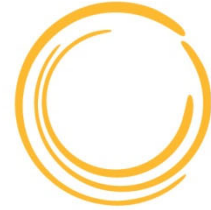


3225 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 226
BARNSTABLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02630

Town Planner
Mar 26, 2021
Received



CAPE COD
COMMISSION

(508) 362-3828 • Fax (508) 362-3136 • www.capecodcommission.org

Via Electronic Mail

March 26, 2021

To: Bourne Zoning Board of Appeals
Coreen Moore, Town Planner

Re: Cape Cod Commission Staff Comments
*Cape View Way Comprehensive Permit Application, Bourne
Applicants: Preservation of Affordable Housing, Inc. (POAH) and
Housing Assistance Corporation (HAC)*

cc: Stephen Mealy, Bourne Representative, Cape Cod Commission
Harold Mitchell, Chair, Cape Cod Commission
Elizabeth Taylor, Chair, Cape Cod Commission Committee on Planning and Regulation

Pursuant to Section 13(j) of the Cape Cod Commission Act, the Cape Cod Commission (herein, "Commission" or "CCC") is considered a "Local Board" for purposes of MGL Ch. 40B, ss. 20-23. Accordingly, the Commission provides, through its staff and in its capacity as a Local Board, the following review comments to the ZBA on the above-referenced matter.

The project proposes the construction of 51 new housing units in one building on a +/- 2.9-acre site currently owned by the Bourne Housing Authority. The proposed location is walkable to area businesses including restaurants, a hardware store, and a post office. It is also within walking distance of the regional transportation hub at the Sagamore Bridge. The project's proximity to these amenities make the location appropriate for the development of housing.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Cape Cod Commission Act and Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan look to preserve the social diversity of the region by promoting the development of affordable housing for low- and moderate- income families. Bourne has made significant headway in the construction of

affordable housing on the Cape, with almost 600 units listed on the State's Subsidized Housing Inventory. Still only 6.9% of Bourne's existing year-round housing stock is restricted as affordable, and a significant need remains.

There continues to be a shortage of housing throughout our region, with a particularly acute need for affordable housing to retain working families. The Commission's 2017 Regional Housing Market Analysis found that as of 2015 the Upper Cape sub-region needs over 1,500 additional rental units affordable to those earning up to 80% of Area Median Income. More than 4,400 rental units are needed for this group Cape-wide.

This gap leads to a significant housing cost burden on working year-round households, most acutely on those earning at 100% of Area Median Income and below. Gaps such as these also hinder the formation of new households and can force individuals and families into substandard or unsafe housing conditions.

This project is a significant step to lessen the gap through the provision of safe year-round housing that is deed-restricted as affordable.

COMMUNITY DESIGN AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The proposed building is a L-shaped structure with approximately 100- to 200-foot long facades and a modest amount of facade variation in the form of shallow projections and changes in building materials. There are 2-foot projections or recesses in the facade roughly every 15 to 25 feet, and the projections have forward-facing gable roofs that provide some variation in the roof form. The building will be partially screened by existing commercial buildings on Meetinghouse Lane but will likely still be visible due to its height and scale relative to existing development. Commission staff suggests the applicant explore possible ways to lower the height of the projecting gables to reduce the overall apparent height of the building and to increase the depth of some of the projections to further break up the apparent mass of the building.

Screening for the building and the proposed parking lots would be enhanced by additional landscape plantings along the south side of the entrance road, particularly in the area between the existing post office and hardware buildings, as well as along the northeastern side of the building. Adjacent parcels contain vegetation that will provide some screening, but it is preferable to have some screening provided on the subject property.

There are no known historic structures or resources in the project vicinity. Still, Commission staff recommends the applicant file a Project Notification Form (PNF) with the Massachusetts Historical Commission to determine whether there are known archaeological resources on or near the property, especially given its proximity to wetlands and to the Canal area.

TRANSPORTATION

The site is in close proximity to nearby area businesses, regional and inter-city transit service, and the regional multi-modal path network along the Cape Cod Canal. These amenities will provide future residents the opportunity for healthy alternative modes of transportation. Commission staff recommends the applicant consider providing bicycle storage and posting CCRTA bus schedules. These measures could assist with reducing motor vehicle trips to and from the site.

WATER RESOURCES

The proposed project is in an area of direct groundwater discharge to the Cape Cod Canal, which is not impaired for nitrogen, and the site is outside of all Commission-mapped water resource protection areas. The applicant should investigate whether there are any private wells or other drinking water supplies downgradient of the site that should be considered.

The project proposes 90 bedrooms in 51 housing units. The project will be served by municipal water from the North Sagamore Water District, and wastewater will be managed on-site by a private septic system utilizing an Innovative/Alternative leach field to allow for a smaller footprint that maximizes the existing vegetated buffer to the adjacent residential property. The anticipated site nitrogen loading concentration from this development is approximately 20 mg/L, which is unlikely to negatively impact the aquifer and any downgradient waterbodies despite being above the 5 mg/L standard set out in the Commission's Water resources Technical Bulletin.

Project stormwater will be managed through site design and a variety of green stormwater infrastructure elements designed to control, infiltrate, and treat runoff from the site. The system was designed consistent with Massachusetts' stormwater standards, including the provision of 1-inch water quality treatment.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The project has been designed to respect both site's natural topography and the surrounding uses and development. The development footprint is clustered toward the flattest portion of the site, and the project proposes the use of a biodiverse mix of resilient native plants that support pollinators and birds, and should not require significant use of water, fertilizers, or pesticides.

The project proposes development within the 100' buffer to the isolated wetland in the westerly portion of the site, although development is largely kept out of the 50' buffer. This wetland is not mapped by MassDEP and it is unclear whether it is a 'jurisdictional' wetland; the project engineers concluded that it appears to be the result of runoff from existing development to the north of the site. Though not of high ecological value, it likely still provides some beneficial functions such as stormwater recharge and filtration, sedimentation and erosion control, and plant and wildlife habitat. Commission staff would encourage the applicant to explore ways as feasible to limit the project's location within the wetland buffer.

Commission staff also encourages the applicant to consider best practices such as scheduling clearing and grading outside of the peak bird breeding season (late May to early August), reusing on-site the Prime Farmland Soils mapped in the easterly portion of the site, and reusing downed trees onsite to create wildlife habitat or chipped and used for landscaping as practicable.