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October 8, 2020
Zoning Board
Town of West Tisbury
P.O. Box 278
West Tisbury, MA 02575

Zoning Board Members,

I come before the Board to request a permit to turn the existing “school building” at my residence of 10 Road to Great Neck into a guest house.

The building has been used as a school every year for the past 23 years. I ran and taught in it for ten years, and after leaving to join my family in the USVI, it was rented by the Plum Hill preschool until June 2020.

In 2001 I was granted a “Detached Bedroom Permit”, from Ernie Mendenhall as an accessory building to the single family residence on the same property. I have abided by the conditions of the permit and have used it every summer since for myself. There have been no complaints.

In late July the Plum Hill School found a property to purchase and informed me that they would not be renting this September, as they had planned. I then advertised, and Vineyard Montessori said they’d like to rent for the fall, however, they found space closer to their school in Vineyard Haven. They had informed me of this in late August.

It seems my plans had changed as well. As of mid-July I intended to honor my contract to the school in Petaluma that I had taught at the past two years. I have a 5 year old granddaughter out there whom I wanted to spend time with. Between the huge fires in neighboring Santa Rosa, and the rapid spike in Covid-19 in that area, (I have high risk conditions) I decided it wiser to stay put, and stay home, here in West Tisbury. I teacher preschool and it would be “in person” teaching with 24 children.

I reviewed the conditions on the detached bedroom permit, one which states: not applicable during the “school year”. I believe that was put that way to not have someone living in the building while it was being run as a school- September through June. Since there is no school running, I believed I was abiding by the conditions set forth.

Finally, there have been generous grants for preschools to make additions to their buildings. Unless, I want to open a school again (too old and too tired) this move has contributed to this building becoming less useful to the community as it once had been.

Other than Social Security benefits, the rental of my main house is my only income to keep up with costs. I am hoping with all this stated, that the Board will be understanding and consider this application as the most practical one.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra Polucci
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