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January 9, 2019

Zoning Board of Appeals
Town of Falmouth
59 Town Hall Square
Falmouth, Ma 02540

Dear Members of the Falmouth Zoning Board of Appeals:

Docomomo US, the nation's leading advocate for buildings of the Modern Movement, is very concerned about the proposed development for 533-539 Woods Hole Road, the current location of the prominent Buckminster Fuller Woods Hole Dome and Nautilus Motor Inn. This dome is the first, and extremely rare example, of this type of structure and the only one by Buckminster Fuller designed and built out of wood by him and his students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This is not a typical structure found in towns and cities across the country, its significance cannot be understated. It is a stand-alone structure that has no equal of its type in the US.

Because of this prominence, a thorough understanding of its condition, setting, contribution of the existing wings, and viewsheds must be developed to best realize the impacts of future development. To date, we don't believe this type of careful analysis has been established by the current developer. This can be plainly seen in the current proposal where a complete removal of the original wings is proposed, a replacement entrance is designed that lacks a relationship to the original structure, the shameless adjacency in the placement of Building "E", and the flagrant disregard to the original viewsheds of this property. All of this points to the lack of sensitivity that is paid to this structure, its potential significance as a cluster of buildings, and the understanding of its setting on the site and within the Town. On top of these issues, there is a blatant disregard paid to the sensitive restoration needed for the delicate structure of the dome. The only indication to any restoration work on this structure are notes at the openings that state: *Infill/Repair as Necessary*. This is not a sensitive preservation methodology and we strongly oppose the current plan.

We understand that the Dome and Woods Hole Organization is willing to renew their involvement in this project, to assist the developer in understanding the full significance of all elements of the site, and to assist the project moving forward. One suggestion is to produce a Historic Structures Report, a foundational document that establishes a plan for a property within the context of the historic significance. We encourage that the Town and the Zoning Board of Appeals deny this application but recommend that the developer reestablish the connection to this organization and develop a plan that respects the dome's significance and legacy for future generations.

Sincerely,



Todd Grover
Secretary
Advocacy Committee Chair