

The Inn at Shearer Cottage, est. 1912 Martha's Vineyard

History: Opened in 1912, the inn has been continuously owned and operated by members of the Shearer Family. The Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture (Washington D.C.) and the Martha's Vineyard Museum both feature the inn's story in permanent exhibits. The property is the first stop on the Martha's Vineyard African American Heritage Trail.

Operations: The inn accommodates overnight guests and small private gatherings. Historically, such gatherings included reunions, retreats, intimate weddings, bridal showers, commemorations, conferences, workshops, fundraisers, lectures, and similar cultural experiences. All gatherings are by invitation only.

Overnight capacity: Originally, the inn offered twelve guest rooms. In more recent history, the inn offered six efficiencies with capacity for 22 guests. The redesigned facilities will offer couples and small affinity groups ten suites and two apartments with an ideal capacity of 26-30 guests. Whole house packages can offer a maximum capacity of 48 guests.

Event capacity: Historically, three locations on the property have been used for private gatherings of up to approximately 250 guests: indoor great room, outdoor patio / lawn, and outdoor garden. After renovation, the property will accommodate intimate gatherings and exclusive guests, subject to the following maximum capacities: indoor great room (60 persons); indoor great room, adjacent outdoor patio and lawn (120 persons); and outdoor garden (60 persons).

Parking: The existing private parking lot will be redesigned to include 12-14 spaces, including one ADA/HCP compliant parking space.

Food and beverage: Historically, the inn provided food service to guests of the inn and other invited guests. After renovation, food and beverage services, when offered, will be strictly limited to overnight guests and attendees of private gatherings. Initially, food and beverage services will be limited to catered events only. In the near future, however, the inn will offer private chef experiences to overnight guests and as part of its "whole house" package. We do not intend to operate a restaurant open to the public.

Noise control: All gatherings would begin after 9am and end before 8pm. All outdoor gatherings with magnified sound (e.g., cultural experiences, lectures, movie debuts) will be limited to Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays between 12noon and 6pm.

Landscape design: Landscapes and boundaries will be beautified and thickened to promote privacy and nature, as well as natural sound barriers. Areas of focus will be property lines shared with abutting homes, particularly residences along Highland Avenue and Rose Avenue, as well as 3 Coral Avenue and 8 Morgan Avenue.

Cultural Impact: As the first stop on the Martha's Vineyard African American Heritage Trail, The Inn at Shearer Cottage proudly displays a large plaque donated to the inn by the MVAAHT. This plaque will be relocated to the inn's border along Church Avenue, which is an ideal location for Heritage Trail visitors to congregate and will provide unobstructed views of the inn.