

To: Chilmark Board of Selectmen
From: Chilmark Historical Commission
October 27, 2011

Re: Draft USCG Menemsha Boathouse Replacement 15% Construction Drawings

Town Selectmen and Chilmark residents met at a public meeting on October 25, 2011 to review and discuss the proposed design for the replacement of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Menemsha Boathouse. Representatives of the USCG design team, from Seattle, WA; members of the architectural team from Boston; Officers of the USCG and the Chilmark Historical Commission were present. The public was encouraged to discuss the proposed early design plan presented.

Several key design issues of concern to the Historical Commission members are:

- 1.) the overall increase in scale of building in small historic harbor
- 2.) the increased length, and height which is beyond our current bylaw
- 3.) the second floor and the many windows
- 4.) first floor windows that should replicate the old double-hung, 6 over 6 windows
- 5.) exterior lighting and pollution of light from many windows
- 6.) louvered dormer windows
- 7.) scale of the proposed boat ramp and dock
- 8.) height of the boathouse door

The Historical Commission members noted that the Menemsha USCG Boathouse, with its distinctive white walls and red roof on the harbor, is in many respects the focal point of Menemsha. The comments of the people in attendance focused on the size of the building, the length of the docks and the historic replication of the former building.

The design team described the needs and requirements for the new station. They explained the challenge of designing a building to meet 100 year flood level requirements and the challenges necessary for technical equipment to be placed in the attic space. Residents voiced concerns regarding the effect of the larger building on the character of Menemsha and the character of the harbor. Menemsha is a rural New England fishing village and has maintained its appearance through vigilance and oversight regarding the growth around Menemsha village. Chilmark has been firm in its zoning which includes height restrictions and setbacks along our roadways and septic responsibility. Our bylaws often refer to scale and neighborhood character, which is a theme throughout our zoning bylaws. The citizens in attendance recognized and appreciate the presence of the USCG in Menemsha and their willingness to work with their neighbors.

The Chilmark Historical Commission hopes the design team will take into consideration the concerns of its members and townspeople and we look forward to the revision of the proposed design.

Thank you for respecting the Chilmark Historical Commission's concerns and input.