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Martha's Vineyard Commission

DRI #81-M3 Vineyard Wind Maintenance Building MVC Staff Report – 2022-4-8

1. DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 **Owner:** Harborwood LLC (Sam Dunn); Vineyard Wind would assume ownership upon receipt of MVC and Conservation Commission approvals.
- 1.2 **Applicant:** Harborwood LLC (Sam Dunn); Vineyard Wind 1 LLC (Sarah Schweitzer, Jack Arruda), Foth Engineering (Carlos Pena), Vineyard Power (Richard Andre)
- 1.3 **Project Location:** 69 Beach Road (Map 9, Block B, Lot 18.1; formerly 61 Beach Road), Tisbury
- 1.4 **Proposal:** Construction of Vineyard Wind operations and maintenance building
- 1.5 **Zoning:** Waterfront Commercial
- 1.6 **Local Permits:** Building permit, sewer flow approval (Select Board), Conservation Commission approval
- 1.7 **Surrounding Land Uses:** Other commercial and water-related uses in the Waterfront Commercial district.
- 1.8 **Project History:** The property was subdivided into two lots with MVC approval in 2021, and Lot 1 (the smaller of the two lots) was relabeled 69 Beach Road (Map 9, Block B, Lot 18.1). The property currently includes most of a 4,000 ft² commercial building constructed in 1978, and part of a smaller commercial building toward the back of the site. A large commercial building toward the front of the site was removed in 2019. The property is currently used for parking, commercial storage including boats and lumber, and a food truck. Prior to subdivision, the property had been the subject of a DRI involving 52 residential units, but that proposal has been on hold since 2020.
- 1.9 **Project Summary:** The proposal is to construct an approximately 36,000 ft² operations and maintenance building to support the Vineyard Wind project south of the Island, including office space, storage, and parking. The property is mostly within the FEMA VE flood zone and the building would be elevated two feet above the base flood elevation, with parking below. The project is part of a larger operations and maintenance system for Vineyard Wind, including the expansion of the Tisbury Marine Terminal at 91 Beach Road (approved as DRI 277-M in 2021), and the development of a helicopter hangar at the Martha's Vineyard Airport (under review as DRI 726).

Approximate square footage breakdown:

Footprint	11,200 ft ²
Lower floor parking	11,200 ft ²
Main floor interior	10,800 ft ²
Warehouse	5,900 ft ²
Support access	2,450 ft ²
Locker rooms	1,250 ft ²
Meeting room/canteen	1,200 ft ²
Upper floor office area	2,900 ft ²

2. ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 **DRI Referral:** Tisbury Building Commissioner, Dec. 22, 2021
- 2.2 **DRI Trigger:** 3.1b (3,500+ ft² commercial development), 3.4b (Storage of fuel/hazardous materials)
- 2.3 **LUPC:** April 11, 2022
- 2.4 **Public Hearing:** Not yet scheduled

3. PLANNING CONCERNS

- 3.1 **Stormwater and Drainage:** The site is mostly within the FEMA VE flood zone, meaning it is susceptible to flooding during storms, including potential impacts from waves. According to state projections, the area currently has about a 25-50% annual chance of flooding, which will likely increase to 50-75% by 2030, and to more than 75% by 2070. (The building has an expected lifespan of 60+ years with proper maintenance.) The first floor of the proposed building would be elevated two feet above the base flood elevation, as required under the state building code, with parking below. The parking area would be at least partly open on three sides (north, south, and west) to allow floodwaters to pass through, with the bottom of openings even with ground level in front and back, and about two feet higher along the sides. The openings will be covered with breakaway lattice fencing. The project is designed according to the 2016 FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps, which do not account for sea-level rise or storm surge.

The applicant has stated that any future raising of Beach Road as a result of sea-level rise could likely be accommodated, but could result in the parking area being lower than the road. In that case, it is not clear how floodwaters would be dispersed.

Apart from storm surge, the property has been the subject of occasional flooding during and after rainfall. According to Sourati Engineering, groundwater monitoring data from 2020-2022 shows that this flooding is the result of runoff from adjacent properties, rather than from groundwater, although the water table is at a shallow depth.

The site is currently lower than the abutting properties, and would be raised about four feet in an effort to mitigate flooding. The applicant has characterized the proposed regrading as minor under the state residential building code, but the residential code does not apply to commercial projects and does not elaborate on minor regrading. The applicant has also stated that the regrading will not divert floodwaters onto abutting properties. Plans show that the property would be about four feet higher than the parcel to the west, with a drainage swale in between. Plans show a decorative stone wall along Beach Road and an approximately 6 ft retaining wall along the ramp on the eastern side of the building. The applicant has stated that the wall along Beach Road could be eliminated.

In general, adding fill to land in a flood zone is not an accepted practice, as it can cause stormwater to be diverted onto nearby properties where it can cause damage. Tisbury Wetlands Bylaw regulations state that “work shall not reduce the ability of the land to absorb and contain floor water or to buffer inland areas from flooding and wave damage.” The proposed regrading is subject to Conservation Commission review and approval.

The site is currently about 85% impermeable as a result of previous and existing uses, and the impermeable area would be reduced by about 10,363 ft² (43%). However, the applicant has stated that the existing 4,000 ft² commercial building will be reconstructed on the abutting property at 61 Beach Road (Lot 2 of the subdivision), which would increase the impermeable surface area on that property by 4,000 ft², with potential drainage impacts.

A drainage plan designed for a 25-year storm event shows roof drains and a subsurface recharge chamber, as well as a drainage swale along the western edge of the property.

- 3.2 Wastewater:** The southern part of the property is within the Lagoon Pond watershed, and the proposed building would be connected to the town sewer, with a proposed flow of between 550 and 800 gallons per day (GPD). The Tisbury Wastewater Superintendent has clarified that when the property was subdivided last year, the lot in question was by default removed from the sewer district, so there is an article on the April 12 town meeting warrant to add Lot 1 to the district. If the article passes, then the applicant can apply for a sewer permit. In the meantime, the Wastewater Superintendent has set aside the required sewer flow of up to 800 GPD for the project, and a sewer line is planned for sometime in April or May to coordinate with the Beach Road project that is underway.

Proposed uses will include the storage of equipment and spare parts, including material classified as hazardous waste (waste oil, grease, refrigerants, etc.), the handling of which must comply with state regulations. No materials will be stored outdoors.

- 3.3 Traffic and Transportation:** The applicant estimates that the project will generate an average of 74 daily trips (including all-year and seasonal activity), with a peak of 80 daily trips in the summer. Traffic-generating activity would include deliveries and the arrival and departure of staff, including van trips. The proposed parking area underneath the building would have 26 parking spaces and elevator access to the first level. Vehicle access to the property would be via a single gravel driveway on the east side of the building, with a turnaround and loading dock to the rear of the building. Another loading area would be located at the parking level. A sidewalk and ramp along each side of the building would provide access for staff and visitors.




Staff review:

- *The applicant in its original submission conservatively projected/assumed the traffic generated by the project and its impact on the roadway network.*
- *Having worked with MVC staff as the project advanced/progressed, the applicant has been able to definitively assume its traffic impacts.*
- *The revised plan now shows a reduction in traffic from the applicant's original submission in 2021.*
- *The current proposed scheduling of the fleet remains as stated in the original submission.*
- *The attached spreadsheet shows the reduction in trips per day, both seasonally and annually, and explains how the applicant defined and reached its assumptions.*

3.4 Economic Development and Housing: The applicant has provided an Economic Narrative that covers the potential economic benefits of the project, as well as information about the anticipated jobs, and the applicant’s goals for providing housing to employees who will use the building.

The applicant estimates the creation of 56 jobs, including 12-year-round onshore jobs, 24 year-round offshore jobs, and 20 seasonal offshore jobs. The offshore jobs would consist of rotating two-week shifts as shown in the table below, so only up to 34 employees would be working at one time. Salaries would range from about \$79,000 to \$128,000.

Table 2: Expected Jobs & Salaries at the O&M Support Building

	Jobs Associated ³	Range of Salaries ⁴
All Year Onshore Site Staff Jobs	<p>12 Total Persons</p> 	\$89,225 - \$128,260 Median: \$113,445
All Year Offshore Technicians	<p>24 Total: Rotating 12 Techs on / 12 Techs off every 2 weeks</p> 	\$78,845
Seasonal Offshore Technicians	<p>20 Total: Rotating 12 Techs on / 12 Techs off every 2 weeks</p> 	\$78,845

³The number of jobs associated at the O&M Support building is based on current project knowledge. The actual number of jobs in each category may be more or less than indicated in Table 2 and will be refined as the project progresses.

Based on an assessment of available qualified workers on the Island, the applicant expects 50% of the jobs to be filled by Island residents in year one, with a goal of increasing that to 75% in year three, and 100% in year five. Non-local workers would eventually be transitioned to off-Island work as more local workers are hired. The applicant estimates that in year one, 18 workers will be “living locally,” meaning they will already have housing on the Island. (This estimate is based on the applicant’s direct knowledge of the local workforce.) The remaining workers, accounting for the two-week shifts, would indicate a need for 21 beds in year one.

The applicant has further clarified that the goal is to provide on-Island rental housing to any worker who needs it. To accomplish this, Vineyard Wind 1 LLC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Island-based developer Delano & Co. to secure up to 15 units of workforce housing on the Island, including up to 10 units at 4 State Road (a proposal for commercial and residential units that is under review as DRI 710) and additional units at 52 William St. in Tisbury. The applicant has stated that additional agreements regarding workforce housing are underway.

The applicant has proposed the following as possible housing offers:

1.1 Applicant shall fulfill its Housing Mitigation as provided in Section 3A.1 of the MVC Housing Policy (July 2019), except as provided in section 1.3 of this offering.

1.2 Applicant shall make available offsite beds in dwelling units to accommodate the housing impact of Development employees except those who are living on Martha's Vineyard in market rate housing.

- *The number of beds within the dwelling units needed is calculated by adding the sum of the Development's actual FTE onshore staff jobs, year-round offshore FTE technicians, and seasonal offshore FTE technicians and then subtracting the number of FTE jobs fulfilled by persons not living on Martha's Vineyard and those Martha's Vineyard residents living in market rate housing.*
 - *For example, due to rotational work schedules where 1 technician is on island for two weeks and 1 technician is on for the following two weeks, these two technicians are equivalent to 1 FTE in the context of the bed that will be made available. As is common with offshore maritime work the offshore technicians will work a two-week rotating shift, i.e., two weeks on-two weeks off. For this reason, the Development will make available housing needs assuming the two technicians will share a common space at opposite intervals. One technician will utilize the space while on their two-week rotation while the other technician is off island for their two weeks off time. This will rotate every two weeks.*
 - *Applicant's current estimate of need as of the time the Development commences operation is 21 beds. - The Applicant's estimate shall be updated approximately 6 months before the expected date of the Development's certificate of occupancy.*
 - *The actual need shall be measured when the Development obtains its certificate(s) of occupancy. The need shall be re-measured at year 3 and year 5 of the first five years after the certificate(s) of occupancy, and at most 5-year intervals after the first 5 years until 15 years after the certificate of occupancy. The actual need can increase or lower the number of required beds.*

1.3 If for any reason the Development cannot make available sufficient beds in dwelling units for Development employees who are not Martha's Vineyard residents living in market rate housing, then it will make a \$2,500 annual payment for each bed in a dwelling unit that the project does not make available.

3.5 **Energy:** The applicant anticipates installing rooftop solar with a capacity of about 50kW (pending final building design) on the eastern portion of the roof, and 3-5 electric vehicle charging stations.

3.6 **Character and Identity:** The building will be located in the vicinity of other light industrial and water-dependent uses in the Waterfront Commercial district. The exterior of the building will be wood panel. The side of the building facing Tisbury Marketplace would be mostly windowless, in part because views in that direction would be limited, and there would likely be warehouse shelving on the inside. Renderings and elevations show a Vineyard Wind logo and wave pattern on the side of the building. The proposed building would be 36 feet at the highest point.

3.7 Landscape and Lighting: A landscape plan has not been provided, but the applicant has stated that two existing honey locust trees along the road will remain, with two new honey locust trees added. The total square footage of proposed lawn and landscaped areas is up to about 9,480 ft². The open parking area below would be partially screened by vegetation. The applicant has stated that if required by the MVC, the project will use native alternatives to lawn, including plant species used at the nearby Boch Park, which were approved by the Conservation Commission. The applicant has stated that the green space around the building would be open to the public.

Grass lawns are generally not acceptable as landscaping in a velocity zone, and staff has recommended that the applicant significantly reduce the proposed lawn area and cover most of the site with strongly rooted native and/or naturalized vegetation that is adapted to the local climate and can tolerate wind and salt (*Rosa rugosa* is one example).

A lighting plan has not been provided, but the applicant has stated that lighting will be limited to what is required for pedestrian and vehicles access and security, and that the fixtures will be Dark Sky compliant.