

Chilmark Residents:

At the Annual Town Meeting in April of 2018, in response to a petition which was withdrawn prior to the meeting, the Board of Selectmen instructed the Planning Board to examine the issue of increasing the permissible size of Guest Houses in Chilmark from 800 to 1200 square feet.

Over the course of the subsequent 6 months, the Planning Board & the Planning Board Subcommittee discussed this issue at each of their regular meetings, both amongst board members and with members of the public who attended these meetings following announcements in the town columns. The Planning Board Subcommittee also invited input from relevant parties such as the Building Inspector, the Tax Assessor, local realtors, members of other island Planning Boards, and members of other town boards.

Following this input and analysis, the Planning Board determined that it would be unable to reach a consensus regarding a change to the Guest House bylaw at this time, and instead has prepared the attached report which presents the Pros and Cons of the issue.

However, the Planning Board does have a suggestion for a related bylaw modification that might meet some of the aims described by the proponents of the proposed Guest House size increase. It had been suggested that a larger Guest House might be more convenient for year-round occupancy for family members. The Planning Board notes that in 2015, the Town passed the Accessory Apartment bylaw specifically to enable family members to live in Chilmark on a year-round basis. The Planning Board acknowledges that amending the Accessory Apartment bylaw to increase the size of an Accessory Apartment from 800sq' to an appropriately larger number might better meet the needs of year-round family members without the negative and possibly unanticipated consequences of increasing the Guest House size. In addition, since the provisions of the Accessory Apartment bylaw can also be applied to affordable housing, increasing the size allowable for an Accessory Apartment might also address affordable housing needs.

Respectfully,

Chilmark Planning Board

Richard Osnoss, Chair
Janet Weidner
Mitchell Posin
Peter Cook
John Eisner
Chris MacLeod
Cathy Thompson