were considered for the tour bus parking, including the areas closer to the ferry dock, and why they were not chosen. This was a primary focus at the hearing last week, including the impacts of tour bus parking on the scenic vista.**

As noted above, we have moved the tour bus parking to the south side of the traffic oval, as shown in the revised site plan and diagrams.

Putting the buses at either side of the interior island of the traffic oval would force passengers entering buses to line up and enter inside the vehicular travel lane. This is because they would be entering on the passenger side of the bus. This would lead to clogged travel lanes and unsafe conditions for the passengers as they queue.

We studied putting the buses on the north side of the traffic oval, but the turning radius for a standard 40’ long bus is too wide to make the turn towards Seaview Ave Ext. See ‘Turning Study 4 – Bus Lane By Ferries’ (Page 10 of the revised North Bluff Traffic and Parking diagrams). To make the buses be able to make the turn, the bus lane would have to be set far into the Fast Ferry waiting area. The Fast Ferry waiting area would then be more cramped and lack the landscape amenities of the Island Queen area. In addition, the turning arc of the bus would require removing 3 spaces in the taxi and dropoff/pickup lanes, which is not desirable.

For these reasons we determined that the south side of the traffic oval was the best area for the buses.

- 2. Which spaces/areas will Uber and Lyft vehicles be allowed to use?**

They will be allowed to use any of the areas labeled ‘active pickup/dropoff’.

- 3. Any commitment from the town to deputize the harbormaster dept to enforce parking rules?**

The Town is exploring and researching options for enhanced parking enforcement for the area, which includes the possibility of deputizing the harbormaster.

4. Will the sitting walls be stone or concrete?

They are planned to be made of reclaimed granite blocks. See example image below.



5. Who will be responsible for landscape maintenance?

The Town will be responsible. The Town maintains contracts with private landscaping companies to maintain public areas throughout the Town.

6. Will there be any efforts to prevent idling of buses and other vehicles? (The relevant state law is included below.)

Efforts to prevent idling of buses and other vehicles are being researched in conjunction with the effort on parking enforcement. (See reply to question 4.) The Town will also reiterate in their RFPs for the tour bus companies that no idling is permitted per the Massachusetts law.