



BOX 1447, OAK BLUFFS, MASSACHUSETTS, 02557, 508-693-3453,
FAX 508-693-7894 INFO@MVCOMMISSION.ORG WWW.MVCOMMISSION.ORG

Martha's Vineyard Commission

DRI 730 Southern Tier Affordable Housing (Phase 1) MVC Staff Report – 2022-11-23 DRAFT

1. DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 **Owner:** Oak Bluffs Resident Homesite Committee
- 1.2 **Applicant:** Affirmative Investments / Island Housing Trust (Affirmative/IHT)
- 1.3 **Project Location:** 85 Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road (Map 50, Lot 31), Oak Bluffs (7.8 acres)
- 1.4 **Proposal:** Development of 45 multi-family affordable rental units.
- 1.5 **Zoning:** R3 residential
- 1.6 **Local Permits:** ZBA (comprehensive permit), building permit, board of health
- 1.7 **Surrounding Land Uses:** Residential and public/community uses in the R3 district, including MV Arena, YMCA, MV Regional High School, MV Community Services, and Oak Bluffs Skate Park; R4 district to the north, including Woodside Village, 190 acres owned by the MV Land Bank (Southern Woodlands DCPC), and Old Holmes Hole Road (Special Way). The portion of the property along Edgartown-VH Road is within the Island Road DCPC.
- 1.8 **Project History:** The town of Oak Bluffs issued an RFP in 2021 to create up to 60 units of housing on 7.8 acres of town-owned land, and selected Affirmative/IHT to develop the property in two phases. The current DRI application is only for phase 1, although the applicant is open to proposing phase 2 at the same time. The town has committed \$450,000 in CPA and Housing Trust Fund allocations for the development. The MVC approved a similar affordable housing development on Meshacket Road in Edgartown in November 2022.
- 1.9 **Project Summary:** Phase 1 of the project is to develop 45 units of multi-family rental housing (total of 85 bedrooms) that will be affordable to residents with incomes between 30% and 110% of AMI, along with a community building, walking paths, passive recreation spaces, and 68 parking spaces.

Proposed building types:

- 3-unit walk-up – 5 buildings, total of 10 1-bedroom units and 5 3-bedroom units
- 6-unit walk-up – 5 buildings, total of 30 2-bedroom units
- Community building with management office and community space

According to the applicant, the overall buildout including both phases will include a total of 60 homes and 90 parking spaces. However, the current DRI is only for phase 1.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 **DRI Referral:** Oak Bluffs ZBA, April 30, 2022
- 2.2 **DRI Trigger:** 4.1a (5 or more dwelling units) – Mandatory referral requiring MVC concurrence
- 2.3 **LUPC:** Nov. 28, 2022

2.4 Public Hearing: Not yet scheduled

3. PLANNING CONCERNS

3.1 Wastewater

The property is located in the watershed of Sengkontacket Pond, which is impaired, and has a nitrogen loading limit of 15.72 kg/year. Accounting for 85 bedrooms, landscaping, impervious area, the project will be over the limit. To mitigate the overage, the applicant plans to upgrade other Title V septic systems in the watershed to NitROE systems. (Note that the nitrogen calculations in the Applicant Package need to be corrected. Revised calculations are still pending.)

Phase 1 would include a NitROE denitrifying septic system and Presby Advanced Enviro-Septic leaching field. The project would also include the installation of a sewer main under the access road for use in phase 2. The applicant has stated that phase 2 cannot be built until it is able to connect to the sewer. Pending the town's expansion of its sewer capacity, the project as a whole may be able to connect to the sewer in the future.

The project will be on town water.

3.2 Stormwater

According to the applicant: "Stormwater will be collected and treated for the proposed development with a series of green stormwater infrastructure practices which will include water quality swales and bioretention areas for pretreatment of the pavement areas runoff. The bioretention areas will utilize a sediment forebay or pretreatment structure for sediment removal. Stormwater runoff from the bioretention areas for larger storm events will be conveyed to several underground infiltration chambers (UICs), as noted on the site plan. Roof runoff will also be conveyed to UICs spaced throughout the proposed development. The proposed practices utilize infiltration and meet or reduce all peak flows to predevelopment levels."

3.3 Environment/Habitat

The property is currently undeveloped woodland contiguous with the Southern Woodland DCPC to the north. Most of the property is listed as NHESP Priority Habitat, and the entire property is listed as either Exceptional or Important in the MVC Open Space Guideline Data. The property is part of an undeveloped corridor connecting the Southern Woodlands to the north with the State Forest to the south, although Edgartown-VH Road runs through that area.

The project would disturb about 4.95 of the 7.8 acres, with about 1.87 acres permanently protected, including for passive recreational use by residents. MassWildlife has provided a determination letter requiring the following conditions for phase 1, in order to avoid a prohibited take of state-listed species:

1. Recordation: Prior to the start of work, the Applicant shall record this determination letter and the Plan in the Dukes County Registry of Deeds so as to become a record part of the chain of title for the property. Prior to the start of work, the Applicant shall provide the Division with written proof of said recordation.
2. Symbolic Fencing: Prior to the start of work, symbolic fencing shall be erected along the "Limit of Work (Phase I and II)" shown on the Plan and maintained throughout the construction period. No work or activity shall occur on the property outside the "Limit of Work Phase I and II" shown on the Plan.
3. Monumentation: Prior to the start of work, the Applicant shall submit a plan to permanently monument the "Protected Open Space" shown on the Plan. Prior to the start of work or as otherwise approved by the Division, monumentation shall be installed pursuant to the Division-approved plan. Said monumentation shall be maintained in good condition and repaired or replaced, as necessary.
4. Compliance Report: Within thirty (30) days of the completion of work or as otherwise approved by the Division, the Applicant shall submit written confirmation to the Division documenting compliance with the conditions outlined herein.
5. Habitat Protection: Within one (1) year of the start of work and prior to recording any instrument to transfer or protect the "Protected Open Space" shown on the Plan, the Applicant shall provide the Division with a plan for permanently protecting the "Protected Open Space" as open space and state-listed species habitat pursuant to Article 97 provisions.

According to the applicant: "It is expected that the majority of trees within the limit-of-work will be removed, with a comprehensive landscaping plan designed to re-establish a natural vegetation community within the development. Depending on the final site grading, it may also be possible to preserve small patches of existing vegetation as well. This general approach was driven by the desire to minimize the development footprint and preserve as much existing woodland as possible within the NHESP Priority Habitat area around the knoll, which will ultimately be protected by a conservation easement. We will review the existing vegetation once we have the roads and buildings staked to determine which vegetation can be preserved."

3.4 Traffic and transportation

Access to the property will be from Edgartown-VH Road. A new access road will loop around a central area with five buildings and a common green, and extend north to the rear of the site and future location of two more possible buildings in phase 2. The plan calls for 68 parking spots along the access road in phase one (1.51 per unit).

Walking paths will connect all parts of the property, as well as Old Holmes Hole Road to the north and the MV Arena and YMCA to the west. The community building will include an area for covered bike storage.

The applicant provided a 2021 Technical Memorandum by Howard Stein Hudson (HSH) for the Edgartown-VH Road corridor between Barnes and County Roads, which accounts for several planned projects in the corridor, including the Southern Tier housing project. The plan estimates that the project as a whole (including both phases) would generate a total of 384 daily trips (4.3% increase over annual average daily traffic), with 26 trips in the AM peak hour and 31 in the PM peak hour. However, the plan does not make any specific conclusions or recommendations about the project impacts. A separate traffic impact summary submitted by the applicant cites the HSH memo and states that the project would have a negligible impact.

3.5 Energy

Each building would have rooftop solar generation and incorporate passive solar design. The plan also includes 6 electric vehicle charging stations, along with conduits for future stations. The MVC Energy Policy calls for any overnight residential parking space to be equipped with an EV charging station or conduit.

3.6 Housing

Phase 1 of the project is to develop 45 units of multi-family rental housing (total of 85 bedrooms) that will be affordable to residents with incomes between 30% and 110% of AMI. The Community Builders (TCB) will oversee leasing, management, and operations. The project would increase the town's Subsidized Housing Inventory from 5.5% to 7.5% of the total housing stock, bringing it closer to the state target of 10%. More information about the buildings, amenities, rents, and housing need is available in the [Application Package](#).

Housing breakdown in terms of AMI:

- 1BR (10) – 2 @ 30% AMI, 1 @ 50% AMI, 7 @ 60% AMI
- 2BR (30) – 2 @ 30% AMI, 2 @ 50% AMI, 19 @ 60% AMI, 7 @ 80-110% AMI
- 3BR (5) – 1 @ 30% AMI, 4 @ 60% AMI

3.7 Character and Identity

In regard to building design, the applicant has stated: “The roof massing, neighborhood scale, and straightforward detailing reflect the simplicity and craftsmanship expressed in the Vineyard’s architectural tradition. The cedar shingles and trim also reflect the Vineyard tradition and provide a low-maintenance finish that will age well over time.” The buildings are essentially the same as those planned for Meshacket Commons in Edgartown. Elevations and floorplans have been provided.

The property will be served by underground electric and communication infrastructure.

3.8 Landscape and Lighting

The project aims to create a sustainable landscape that blends into the natural surroundings, including the use of native plants found in the existing woodland.

The project will include light-activated LED ceiling-mounted porch fixtures and solar-powered, motion sensitive path lighting.

A landscape plan and preliminary lighting plan have been provided.