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TAXPAYERS'
ASSOCIATION

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16 August 2007

Dear Friends --

I regret the intrusion into what I hope is a delightful summer, but a matter worthy of TNRTA members' attention has arisen in Truro. A plan is underway to develop an important undeveloped bay dune site in Truro, a site that has considerable artistic, environmental and historical significance. It is unique and irreplaceable. Urgent action is needed this week.

A community effort spearheaded by abutters, neighbors, and concerned seasonal and year-round residents is underway to preserve the Hopper Landscape (defined as the view from the Hopper studio window) and has asked for TNRTA's assistance. We agree that this matter deserves member attention now. Already this matter has been the subject of an article in the Cape Cod Times of 8/14 and the Boston Globe on 8/15. Links to these articles can be found here and on the TNRTA website:

http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2007/08/15/mansion_may_obscure_what_hopper_painted/

<http://www.capecodonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070814/NEWS/708140310>

The Hopper Landscape is one of Truro's major historic, cultural, and environmental spots. Hopper lived and worked here for over thirty summers and the house-studio has probably been painted and photographed by professionals and amateurs more than any other spot in Truro, with the possible exception of Highland Light. The viewscape is now threatened. A 9+ acres parcel immediately to the north of the Hopper studio window has recently changed hands. It contains a 200 year old, beautifully renovated house on Stephens Way which the new owners intend to turn into a guesthouse. They plan to build a new 6,500 sq. ft. residence, a detached garage, a large swimming pool and other "appurtenances" right on the crest of the dune in front of the Hopper studio window. If this plan is fulfilled, the Hopper Landscape will be ruined forever.

At this moment, the proposal is going through a state environmental review process because the property contains several rare species. The species of greatest concern is a low heath plant called broom crowberry. It has been determined that the proposed construction will constitute a "taking" of broom crowberry and mitigation possibilities are being considered by the state agency in charge which will issue a determination on August 24. If the determination is favorable to the proponents, a building permit could be applied for and approved immediately after that.

In the meantime, concerned residents are circulating a petition (attached) asking the Board of Selectmen, other Town Boards, and the Building Inspector to act quickly--before any permits are issued by the Town -- to make a "Discretionary Referral" of the proposed construction to the Cape Cod Commission.

This petition is attached. It can also be downloaded from the TNRTA website at ww.tnrta.org. If you are interested in supporting this effort, PLEASE ACT QUICKLY by FAXING OR MAILING A SIGNED COPY OF THE DETACHABLE PORTION TO JULIE DUPREE, SECRETARY TO BoS, TRURO TOWN HALL, PO BOX 2030, TRURO, MA 02666 OR TO FAX NUMBER 508-349-5505.

If you wish TNRTA to keep track of the number of responses, please ALSO send an email to tnrta@tnrta.org with the subject line: Hopper Landscape Petition. Note your name and Truro address, and whether you sent the petition or have other comments you wish to send to TNRTA. Since TNRTA never releases member information, TNRTA will not forward or file your petition. TNRTA will only aggregate the total number of responses, so we know the level of member interest in this issue. Of course, we will also follow-up on the issue with Town officials and concerned neighbors.

I hope you are enjoying your summer. Many thanks for your consideration, as always.

Regards,
Regan McCarthy,
President, TNRTA

