

## DRI # 581 - Vineyard Gardens

### 1. DESCRIPTION

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- 1.1 Applicant:** Charles and Christine Wiley
- 1.2 Project Location:** West Tisbury Assessor's Map 16, Lots 235.1, 235.2, and 235.3 (4.8 acres total). The proposal also requests a determination for an abutting lot (Map 15, Lot 73, 1.7 acres) owned by Stephen and Robin Elrick, which is for sale.
- 1.3 Proposal:** The Wiley's would like to move their business, The Vineyard Gardens, from its present location on State Road in the business district to property they own on Old Stage Road. They would also like to purchase an abutting lot if the permitting process allows them to use it to their advantage.
- 1.4 Zoning:** All of the lots are zoned RU (Rural) which does allow agricultural and horticultural retail by special permit. The lots also abut the LI (Light Industrial) district and a residential district.
- 1.5 Surrounding Land Uses:** Several residences, Keene Excavation, and the West Tisbury landfill.
- 1.6 Project History:** The Wiley's have run a plant nursery on State Road in the business district of West Tisbury for several years on land they lease. They own three lots (4.8 acres) down the road near the intersection of State and Old Stage Roads. They have been using the lots they own on Old Stage Road as a horticultural growing area but have not used it as retail.

When the lots on Old Stage Road were originally subdivided the access was specifically designated to be on Old Stage Road. The curb cut on the Elrick property was granted recently for a residential home specifically for the safety of young children. The West Tisbury Planning Board has written a letter stating that they are opposed to the curb cut on State Road being used for a retail business. If a retail business is allowed they suggest reverting to Old Stage Road as the access.

- 1.7 Project Summary:** The Wiley's would like to move their business, The Vineyard Gardens, from its present location on State Road in the business district to property they own on Old Stage Road in the RU district. The Proposal has several aspects. They would prefer to purchase an abutting residential lot (Map 15, Lot 73) that could potentially give them good visibility on State Road, provide a house to be used as an employee dormitory, and use of a new curb cut on State Road as the primary access for the business. If any or all of these factors were nullified through the permitting process they want to see what they are allowed to do with the land they own now (Map 16, Lots 235.1, 235.2, and 235.3).

## **2. ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY**

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- 2.1 DRI Referral:** The West Tisbury Zoning Board of Appeals referred the project to the Martha's Vineyard Commission.
- 2.2 DRI Trigger:** 3.301h - "Any development of commercial...that is on the list of high traffic-generating businesses provided as attachment B, with the concurrence of the Martha's Vineyard Commission". Attachment B includes Nursery (Garden Center) and Nursery (Wholesale) as high traffic-generating businesses. The West Tisbury Z.B.A. also noted that they were not clear about whether the proposal might also be referred under sections 3.301 a, b, c, and/or d and deferred the decision of whether those sections should be included in the referral to the Martha's Vineyard Commission. Section 3.301 reads – "Any development of commercial, storage, office and/or industrial lands or building(s), or any private educational facility that has: (c) outdoor commercial space of 6,000 square feet or more, including commercial polyhouse structures; traditional farming activities and outside plant stock are excluded; or (d) any combination of new outdoor commercial space and new construction totaling 1,000 square feet or more resulting in a square footage of 2,000 square feet or more. 3.301h is a concurrence vote while 3.301 a, b, c, and d are mandatory referrals. The proposal triggers both 3.301 (c) and (d) and therefore is a mandatory referral.
- 2.3 Pre-Application meeting with staff:** Thursday October 28, 2004
- 2.4 LUPC:** Monday November 8, 2004 at 5:30 p.m. in the Olde Stone Building. A second LUPC was held Monday January 31, 2005 at 5:30 p.m.
- 2.5 Site visits:** To be determined
- 2.6 Public Hearing:** To be determined when application more complete.

## **3. PLANNING CONCERNS**

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### **3.1 Some Key Preliminary Issues**

- How will the intersection of Old Stage Road and State Road be affected?
- How will the Vineyard Gardens change or treat the streetscape along State Road?
- Is this proposal compatible with the preservation of this stretch of road that has a strongly rural character?
- Is this an appropriate land use and increase in intensity of use in a residential zone?
- What are the wastewater and/or nitrogen loading issues with this proposal?
- What will happen to the present location of Vineyard Gardens if they leave?
- Can the Vineyard Gardens use the new State Road curb cut on the Elrick's residential property for their retail business?

### **3.2 Environment**

- **Vegetation:** The property is partly wooded. The proposed nursery would ensure that the property is somewhat vegetated although not necessarily with native plants.

- **Habitat:** The property is wedged between State Road, the landfill and a large excavation company’s gravel pit and thus not prime habitat. However, the applicant has stated that Vineyard Gardens have been recognized by the NWF as beneficial to habitat.
- **Water:** Well water. Vineyard Gardens estimates their water use at 9,000 gallons per day over a six-month period or 1.62 million gallons per year.
- **Wastewater / Stormwater:** If the proposed dormitory on the Elrick property were to house eight employees it would exceed the MVC interim nitrogen loading limits set for the Tisbury Great Pond. They could possibly get around this by adding a de-nitrification unit (Bio-Clear) or a non-water based wastewater system such as a Clivus system. Regarding the greenhouse fertility program, fertilizer would be applied through the irrigation water. While the greenhouse is covered, spillage on the floor would remain in the soil, as there is no recharging precipitation to carry it into the groundwater. However if the plastic is removed and left off the houses over a period of time with precipitation (particularly late winter and spring) substantial nitrogen could move into the groundwater. A best-practices management program is necessary to assure that this does not happen.
- **Compost:** The compost piles represent a substantial organic nutrient source. These nutrients are largely locked up in the composting process. The piles require air and moisture for optimum conversion of coarse organic matter into a humus like end product. Ten yards per day are added. It is estimated that this would continue over an eight-month period and account for 1,600 to 2,000 yards of input to the composting process.

- **Preliminary nitrogen load estimate:**

Wastewater assuming 30% reduction due to intervening wetlands	13.0	kilos
Container fertilization " " " "	1.0	kilos
Greenhouse fertilization " " " "	0	kilos
Compost	0	
Total	14.0	kilos

Allowed load for 6.5 acres is 7.8 kilos.

### **3.3 Transportation**

- **Access:** The existing access to the site is Old Stage Road. The Applicant proposes to allow an additional site access through an existing driveway from the Elrick property.
- **Traffic:** At the 1/31/05 LUPC it was determined that the Applicant will have to conduct a more thorough traffic study that includes a study of sightlines, accident data for the past 3 years, and turning movements. According to the applicant the peak season for the business is April through mid June and has 9 employees working at the nursery. Based on the number of sales submitted, the proposal is likely to generate anywhere from 41 to 268 trips per day during the peak season.