

Strock Enterprises - Notes

BG 10.17.1954 Dr. Alvin Strock at Brigham Hospital demonstrating new ultrasonic dental drill.

VG 11.20. 1964 Strock Firm buys two more large tracts.

Charles T. Luce Farm at Farm Neck. Farmhouse and 200 acres. Purchased from heirs. Adjoins land previously purchased by Strock including Island Country Club.

Katama Estates from Al Brickman. 250 acres sold by Elisha Smith to Brinkman.

Sales brokered by Carlyle Cronig.

Island Properties established for the purpose of conserving the natural resources of the Island while helping to meet the housing and recreational needs accompanying growth with increasing accessibility. Guided by the principles of the American Conservation Association. In foreword of recent publication – Laurance Rockefeller stresses that the time has come for conservation and development to take positive interest in each other.

Association approach based on theory that “the preservation of nature and the enjoyment of it by the public can provide effective control in the absence of zoning.”

Overall plan for Island Properties designed by Sasaki, Walker and Associates. Sasaki is professor at Harvard. Developments will provide: off-season caretaker services, special membership at Island Country Club; rental arrangements; access to beaches; architectural and design guidance; bridal paths.

BG 11.23.1969 Home planning and conservation go hand-in-hand on Vineyard

Strock’s 2200 acres including only 18-hole golf course. Doug Strock sales manager (son and nephew). Accommodate growth with sound planning.

General manager Richard Thorman.

Received first conservation award: from Western Wood Products Association. “In recognition and appreciation for creative design and utilization of Western wood products and for its approach to preservation of open land and the natural growth of the island in the development of modern home sites.”

Pilot project on Waterview Farms, which may grow to 500 acres. Undeveloped shore, 25 acres of open space, ferry to beach, other perks.

BG 3.26.1970 Moses Strock, 68, died. Pioneer in electro-surgery. Harvard Dental School grad. Chief of dental services at Brigham Hospital. After retirement continued in Boston and MV.

7.18.1976 Strock strives for balance in Vineyard development

He and brother largest land owners on MV. Started family acquisitions 1959 to 1965 that led to 2000 acres. "He said his use of the land would become a model." Set aside waterfront, view easements, clustering. Brother Moses and nephew Peter Strock.

The Kennedy legislation influenced their decision to record a plan for full development of a major portion of their land. Previously considered it a long-term investment.

Much of best land going into golf; only developing 59%, avoiding shore; not developing to maximum;

Concern for Island – donated land to the Wampanoags; sold the Dr. Fisher House to a non-profit interested in its preservation. Helped found the Vineyard Alliance – focused on historic resources and traffic congestion.

Houses in Waterview - \$45-70,000; blended into natural pine woods with weathered stains.

BG 10.03.1976 SJC case between Strock and MVC. Strock plans 842 houses. Oak Bluffs has 1600 residential buildings. Island has 6000 residents. Would represent 8 years of construction as 100 houses built the previous year.

HBH – uncertainty of water.

Strock – 41% would be open space. Given MAS easement to control wildlife (?).

VG 4.15.1977 G. Adams Strock Development Concerns Adjudged Bankrupt by Court

Strock Enterprises and Island Properties declared bankrupt. No further family control.

Decision was direct result of Supreme Judicial Court ruling three weeks earlier that MVC regulations apply to the Waterview development. Ends the attempt by Alvin and Marcus to refinance. Strock Enterprises Island Properties is subsidiary of Strock Enterprises. They had been granted protection from demands of creditors under federal bankruptcy laws, contingent of financial reorganization plan.

Financial distress due to inability to market the Waterview lots. Subdivision plans were approved a month before the first MVC moratorium became effective; portions of the land remained under moratorium until this past month. As moratoriums ended MVC regulations came into effect, which restricted the density of development to one dwelling per 1 1/2 acre and 25 units per year. The subdivision plan restricted density to one dwelling per 1/2 acre and no rate restriction.

The two companies brought suit against the MVC. SJC ruled against. The agreed upon refinancing arrangement with creditors was then unviable.

“Everything crumbled,” Daniel Glosband, lawyer for Strock.

Major debts: Bass River Savings \$4.5m, First National Bank of Boston \$2.5m, City Bank and Trust Company, \$600,000, Mutual Bank for Savings \$300,000, Capital Bank and Trust Company \$300,000.

Katama property is complicated as First National Bank was initially granted attachment but now other claims.

Strock – rate restriction makes Waterview unmarketable.

“My only interest is in continuing to try to make a contribution to the Island.”

VG 7.26.1977 George Adams Strock Lands Slow to Move

Family development firms shattered by bankruptcy. Court appointed a trustee of Strock Enterprises. Put much of land up for sale to reorganize financially. Trustee is rejecting low-ball offers.

Most of the smaller developed tracts disposed of. More than 1300 acres remain in tracts up to 380 acre.

Waterview Farm going to Bass River Savings Bank, mortgage holder.

Alvin Strock put much of the blame on the MVC. Trustee – one of big mistakes was to land-bank large hunks of property.

Lists property – notes added to table.

BG 4.23.1978 SJC decision against Strock.

George Mathieson, MVC Chairman "most people saw the decision as validating the commission's powers even beyond those at issue in the Strock case."

BG 9.27.1981 After 7 years Wamps will learn whether suit claiming tribal ownership of 238 acres of GH is settled or will go to trial. Voting on plan to return to the tribe land worth \$2.38m in out of court settlement.

Leadership in favor; opposition from tribal group that views it as sell-out.

The 14-item settlement package is the product of more than four years of negotiations between the tribe and the non-Indian Gay Head Taxpayers Assn. The taxpayers' association stepped into the negotiations in 1976, claiming the town's three selectmen, because they are Indians, could not represent the interests of Gay Head non-Indians.

Since 1977, the tribe and the taxpayers have been unable to agree on a settlement, despite mediation efforts by Harvard Law School Dean Albert M. Sachs in 1978, and despite the fact that, since last year, only one issue has really separated the two sides.

That issue was ownership of the beaches adjacent to the 238 acres of town Common Land - including the famous Gay Head clay cliffs. The tribe wanted total ownership of the beaches. The taxpayers' associations argued that the town should keep control of a 50-foot wide strip of the beach to insure that non-Indians would have beach access.

The package the tribe is voting on now gives the town the 50-foot strip of beach. It gives the tribe 238 acres of shorefront Common Land to be kept in their wild state, and 175 acres of buildable land to be purchased from a bankrupt development firm. The tribe would form a land corporation to oversee development of the so-called Strock Land into housing for tribe members who otherwise could not afford to stay in Gay Head.

Those who object to the settlement believe it doesn't give the tribe enough. On Aug. 31, the objector petitioned US District Court Judge John McNaught to allow the expansion of the original suit from a claim for 238 acres of town land, to a claim for return of the entire town of Gay Head, 3400 acres, to the tribe.

Robert Hahn, the Boston lawyer who represents the 43 Indians seeking return of the entire town, says Massachusetts violated the federal Indian Non-Intercourse Act of 1790 by creating the town of Gay Head and transferring land from the tribe without federal approval.

"That 3400 acres is the Gay Head Indian reservation," Hahn says. Asked about non-Indians who have bought land in Gay Head from Indians and built houses, Hahn says: "Those people aren't dumb. They knew this was a touchy situation."

Tom Tureen, lawyer for the tribe, says the settlement gives back most of what the tribe could reasonably expect to get. Combined with the 703 acres of Gay Head land already owned by Indians, the return of 492 acres to the tribe would give Gay Head Indians control over 1195 of the town's 3,400 acres, Tureen says.

"This is the best settlement that could be accomplished short of litigation. And you have to ask, do the risks of litigation outweigh the benefits of a settlement?" he says.

Madison, himself a Wampanoag, says his real concern is that the tribe could lose a trial. Members of the Gay Head Indian community can't afford land in town, he says, and the settlement is the only sure hope of getting land for Gay Head Indians to live on.

"I believe the tribe had a chance to get what it needed. If this goes to trial, it could be the end of the tribal council ... and I think the community will suffer for it," Madison says.

No one will predict the outcome of the vote. The history of Gay Head Wampanoag tribe votes is that they are totally unpredictable. But Widdiss says he hopes to begin work after the ballots are counted tomorrow on legislation that would bring the settlement of the state's longest standing Indian land claim before the United States Congress for ratification.

BG 9.25.1988 Alvin Strock 76, Newton Centre. Broke hip 3 years ago skating. Designed a hip protector to protect from impacts.

"Strock finds that his lifelong fervor to improve the quality of life with biomedical inventions is adding an extra dimension to his retirement."

In 1938, while an associate dental surgeon at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Strock placed the first successful human dental implant.

Prior to his retirement, Strock and his late brother, Moses, also a dentist, would continue their summer enjoyment of Martha's Vineyard by returning to see patients there in winter, a practice now continued by his dentist nephew, Peter.

Island Properties, Inc.

Assembled by Drs. Alvin and Moses Strock. Total 2,025 acres plus Island Country Clubⁱ

Sengekontacket Pond 670 acres

Includes Major's Cove and Dodger Hole. Two sections have begun: Waterview Farm (15 lots); Trade Winds (8 lots). Preliminary plans for the entire area. [Dodgers Hole: 100 acres bordering State Forest on east along E-VH Road. Includes the pond and wetland. Divided into 185 lots that have been rough cut and graded.] [Hidden Cove: 81-acres on Majors Cove includes open meadow. Approved subdivision of 119 lots but MVC will only allow 54. Roads cut and graded.]

Lagoon Woods 110 acres

Woodlands with a partial plan of one-acre lots. Sandy Point on Lagoon will be the recreation area for the development. [73 acres on east side of Barnes Road, partially subdivided and developed. Two of the six half-acre lots are built on. Remainder are empty. Undivided land zoned at 1 1/2-acre density.]

Katama Farm 220 acres

Area turned into farmland. Tentative development plans call for high densities.

Gay Head 200 acres

Preliminary proposals call for quarter acre lots. Plans are to be changed. [Jeffers Homestead: 22-acres half way between Lobsterville and State Roads. Wooded with ravine and stream running through. Looks out towards Elizabeth Islands.] [Scattered through Gay Head are a number of lots most on southern end of town overlooking NoMan's Land and Squibnocket Pond. Total about 150 acres. Much of it rugged with some parcels contiguous.]

Red Hill Farm 90 acres

Development to be centered around horseback riding facilities. [75 acres of meadow surrounded by pines and oaks. Southern end runs into Duarte's Pond and abuts Chicama Vineyards. Small house and barn].

Great Plains Wildlife Preserve 400 acres

Forest contiguous to Red Hill Farm. Land would provide excellent cover to pheasant and other types of fowl. [380-acre tract abuts State Forest on two sides. Subdivided into 226 lots, ranging from 1 1/2 to 2 acres. No roads or utilities. Forested in pine and oak]

Tiasquam River 143 acres

[Touches the south side of Middle Road and lies across Meetinghouse Road with the Tiasquam River running through part of it. Subdivided into 49 lots, 2-3 acres in size. Slopes south (??N?)]

Deacon Vincent Land (Edgartown) 150 acres

Edgartown Meadows 150 acres

Recent Acquisition 35 acres

[Ferry Boat Village: nine buildings in commercially zoned district.] [Other small lots in Gay Head, Oak Bluffs, and West Tisbury.]

Island Country Club, motel and seaside 18-hole golf course

Dockside (Vineyard Haven)

Colonial Inn (Edgartown)

Mainland Waystation (Woods Hole)

ⁱ Information from the archives at the Vineyard Gazette. One yellowed single sheet must date from around 1970 as Waterview I was started but not completed and Waterview II had not been proposed. Additional information contained in [] comes from Vineyard Gazette July 26, 1977 article by George Adams "Strock Lands Slow to Move".