Shearer Cottage Expansion

Owner and applicant: Eric Van Allen; Chuck Sullivan (architect)

Permits: Building Permit, Special Permit and/or variances

Checklist: 3.1b (Commercial construction of more than 3,500 ft²), 3.1h (Parking for 10 or more vehicles), 4.1c (Five or more dwelling units or rooms); mandatory review

LUPC: 9/13/21

Site visit: 10/6/21
Additions to the record since 9/13/21

• Event guidelines
• Simplified site plan
• Updated existing and proposed site plans
• Revised floorplans and elevations
• Drainage plan and impervious area
• Parking and lighting plan
• Correspondence (23 letters)
• Town special permit application
• Clarity from town assessor on the lot boundaries
• Updated staff report (economic development, housing, nitrogen, etc.)
Project history

• Charles and Henrietta Shearer
  • Purchased cottage overlooking Baptist Temple in 1903
  • Cottage fully established as a business in 1912
  • Laundry business operated until 1917

• Early guests were primarily business owners, politicians, lawyers, doctors, intellectuals

• Host to many social and charitable groups

• Was listed in the Negro Motorist Green Book

• Shearer Summer Theater

• First landmark to be designated on the African American Heritage Trail of Martha’s Vineyard in 1997

• Cottage featured at the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC.

• Properties have remained in the family for more than 100 years

• Efforts to renovate and expand the cottage began in the 1980s-1990s
Proposal

The properties include two main buildings:

• Two-story cottage with three bedrooms
• Separate one-story building to the south with three rooms

Property at 5 Morgan Ave. is currently used for parking.
Proposal

• Main cottage will be gut-renovated and expanded to the west, with a total of five bedrooms.
• Separate one-story building will be demolished.
• New two-story building with eight bedrooms (including a basement level) will be constructed immediately west of the main cottage.
• New one-story building with two bedrooms will be constructed immediately south of the main cottage.
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 2,184 SF
FOUNDATION PLAN - PROPOSED

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION
Proposal

• The southern portion of the site will be regraded to allow for windows and doors on the basement level of the larger of the two new buildings.

• The total number of bedrooms on the properties will increase from six to 15, and the total square footage will increase from 3,061 ft² to 9,003 ft², not including deck and porch space, which will increase from 906 ft² to 2,085 ft².
Planning concerns

- Wastewater
- Drainage
- Energy
- Traffic
- Character and identity
- Housing and employment
- Noise and lighting
- Landscape
Planning concerns

**Wastewater:** The property drains into Oak Bluffs Harbor, and the proposal includes a single Title 5 septic system to serve the new buildings. Information about the existing and proposed wastewater flow is still pending.

- Adjusted nitrogen load for Oak Bluffs Harbor watershed is 11.83 kg/acre/year.
- The load limit for the property (3 acres) is 7.512 kg/year.
Calculations below are for bedrooms and estimate of events only. Runoff or landscape NOT included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>N load (kg/yr) with Title 5 @ 26.25 mg/l</th>
<th>N load (kg/yr) with I/A @ 19 mg/l</th>
<th>N load (kg/yr) with I/A @ 12 mg/l</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 bedrooms</td>
<td>7.26</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>3.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 bedrooms</td>
<td>18.16</td>
<td>13.15</td>
<td>8.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events *</th>
<th>N load (kg/yr) with Title 5 @ 26.25 mg/l</th>
<th>N load (kg/yr) with I/A @ 19 mg/l</th>
<th>N load (kg/yr) with I/A @ 12 mg/l</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indoor or Outdoor 60 people</td>
<td>365 days @ 60 people</td>
<td>29.37</td>
<td>21.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor or Outdoor 60 people</td>
<td>52 days @ 60 people</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor or Outdoor 60 people</td>
<td>184 days @ 60 people</td>
<td>14.81</td>
<td>10.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*calculated at Function room rate
Planning concerns

**Wastewater (staff recommendations):**

- Only slow-release, water-insoluble nitrogen source fertilizers may be used in the maintenance of landscaping.
- Landscape plans must use native or low-maintenance, drought-tolerant species that are non-invasive to minimize the application of nitrogen, pesticides, and water.
- Stormwater should be dispersed into natural vegetation and/or infiltration systems (e.g. vegetated swales, bio-swales, and rooftop vegetated areas).
Planning concerns

**Stormwater and Drainage:** The proposed new parking area will be permeable, and a large patio proposed for the area north of the main cottage will consist of permeable turfstone pavers. The total impervious surface area will increase by about 4,588 ft² (51%). A drainage plan shows three drainage pits and one catch basin for the project.
Drainage plan
Planning concerns

**Energy:** The applicant is considering rooftop solar panels, as recommended by staff, and has proposed adding one or two electric vehicle charging stations in the parking lot, with a longer-term goal of having one EV station per parking space.

**Traffic and Transportation:**

- There are currently 12 parking spaces across the street at 5 Morgan Ave, with 12 proposed, and an additional handicapped-accessible space at 4 Morgan Ave.

- The applicant plans to encourage guests to use alternate modes of transportation such as bikes and public transit, and to possibly offer free bus passes.

- All events will be by invitation only, with valet and/or shuttle service as necessary to avoid traffic and parking congestion.
Planning concerns

Character and Identity:
• The new buildings and exterior renovations will retain some features of the original structure:
  - Cedar sidewall
  - Double-hung windows
  - Decorative moldings facing Morgan Ave.
• Certain historic features will be modified:
  - Replacement of the large second-floor balcony with a smaller railing and double doors
  - Replacement of the solid railing on the first-floor porch with a cross-fence design
  - Addition of a second floor on the northern part of the building.
• The new buildings to the west and south will be visible from in front of the main cottage, including the gables and chimney of the building to the west (behind the cottage).
• An existing plaque donated by the Martha’s Vineyard African American Heritage Trail will be relocated to Church Ave.
Planning concerns

**Economic Development and Housing:**

- The cottage has recently accommodated overnight guests and private gatherings, including reunions, retreats, weddings, conferences, etc., by private invitation.

- Expanded inn will offer daily, weekly, and monthly rates, whole-house packages, and private events from May through October. The applicant has stated that the inn will also offer whole-house packages and private events, and daily rates to the extent practicable, in the off-season.

- The applicant estimates the addition of one or two new employees as a result of the project, with onsite housing for up to four employees. As proposed, the inn may also barter with local businesses seeking housing for their senior staff members.

- Food and beverage service was previously available to guests and others, but would now be limited to overnight guests and event attendees.
Planning concerns

**Economic Development (staff review):**

- The cottage has been a family-run business with additional contract help such as laundry and landscaping services.
  - Exact number of new jobs is not known at this time.
  - It is not known how many events will take place per year.
- Project may not have a significant impact on town services, since it is located in a densely developed residential area.
- All buildings will be up to current building and fire codes, which will be an improvement.
  - Applicant may need to coordinate with the police department depending on the size of an event or gathering.
- Will generate additional commercial Room Occupancy Tax income for the town and the state.
- Will likely increase the value of the property and generate new property tax for the town.
- Will create a small number of new temporary jobs in the professional, technical, construction, and trade industries.
Planning concerns

Affordable housing (staff review):
• According to the MVC DRI Housing Policy Monetary Mitigation Formula:
  • 11,088 – 3,967 = 7,121 new additional square feet
  • 7,121 X 3 (Hotel Use) X 8 = $170,904
• The applicant has offered to provide housing to two staff employees onsite, but the monitoring and enforcement will need to be clarified by the applicant.
• Staff would recommend waving the monetary mitigation in exchange for actual housing for employees.
Planning concerns

**Noise and Lighting:**

- Lighting fixtures at 33 locations (parking, path, and wall-mounted)
- All private gatherings would begin after 9AM and end before 8PM, with sound-generating events such as lectures limited to Fridays and weekends from 12-6PM.
- Typical events would include banquets and ceremonies, educational and cultural events, and corporate meetings, some of which would involve amplification.
- How will noise (and dust) be managed during construction?

**Landscape:** A landscape plan has not yet been provided, although the intent is to increase vegetation along the property lines with abutting houses, which could serve as natural sound barriers.
Planning concerns

**INDOOR PRIVATE EVENTS**

*Location: Great Room (60 persons max)*

*Indoor amplification: as necessary*

*Months of operation: January to December*

*Days/hours of operation: Sunday through Thursday, 10am – 8pm; Friday and Saturday, 10am – 11pm*

**OUTDOOR PRIVATE EVENTS**

*Locations: Patio (60 persons max) and Garden (60 persons max)*

*Outdoor amplification: voice only, as necessary*

*Months of operation: May through October*

*Days/hours of operation: Thursday through Sunday, 10am – 8pm*
Site context