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September 24, 2021

Mr. Ray Pohl, Chairman
Historic District Commission
2 Fairgrounds Road
Nantucket, MA 02554

Re: 27 and 29 Fair Street - Front and Rear Buildings

Dear HDC Members:

I am a homeowner and resident of Martins Lane around the corner from 27 and 29 Fair Street and, accordingly, consider myself an interested party to the proposed changes to 27 and 29 Fair Street.

The Fish Lot section of town is known for its charm and human scale. I believe, for the most part, renovations in this neighborhood have been made consistent with the guidelines provided in "Building with Nantucket in Mind." I refer to several passages of the HDC's manual that I believe to be at the essence of my concern for the renovation being proposed:

- *The scale of a building is one of the most important factors determining whether it is compatible with its setting. A stark contrast of scale between adjacent buildings is visually disruptive while a similarity of scale gives them a fundamental relatedness. The unified charm of the streets of Nantucket is due largely to the consistent scale of its buildings.*
- *Scale not only applies to the dimensions of a building but to space as well. Between buildings or other visual solids, such as trees, are the voids of partially enclosed spaces.*
- *A simple main mass should be placed on the street side of a building and be in harmony with the form and orientation of existing buildings along the street.*
- *The integrity of the front of an historic building should be maintained. Consequently, on pre-Civil War structures, adding bays or other massing interruptions to its plane is not permitted. Any addition to an historic house should be extended from the rear or side wall and kept as inconspicuous as possible. Such additions should harmonize with the*

massing, style, and details of the original house. Further, their bulk should not overwhelm the original building size.

My concerns are as follows:

- A. 27 Fair Street: a second floor would be added to the rear third of the house clearly visible from Hillers Lane. The height of the building would be raised by 18”.

- B. 27 Fair Street Guest House: the house currently consists of three sections, the two at the western end being two stories and the third being one story. The proposal would add a second floor to the third section and add a fourth section consisting of two floors, all totally visible from Hillers Lane. The height of this building would also be raised by 18”. This “guest house” would be massive in scale and would not be “sympathetic” to the character of the front building at 27 Fair Street. Nor would it be sympathetic to the scale of the Hiller Street residences to its west.

- C. 29 Fair Street (Woodbox): a large second floor would be added to the rear of the building and totally visible from Hillers Lane.

I submit to you that, should the proposed renovations be approved and made, the new scale of the buildings at 27 and 29 Fair Street (and primarily 27) would violate the basic tenets as described in “Building with Nantucket In Mind.”

Sincerely,

Al Messina