

**Subject: Zoning Board of Appeals- Prospect Girls, LLC (Hob Knob design & development) 14 Temahigan Ave; Map 4 Parcel 162**

Dear Ms. Rogers, Chair:

I am writing in regard to the expansion and additions proposed at 14 Temahigan Ave. Our family has owned a home 2 houses away at 379 East Chop Drive. Also, my sister and her husband raised their daughters, live and work locally on the island.

The Prospect Girls, LLC proposal (Hob Knob design & development) is too large and out of scale for the residential neighborhood and creates potential risk to the fragile wetlands. Many of us have cherished living on the wetlands, with the diversity of birds and wildlife and the quiet of the residential area.

There are significant issues with the substantial additions and expansions of historic 14 Temahigan that affect the fragile wetlands and the neighbors. 14 Temahigan Ave lies on a slope on and above the wetlands; I have requested of the Conservation Committee to request assessments of the applicant as per the attached letter:

- The soil displacement of an expanded house and additional garage/suite is likely to disrupt the below wetlands. Also, the soil run-off with construction could be exposed to lead paint given the age of the original house.
- The addition of the large pool (12 x 50 ft), the septic system leaching considering the proposed extensive numbers of water uses in the house (7 full baths, 4 ½ baths, 2 washing machines in a laundry, kitchen and wet bars) and the potential for water run-off from the new buildings, expansion and hardscape, all of which could negatively affect the wetlands below.
- The noise level of the current house porch is already loud given its high promenade bordering the low wetlands.

The historic early 1900's home is proposed to be expanded up into the attic, down into the basement, decks and porches added and also expanded outward to more than double in size to ~10,000 square feet and be 4 stories, which is out of character for the neighborhood.

- Notably, an elevator is planned for the building.
- According to the attached current tax assessment, there are only 2 ½ baths in the current house
- The proposed plans request 7 full bathrooms, most of which are attached to bedrooms, plus 4 ½ baths, kitchen, wet bars, 2 washing machines and garage

Regarding the garage, when the property was subdivided years ago, the garage was sold with the property. The question becomes, if a garage is now requested, it should be closer for convenience to the main house and away from the septic system and leach field. The additional structure appears to have another purpose: to add a suite and workout room (the size of the garage footprint is roughly equivalent to the LePage house) with a view onto the neighboring properties. We would question why a second floor separate suite and first floor workout room are not planned for within the large main house.

**The concept of 'dimension of time' is important in architecture. Homeowners change-over and the intentions for the property do change.**

In reviewing the 14 Temahigan plans, please look at what the plans could be now and in the future, all of which would affect the residential and wetlands areas in the future decades.

- More than doubling the living space in the house to a 10,000 sq ft, 4 story structure including a separate suite in another building do not suggest a private residence, but more of an income-generating property with high turnover of guests.
  - The common spaces are quite large on the 2 of the proposed 4 stories, plus an added future elevator plus the garage workout gym, more suited for rental venues or events. Most of the proposed bedrooms/suites have attached bathrooms. There is a laundry room with 2 washing machines, away from the bedrooms, which would be necessary for rentals.
- Given the Mass change in rental laws in the last few years, the homeowner can readily transition from being a family residence to a rental for group party events and weddings, all without designation of commercial zoning. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/room-occupancy-excise-tax>
  - Living near constant loud music and parties or even weddings is not in keeping with a Vineyard residential area.
  - The coming and going of traffic presents another issue. There is a question of where all of the guests would park.
- Indeed, the garage bedroom suite could become another rental. The garage suite could then transition to an apartment under The TOWN OF OAK BLUFFS RECODIFIED ZONING BY-LAWS APRIL 2003 (includes changes adopted through Feb 2018; section 3.4) which does enable a homeowner to build a separate apartment over time and meeting certain conditions.

Regarding the pool, there are many questions given the location of the pool on a slope towards the wetlands and neighbors. With the potential for chlorine leaching from the slope, the expectation would be that it would be a salt water pool not a chlorine pool. What is the platform around it- more hardscape? Also, where is the pool fencing to be situated to prevent potential drownings? There is the additional cabana building with what appears to be a fireplace or grill.

Lastly, where are the plans for the native plants, shrubs and trees plantings to help block the noise for the neighbors and encourage the wildlife and migrating birds? What are the plans for outdoor lighting which could have a negative effect on wildlife and migrating birds in the wetlands.

In essence, we are not supportive of the massive expansion of the house, which is not in keeping with the residential neighborhood and with protecting the wetlands. We also do not support building of the large garage with a suite. We would ask the Oak Bluffs Zoning Board to enforce the zoning ordinance and not grant a special permit.

Thank you for your consideration and time investment by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Yours very truly,

*Holly Crosbie-Foote*

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