Historical Society of Old Yarmouth
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September 11, 2025

Historical Society of Old Yarmouth

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Cape Cod Commission
P.O. Box 226, 3225 Main Street
Barnstable, MA 02640

Re: 49 Putnam Avenue, Cotuit, MA 02635

Dear Commissioners:

The Historical Society of Old Yarmouth (HSOY) is writing to urge you to deny the request for demolition and moving of structures at 49 Putnam Avenue, Cotuit, MA. The proposed project would entail the demolishing of the historic ells, the first of which was added in the 1840's as the first post office in "Cotuit Port" as this area of the village was then called. It also calls for the move of the stripped-down main house either to a site across the driveway down a slope, or to a site at 555 Main St. currently occupied by a historic mansard house for which style of architecture Cotuit is particularly known. The proposed move would inevitably entail the removal of the curious solarium, called "the Nose," added to the late 19th century front porch. The project has been referred to the Commission for review under "Developments of Regional Impact."

It has come to our attention that the Massachusetts Director of the National Register has stated that completion of this proposed demolition project would entail the removal of this historic home from the Historic Register. This is a matter of concern for us because this house is a not only a beloved monument overlooking the bay, but an integral part of a historic Cape Cod estate that still includes: a unique ice house with a gentleman scholar's study on the second floor, a garage of similar date, a 19th century gardener's cottage and a root and egg cellar remaining from the estate when it was a working truck farm.

The need for "enlarged outdoor living space" for the property owner is surely not a reason to disfigure and fundamentally destroy the oldest and most historic house on Cotuit Bay and cause its loss not only to the residents of Cotuit, but also to Cape Cod and the State of Massachusetts. HSOY stands in agreement with the Barnstable Historic Commission and several other historic agencies in believing that this proposed project is a senseless destruction of an estate with important local and regional significance. We strongly urge the Cape Cod Commission to deny the request for this demolition and move. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Robert D Kelley

Robert D. Kelley
President, Board of Trustees
Historical Society of Old Yarmouth

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