

The Zoning Board of Appeals

Town of Chilmark

Chilmark, MA 02535

Dear Zoning Board,

We have built a guest house, including a covered porch, in the woods, on the North side of Abel's Hill. From the very beginning we knew it was important to screen-in the porch, so we could enjoy it during the day and evening.

During the approval process for the guest house, I had several conversations with Lenny Jason while he was still the Building Inspector. I assured him that we had no intention of building solid walls around the porch. Given that assurance, Lenny said we could screen in the porch. Subsequently, your Board issued a restriction against screening in the porch. I approached Lenny with that, and he repeated that it was okay to do the screening.

On June 20, 2023, before we started on the screening, Akeyah Lucas and Lenny visited the house. He inspected it and signed a Certificate of Use and Occupancy. At that time Akeyah asked Lenny about the screening, and, again, he approved it. You, of course, can confirm that with Akeyah. On the strength of that, and former approvals, we hired Ed Griggs, a skilled carpenter from Vineyard Haven to install screens. Things were progressing nicely when sometime last week the new Building Inspector came to the site and told us he had received a complaint about the screening of the porch. Ed Griggs stopped the screening portion and finished off some of the rough work. We have a fairly substantial investment in the project and it is nearly complete.

Sally and I feel squeezed between your Board and the former Building Inspector, Lenny, who we are very sorry to hear has had serious health issues. We thought we had the necessary approval otherwise we would not have proceeded. I have been a Chilmark summer resident since the 1950's and Sally and I have been homeowners since the early 1970's. I served the Town for a number of years as a Fire Fighter.

Please allow us to finish the last part of the screening of the porch. We will never build solid walls around the porch. The whole point of screening, especially in the woods, is to be able to enjoy the porch during the day and evening.

Respectfully,

Sally and Hans Solmssen

*Sally + Hans
56 North Abel's Hill Road*