To: Town of West Tisbury, planning board/ Appeals/ Building dept etc

Regarding: ‘Uncle Leonard’s Farm’, Road to Great Neck, West Tisbury Map 31, lot 68.3

What: Building a vegetable and cut flower barn and employee housing build.

Narrative:

 Morning Glory Farm and the property owners Simon and Robyn Athearn are looking to add a production barn and add employee housing, upon discussions with WT Building Department and Kevin Cusack of Autumn Construction, and Tom O’Brien (project manager). We are looking at building a barn with storage loft in the agricultural building area. The barns purpose is to house and manage the vegetable and cut flower production of the farm, with needs for refrigeration, tuber and seed storage, store crates & bins etc, washing sinks, general farm storage, production space for bagging salad greens, packing broccoli and processing cut flowers and making wreaths and bouquets and the like.

Building code and resulting cost concerns promote separating the barn space from the living space, the building department has encouraged building several detached bedrooms with small storage loft and small porch, the bedrooms as the dormitory housing that will use the bathroom facilities and kitchen space shared in the farm use building. This will separate the living space from the work space and will remove the 4 or more unrelated persons rule mandating a fire sprinkler system that we wish not to need. The workday and employee at home time should naturally off set from each other in timing making a good mutual use, although there is separation between the uses.

These detached bedrooms are desired to look small and camp like. Will not contain cooking equipment, bathroom or running water, have very limited downcast exterior lighting, and a bicycle rack. The one larger manager’s cabin will have a bathroom but no cooking facilities. They are all naturally insulated as they are log homes and we will insulate the floor and roof; but our staff demand is mainly during the warm months, we have additional year round accommodations at the home farm in Edgartown. We like buildings to blend into the oak forest and will be of log home and cedar shingled, and grey asphalt roof style.

Other ideas of note are: solar panels expected on roof, new parking area adjacent and to north and east. Shed roof off the side for tractor parking. We want a small group of current oak trees (3/4 acre) to remain in front of the building to filter the sunlight and lessen the view impact from the field for neighbors impact. We will use our current road and not need a curb cut from Road to Great Neck.

The setback from my personal house lot is requested to be closer to the east as it will make the barn less visible to neighbors in that location, maximizes the forest that can remain, be closer to the existing road and currently parking can still be used. The greenhouse and field production will be closer this way thus making the many repeat trips a day easier on staff. Of note I believe is that the parcel the land is on is fully owned without a mortgage by myself and my wife and is of very low value; of pegged at $3,000 per acre, permanently. Thus significantly lowering the value for any resale to an outside party. The farm is one economic farm unit and needs the house and it related barns, sheds, greenhouses, wells, animal pens etc to work. Point is there is very little chance of sale outside the Athearn family and has a landbank mandate to stay in agriculture that prohibits horses as they are not agriculture. So a fancy horse farm would never be suiter either.

We are and plan to be active farmers for many years and generations to come , producing an abundance of high quality farm goods and training many new farmers. We appreciate all the support the town offers our family and the farm community as a whole. Thank you

Simon & Robyn Athearn