

Alison Kisselgof

From: cmsmailer@civicplus.com on behalf of Contact form at Chilmark MA
<cmsmailer@civicplus.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 30, 2021 1:59 AM
To: akisselgof@chilmarkma.gov
Subject: [Chilmark MA] New Construction at 15 Doctor's Creek Path (Sent by Jaime Iglehart, jaime.iglehart@gmail.com)
Attachments: photos_of_neighborhood_1930_1965_1980.pdf; evan_becker.pdf; ellen_and_daisy_schnepel.pdf

Hello akisselgoff,

Jaime Iglehart (jaime.iglehart@gmail.com) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.chilmarkma.gov/user/1011/contact>) at Chilmark MA.

If you don't want to receive such e-mails, you can change your settings at <https://www.chilmarkma.gov/user/1011/edit>.

Message:

Dear Ms. Kisselgof,

I am a long-time renter at 17 Doctor's Creek Path in Chilmark. I have been lucky to come to this beautiful and pristine place since I was a baby. I love Doctor's Creek Path and Chilmark more than any place in the world. The character of this unique place -- modest, low-key, rustic, peaceful, is what makes it so special. It is the character of Doctor's Creek Path which have kept renters like myself and my family returning for the past 39 years.

I look forward to the retreat to Chilmark all year long as a place to unplug from the hectic world we all live in. At Doctor's Creek Path, I can truly connect with nature. The clear stars at night, walking down the tiny dirt path, the sounds of the birds, and the rolling waves which we can hear from our cabin as we go to sleep at night-- these moments are priceless and increasingly rare in our ramped-up world.

The Town of Chilmark Zoning Bylaws (If I understand them correctly):

Town of Chilmark Zoning Bylaws 2019 1-1 Article 1: PURPOSE Section 1.0 The purpose of this bylaw is to promote the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the inhabitants of the Town of Chilmark by:
A. encouraging the most appropriate use of land, B. preventing overcrowding, C. conserving the value of land, buildings and the rural nature of the Town, D. preventing traffic congestion and promoting traffic safety, E. preventing undue concentration of population, F. reducing fire and other hazards, G. preventing undue pollution of air, ground and water, and H. conserving the unique natural, historical, ecological, cultural, scenic and other values of the Town.

It is my understanding that the proposed structure on 15 Doctor's Creek Path is currently benefiting from variances to the Zoning bylaws which were granted in previous hearings. I humbly ask you to reconsider this decision.

The current structure on 15 Doctor's Creek Path is already out of proportion with its land allotment. A larger house which encroaches upon the houses below will encroach upon our privacy as long-term renters. Infinitely more importantly, it sets a precedent for ramped-up luxury development in this historic area within an already fragile ecosystem.

I read about the Chilmark "Big-House" bylaw online and was happy to see there was a system in place to preserve the historical character of Chilmark and prevent it from becoming totally and utterly a playground for the ultra rich. I wonder how this bylaw does not protect such a tiny path from a house which is so out of proportion with its lot? I understand that there are politics involved and influential architects and lawyers, but this piece of pristine and historic Chilmark landscape should not join the consistent creep of larger and larger development that result in mega-mansions. Some places should be honored for their unique character, unlike any place in the world.

<https://onebighome.com/chilmark-bylaw>

If this new home is built to the current specifications, it would ruin what has been for me and my family, a decades long relationship with a very special place. I believe it would result in the encroachment of sound and light pollution, the diminishing of our privacy, and the forever disrupted character of Doctor's Creek Path.

I understand that speaking as a renter, my voice might not be heard. I just want you to know that for this one letter there are many other people who feel the same way as me, whom I have spoken with about this proposed construction. We may not be land owners on Martha's Vineyard, but we are invested— with the time we've spent over our lifetimes and intend to continue spending as long as Chilmark continues to be the place we know and love. Please protect this cherished place.

Sincerely,
Jaime Iglehart

Alison Kisselgof

From: Contact form at Chilmark MA <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2021 3:59 PM
To: akisselgoff
Subject: [Chilmark MA] 15 Doctor's Creek Path (Sent by Thomas Iglehart, tom@iglehart.net)

Hello akisselgoff,

Thomas Iglehart (tom@iglehart.net) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.chilmarkma.gov/user/1011/contact>) at Chilmark MA.

If you don't want to receive such e-mails, you can change your settings at <https://www.chilmarkma.gov/user/1011/edit>.

Message:

Dear Ms. Kisselgof:

I have been an annual summer renter at both 17 Doctor's Creek Path and 15 Doctor's Creek Path in Chilmark since 1983.

Those 37 summers have provided me with much personal experience at this idyllic "up-island" location, since just after my daughter was born. Over those many years, three generations of my friends and family have stayed at either of these addresses at various summer months, starting with my generation, then my daughter's, followed by the children of my daughter's best friends as well, the eldest of whom is now 11 years old.

I have viewed the plans for demolition and replacement of the summer cottage located at 15 Doctor's Creek Path. I could not be more opposed to these plans.

First, in my experience: zoning authorities typically place the "character of the neighborhood" at the center of their deliberations, often superseding more tangible restrictions that may be documented in regulations. I therefore write to speak to that first and foremost. It appears that this aspect has been entirely overlooked, since the proposed plans for #15 are apparently being taken seriously.

The peaceful, quiet, and rustic character of Doctor's Creek Path is so distinct that it qualifies as a "neighborhood unto itself". As such, the concerns of visitors along that same gravel lane should be central to the concerns of the zoning board. I view this as simply a matter of responsible zoning management.

To that point, I am appalled at how completely out of character the proposed plans are. A single number reveals the most to me: the current cottage has two bathrooms, and the proposed plan shows five bathrooms. From this alone, the intent of the proposal is clear: excessive density and occupancy, and on a tiny parcel.

Along with that, the sheer size of the proposed footprint is astonishing, with every possible square foot built out, covering as much now-permeable soil as possible with structure. It is easy to imagine the impact of runoff to #17 immediately below and beyond. This also means multiple vehicles at #15 at all times with, it appears, little other place to park them but on top of the proposed "high capacity infiltrator bed", ensuring eventual damage to the entire waste water treatment plant. As any resident there knows, Chilmark Pond is already stressed by septic effects. Inviting more is simply unconscionable.

Furthermore, there is a major reason that our summers there have been so prized: night sky. More than just an attraction to amateur astronomers, every nightfall brings with it the peace of the Milky Way, easily visible now with the naked eye. (Many of our guests over the years had never seen the Milky Way before.) The current plan is a night-sky disaster: in addition to the high occupancy and intensive land use, the dismal effect of a decidedly oversized house with glass doors and bright lights is sure to obscure any nightly view of the heavens for good. This, to me, would be an environmental crime in itself.

Finally: noise. Gross enlargement of the house footprint and extension of the new deck, so that it directly overlooks #17, exudes dominance. The likelihood of regular deck parties is obvious. Please imagine a family "going camping", then setting up a television at their campfire that everyone else at the campground is supposed to tolerate, something I once saw at a national park. (They were expelled.) The deck alone is certain to be overused in any case, and at all hours, by any number of people -- both future residents and visitors. Generations have gone to Doctor's Creek Path to get away from it all, not bring "it all" with them. That is Doctor's Creek Path's entire reason for being. This proposed plan sabotages that.

I should provide further perspective on the existing summer cottage at #15, having stayed there over many summers at the invitation of its original owner Cathy Mansfield and, after she died, her successors the Mansfields. It currently sleeps four quite comfortably, with a fifth easily added when needed. The two bathrooms are perfectly adequate for that number in that old summer home, and the existing deck ample for occasional entertaining. I believe that trying to extract more occupancy and more intensive usage -- as shown in the proposed plans -- to be more than excessive. I see it as utterly out of place and certainly excessive.

There is no place like Doctor's Creek Path -- anywhere. Please do not allow it to be abused like this. I have taken pride in being able to say that I am a seasonal resident of Chilmark. I would like to be able to take that same pride with me in the future, wherever I am.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas J. Iglehart
15905 Carroll Road
Monkton, MD 21111
tom@iglehart.net
617-529-9889

August 22, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

For over 30 years (1962-1994) our family owned a house on School Street in Edgartown. After our parents passed away, we decided to sell the house in 1994. Edgartown was changing. New people were discovering the beauty of the historic whaling town and buying homes. They soon expanded the square footage of their residences, put in pools, and built out secondary structures on the premises. These changes transformed the charm and quaintness of the town while drastically limiting the percentage of green space on residential properties and forever altering the sense of community.

We abhorred these changes and naturally chose to move up island where life is more peaceful and less densely populated. For over two decades now we have rented the Bainbridge house — Camp #15 on South Abel's Hill — in a bucolic setting of beetlebung trees, evergreens, and an unobstructed view of the ocean in the distance. Chilmark offered us a different kind of vacation, one that was built around nature, Chilmark Pond, and a private beach. Days were sunny and fragrant, nights were quiet, offering pristine skies with stars and constellations that are not only visible but identifiable. And we loved the fact that neighbors' homes were not visible or audible from the outside deck of Camp 15. Modest, shingled homes had been built on lots between 1 and 1.5 acres in the 1950s and 60s as part of the Abel's Hill Association where families could reunite, and excess wasn't a part of their vocabulary.

Both of us have revered Up Island for its idyllic qualities and the towns' interest in enlightened development and land preservation. Witness the 2016 movie on Chilmark, "One Big Home," which pointed out the dangers of the proliferation of newly built mansions — in particular, the environmental impact on an island whose natural resources are limited and under constant threat from new housing development, increased population, poor stewardship, human greed and insensitivity.

We have reviewed the plans to tear down and replace the cottage at 15 Doctor's Creek Path with a 1,840 sq. ft. footprint and 3,108 sq. ft. house, with a 593 sq. ft. deck on the tiny 0.22 lot, one of the smallest in Chilmark. We stand in opposition to the proposed plan and in agreement with all the points raised by Thomas Iglehart in his letter. In summary:

- flagrant disregard for the character of the neighborhood;
- excessive density and occupancy on a tiny parcel that proposes to be built out to its maximum with huge indoor and outdoor spaces;
- a major deck extension that will hover over the property to its south;
- multiple vehicles in which parking, wherever it is located, will be very visible from neighboring land;
- undue stress on the surrounding environment and fragile ecology due to water runoff, increased use of a septic system, and potential soil erosion — not to mention the need

to accommodate the increased occupancy with a 1000 gallon pump chamber, 1500 gallon septic tank, well house, high-capacity infiltration bed, and so on;

- excessive light pollution and glare at night that will affect the quality of life of neighboring residents;
- increased noise as well as noise decibels due to high residential occupancy, magnified to the fullest by a proposed outdoor entertainment center.

We are appalled and dismayed by the March 25, 2021 decision of Chilmark's ZBA to capitulate to development interests and to approve the proposed plan at 15 Doctor's Creek Path. This is irresponsible zoning management of a treasured and unique spot in Chilmark.

Abel's Hill residents, seasonal visitors, and the greater Chilmark community deserve better stewardship by the ZBA of these precious lands. Our voices in opposition to the magnitude of the current building project and its irreversible harm to the natural environment and quality of life in Abel's Hill should be heard and heeded.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Ellen M. Schnepel, Ph.D
34 Monroe Place, #2B, Brooklyn, NY 11201
eschnepel@verizon.net, C: (917) 854-5999

Marguerite (Daisy) Schnepel
109 Transit Street, Providence, RI 02906
daisy.schnepel@verizon.net, T: (401) 451-4042



Opposition of 15 Doctor's Creek Path

1 message

Evan Becker <evan.m.becker@gmail.com>
To: Heather Norton <noheatmac@gmail.com>

Tue, Jul 27, 2021 at 4:31 PM

Hi Heather,

I'm writing to share my thoughts opposing the proposed construction at 15 Doctor's Creek Path.

My family has been staying at Doctor's Creek Path since the early 80's. Personally, I've been staying at 17 Doctor's Creek every summer since before I was born. And this year we added a 3rd generation to the annual tradition, with my now 10 month old son, Thomas. I'm fortunate enough to have traveled to dozens of countries and 6 continents around the world, but I come back to Doctor's Creek Path every year, because there's nothing like this place on the planet.

The setting has always been a beautiful retreat protected by Chilmark's thoughtful building codes that preserve the natural beauty of the region. Now it seems that someone with deep pockets is looking to selfishly break the rules for their own self interest. They clearly purchased the property knowing the lot size and respective town limitations, but are blatantly ignoring the town's rules intended to keep this unique place so special. The proposed structure at #15 does not conform with the regulations of the town, and seems to be opposed by all of the neighbors. It adds nothing to the neighborhood, only detracts from the community and environment. If the local community is so strongly opposed, it clearly should not be allowed.

My greatest concern is the precedent this sets for Chilmark. The structure is too large for the lot and by code should not be approved. If this is allowed, it could, and most certainly will, be used as a case for countless more building projects. Before we know it, Chilmark could transform from a beautiful country landscape, to a suburb of McMansions popping up left and right on lots that are too small. Allowing #15 to move forward puts Chilmark as a whole in a dangerous position for the future.

Additionally, #15 will negatively impact the lifestyle all around have grown accustomed to. It will block views of the water, add a blemish on the landscape when you come back over the dunes, and for folks like myself, be a towering structure looking down on our little summer retreat. #15 will have a direct view into the private bathroom and outdoor shower of #17. Plus the light and sound pollution coming from outdoor lights, a TV, and a hot tub will inevitably take away from the serene landscape the neighborhood has experienced for decades. Not to mention, a significant environmental risk with the well water, and septic systems the property will require.

I truly hope the town of Chilmark will consider the negative impact approving this structure could cause not only for the immediate residents, but the ripple effect it could have for the town itself. Please do not approve building anything other than on the existing footprint of 15 Doctor's Creek Path.

Kind Regards,
Evan Becker

617-852-2528
656 West Roxbury Parkway
Boston, MA 02131

