

From: Walter Meinelt <wmeinelt@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2022 7:26 PM
To: Chris Seidel <seidel@mvcommission.org>
Subject: Luce House Indian Hill, West Tisbury, MA

Just wanted to share my Letter to the Editor at the MV Times regarding the demolition of the Luce House in Indian Hill.

Walter Meinelt January 7, 2022 At 6:49 pm

https://www.realtor.com/realestateandhomes-detail/371-Indian-Hill-Rd_West-Tisbury_MA_02575_M31091-10647#photo36

This was the house when they purchased it...definitely worth preserving...and expanding if necessary...Old houses take work and love...

In 2008 my mother, Polly Mayhew Meinelt died. In 2013 my father, Theodore Meinelt, died. At the time of his death he owned my mother's family home at 181 South Road in Chilmark. The house was built in 1713 by Zaccheus Mayhew and had been continuously owned by subsequent generations until I inherited it upon my parent's deaths. When we were faced with what to do with a significantly compromised first period Colonial home we were faced with a similar decision. Chilmark Building Inspector, Lenny Jason, reviewed the completely negative engineering reports about the house that recommended, without question, demolition. Lenny looked my wife and me in the eye and said, "The Mayhew/Meinelt house is my favorite house on Martha's Vineyard, I will never grant you a demolition approval. Figure it out!" And, fortunately we were able to do this. We, ultimately, decided to restore vs. sell. It was an emotional family-based decision recognizing the incredibly strong family history surrounding the home. Once we made the decision to restore, we never looked back and we now have a wonderful family home that will live many more generations into the future. I know that this is a much older house but it is really important to recognize and celebrate the architectural heritage that makes the Vineyard such a special place. I encourage this family to rethink their plans. There are so many ways that older homes can be adapted to serve contemporary families without scraping them altogether. I am more than willing to share our renovation success with anyone who is contemplating demolition.

Sincerely,
Walter (Terry) Mayhew Meinelt

Please make sure that these comments find their way into the MVC comment file and let me know that this has happened. Many thanks. Terry