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To: Merrill Mead-Fox, Chair, Wellfleet Historical Commission
From: Sarah Korjeff, Preservation Specialist
Date: April 27, 2021
Re: 15 Squire's Pond Lane

As you requested, I have reviewed the historic inventory form for 15 Squire's Pond Lane and the Project Review Application submitted by the owner. The following comments are for consideration by the Wellfleet Historical Commission as they decide how to proceed with review under the town's Demolition Delay Bylaw.

The house at 15 Squire's Pond Lane is located just outside the boundary of the Wellfleet Center National Register Historic District but it is included in the state's cultural resource database (MACRIS). The recently updated historic inventory form for the property is well developed and provides a good description of the architectural elements of the building. This house does not follow the traditional form of a single architectural style, but instead appears to be comprised of several different building components joined together in the mid-1800s. Given the recognizable form and detailing of some of these elements (especially the section resembling an early Cape Cod House), it is likely that portions of the building are older than the circa 1850 date.

The unusual form of this building reminds me of some other Outer Cape properties where simple traditional buildings were "dressed up" in the late 1800s to incorporate Victorian/Queen Anne architectural elements such as towers, porches, and shaped shingle siding. The two-story tower on the south side of this building may have been such a late-1800s addition. We know from the historic inventory form (Form B) developed in 1983 that the south façade of the Cape portion of the building had patterned shingles on it, and the entry door at the southeast corner of the Cape may suggest that a porch once stretched across the front of the Saltbox portion of the building or wrapped around the corner.

This property is not visible directly from Main Street, but much of it is visible from the Methodist Church parking lot which it abuts. Though its architecture is not as distinctive as many of the buildings within the historic district, it provides a unique architectural story within the closely developed area of the town center. Some windows and exterior detailing have been relatively recently altered, but the basic form of the building constructed circa 1850 appears to be intact. I agree with the consultant who



updated the Form B inventory that an inspection of the building interior may provide more information about the age of the separate building components and the building's evolution.

Demolishing and rebuilding the structure in the same form would mean losing all the original structural frame and materials that can reveal this building's history. A replicated building would not have the same historic significance and it may have other differences too because it may not be possible to replicate the dimensions of the existing building and still meet current building code requirements for ceiling height, insulation, and egress in new construction.

Siding and roofing materials are expected to be replaced over time, but the original structural frame and sheathing materials used in the early 1800s were made to last for centuries, which partly explains the reuse of several early building elements to create this unique structure. The building's evolution makes an interesting story and it would be far preferable to preserve the significant portions of the building and continue its evolution than to lose all the original building elements and replace them with new materials. I encourage you to examine the building's structural frame in an effort to better understand its age, and then to work with the applicant to retain the oldest and most unique portions of the structure and marry them with areas of new construction.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.