



www.chilmarkma.gov

TOWN OF CHILMARK CHILMARK, MASSACHUSETTS

TOWN OFFICES:
Beetlebung Corner
Post Office Box 119
Chilmark, MA 02535
508-645-2100
508-645-2110 Fax

January 23, 2012

Senator Dan Wolf
Room 511B
State House
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Dear Senator Wolf:

The Town of Chilmark is seeking your assistance regarding the rebuilding of Menemsha after the devastating fire of July 12, 2010. We ask that you join the town in sharing your concerns with the Massachusetts Historical Commission as they review the U. S. Coast Guard's design this coming month.

The town has been working closely with designers from the US Coast Guard for the replacement of the Menemsha Boathouse for the past year. The new design was not consistent with the historical elements of the old boathouse except in general shape and color.

The Chilmark Historical Commission and Board of Selectmen have met three times with Captain George Bonner, PE and members of the DHS/USCG Facilities Design & Construction Center from Seattle to review the 15% design documents for the replacement boathouse. We have discussed windows, doors, exterior lighting and trim. The remaining major issue is the increased size of the building. Local zoning does not allow coastal buildings taller than 18 feet and the town objects to the 31 foot tall new design.

As you know, the boathouse was the largest structure on Menemsha Harbor and dominated the area. The new design was much larger than the original boathouse and included three floors. It would represent an unprecedented violation of our local zoning and adversely impact the jewel that Menemsha is.

The town has worked with the USCG to bring the new design closer to the original boathouse. The USCG design team has cooperated with the town and reduced the mass of the building. However, the height of the building remains three feet taller than the original boathouse and will block the historic view shed for the many homes and cottages along Menemsha Harbor and change the public vista as well. We are striving to protect Menemsha from unnecessary incremental changes.

Chilmark supports the USCG mission and is grateful to have them in our harbor. We thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Board of Selectmen

Historical Commission