

# John T. Cunningham

17 November 2019

Dear Selectmen,

First, please know that our entire family appreciates the volunteer Board's ongoing effort and hard work on all of our behalves. Along with the many issues and decisions that are made in the course of everyday business, we rely on the Board to make sound decisions to strengthen our community. Today I write you to ask for your whole hearted support of the proposed redevelopment and expansion of the Martha's Vineyard Shipyard Marina.


Personally, I have worked with the Hale Family since my family started coming here 27 years ago. Before I used the MV Shipyard, my father in law used them for his boats. Boating is Martha's Vineyard, starting from the first ship that sailed these waters up to now with a family and their Boston Whaler. Boaters need basic dependable services – boat repairs, commissioning - decommissioning, parts, storm hauling, mooring services, etc. - services critical to any boaters enjoyment of boating. Try fixing your own boat!

The MV Shipyard has provided families like mine and visiting boaters with all of these critical services and more. They provide their services in an environmentally sound and conscientious way. They have provided jobs for dozens of good folks who in turn can support their families on the island. I imagine each of you know of the challenges many seasonal island businesses face and you also understand that in order to be successful, businesses must challenge themselves and in this case, the community, to adapt and grow in order to keep up with increasing wages as well as maintain affordable prices for their customers. This potential improvement represents a positive change!

It is my personal feeling the Martha's Vineyard community needs the Shipyard to be vibrant just like it needs it's hospital. The Shipyard is the backbone of the island boating community. People will complain and object as it will negatively impact them no doubt. It's about the greater good and planning for the future. Options are few and far between and allowing the Shipyard to expand and improve their services makes sense on a number of levels: the greater community benefits from the jobs, services and the future contribution to MV being a great place to live on and boat around; on the business level to allow a 150 year old plus company to maintain itself and grow while providing a life blood of services to the island-wide community – all the while giving their customers like me the services we need at prices we can afford.

Thank you for the opportunity to express this opinion and for your ongoing consideration. I hope you all have a Happy Thanksgiving and peaceful holiday season.

Best Regards,

  
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