

Dear Leah,

Thank you for your letter regarding your Board's June 22 meeting. I was sorry to learn that the Planning Board has become frustrated with Island Autism's progress, and I appreciate the opportunity to respond. I have been working very hard this spring and into the summer to move House one to a finish due to circumstance that were unanticipated and out of my control. I am happy to say that we have received unanimous approval for the landscape plan from the MVC LUPC and the COO is in Hand for House One. House Two construction is now underway.

Over the past several months, House 1 presented an unusual set of challenges that required my attention on many fronts. During that time my primary focus was on completing the building and satisfying the remaining requirements necessary to obtain the Certificate of Occupancy so that we could begin serving the individuals and families who have waited so patiently for this resource. I appreciate the Planning Board's support throughout this process.

Island Autism's project differs in important respects from a typical affordable housing development. As a nonprofit organization, our project is funded through a combination of Community Preservation funding, private philanthropy, grants, and financing. As with any nonprofit capital campaign, the pace of construction can be influenced by fundraising and changing economic conditions. Nevertheless, I believe the project is progressing well overall, and now that House 1 has received its Certificate of Occupancy, construction of House 2 is beginning.

I have always understood that completing the campus in approximately five years was the project's shared objective. My recollection is that this timeframe was mentioned by Matt Merry during an informal visit to the property several years ago, and I have carried that understanding with me throughout the project. However, I have not been able to locate any condition of approval, permit requirement, or recorded decision establishing a mandatory five-year completion deadline. Accordingly, I have always understood the five-year timeframe to be a shared goal rather than a binding condition of approval.

Throughout this project I have worked diligently to comply with the conditions imposed by the various permitting authorities while also responding to requests and concerns raised by the Planning Board and our neighbors. My goal has always been to work cooperatively, maintain open communication, and ensure that those who have supported this project remain informed of our progress.

Island Autism has worked hard to honor both the conditions of its permits and the concerns of the surrounding neighborhood while creating a campus that will serve Martha's Vineyard residents with autism for generations to come. I remain committed to completing the project as expeditiously as possible and to continuing a constructive and collaborative relationship with the Planning Board.

Thank you for your continued support and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kate