Perhaps the most difficult challenge the Planning Board faces when new developments occur within Marion is the desire to achieve architectural designs consistent with Marion’s 19th century rural New England seaside village character. In addition to our Design Guidelines, we wish to ensure that these be multi-story structures, consistent with that experienced throughout the Town. Therefore, the following motion is intended to require that new, and substantially rebuilt structures – those where the cost of the renovations exceed 50% of the value of the current structure – unless approved by the Marion Planning Board under a Special Permit.

Sprawl development is what we are trying to avoid. In the past decade we have seen numerous applications for development within the General Business Districts. In almost all cases these were for commercial establishments seeking to fully utilize the lots with only single story structures. The lack of specific mention of this requirement in the Bylaw has resulted in applicants refusing to achieve this – becoming a partial reason for denials of the applications. In some cases, these matters are being settled in negotiation following an appeal, but in others, we have seen single story structures that could have much better reflected Marion’s architectures – and helped preserve the character that we have voiced support over repeatedly;

Therefore, we move that Town Meeting accept the following provision to the bylaw;

In Section 4.2 in the Table of Principal Use Regulations that the following row, and the associated (\*) comment be added at the end of the current Table:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Minimum 2 Story Structure\* | NA | NA | PB | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |

Except by Special Permit shall new structures, or renovations to existing structures that exceed 50% of the existing structure’s value, be allowed.