

September 20, 2026

Dear Historic District Commission:

I heartily support the proposed addition to the church. It will clearly be a significant improvement to the exterior appearance of the building. The congregation, Cathlin, and Molly are long overdue for a better-functioning parish house that will help them in all they do to serve the island.

I have two comments about the design:

First, I hope there can be a reconsideration of the shape of the dormers. The shed dormers in the current design seem out of keeping with the original early-nineteenth-century structure. I think shed dormers tend to be more closely associated with the Arts and Crafts period, American bungalows, or a current contemporary look. In the village, the dormers within sight of the church are all gabled—Alley's, Rosenthal's, and Gothard's. In fact, I don't think there is a street facing shed dormer anywhere in the village. The more the new addition can connect visually and architecturally to the neighboring buildings, the better.

My second comment concerns the Music Street side of the building. Roads are built to move traffic quickly between regions; streets are built for community life. Music Street is the only "street" in the whole town of West Tisbury, and, like the village itself, it is a historic treasure. The Town Hall and Congregational Church, both striking period buildings, stand as the gateway to our only street.

Please take great care in thinking about historic design and the aesthetics of the Music Street side as the addition is planned. Elements such as a ramp and garbage shed must go somewhere, and perhaps they must be located on the Music Street side, but please remember that this side of the building is as important—or nearly as important—as the State Road side.

Thank you for work and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dorie McCullough Lawson

19 Music Street