

Mr. Adam Turner, Executive Director  
The Martha's Vineyard Commission  
P.O. Box 1447  
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

January 19, 2020

Re: DRI 314M, Martha's Vineyard Shipyard

Dear Mr. Turner,

After reviewing the MV Shipyard proposal for the upgrading and expansion of its current business operation on Beach Road in Vineyard Haven, I recommend that the Commission rule in its favor. The Hale family has been a responsible waterfront steward as well as successful providers of essential boating services for the island and warrant your approval of their plans.

"The Shipyard" has been a fixture on the harbor and a contributor to the island's economy for nearly one-hundred-seventy years. Since 1961 the Hales have invested three generations of personal resources in creating state-of-the-art services for islanders and visitors alike. While boat building is no longer sustainable for them, the same high-quality workmanship and service invested in that aspect of family's business in the early years, have been the hallmark of its current boating services and is reflected in the exceptionally well-articulated expansion proposal they have submitted.

In support of my position I offer the following:

1. The proposal is consistent with current zoning for the district in which the Shipyard is located and sustains the historical use of the waterfront.
2. There is a need for additional long-term boat slips on the island. There are currently three island locations offering such services and slips are at a premium. By way of example, I have been an island seasonal resident for thirty years. For the last twenty I have owned a small fishing boat. After being on a mooring for most of that time, I sought a slip and was a wait list for three years before obtaining one. In speaking with other slip users, it was clear that they too sometimes waited years to obtain a slip. And like me, age played a part in seeking a slip for some of them. Climbing in and out of boat from and into a dinghy was no longer a safe way to access a boat. Some of the aging population of island boaters could certainly benefit from the option provided by increased long-term, seasonal slip access.
3. The Hale family has historically employed islanders year-round. Their proposal sustains their commitment as it modestly increases staff for the expanded services.

4. While no waterside plan can anticipate the long-term consequences of climate change nor address the long-standing, island-wide water quality issues, the plan and associated study submitted by the Hale family does respond to what is currently evident and outlines proactive steps it will take to minimize the impact of the new facility on abutters, promote shellfish habitat and support the shell-fishing community. Reconfiguration of the Lagoon-side site will also reduce rainwater runoff into the Lagoon by providing additional permeable surface area. The family's voluntary installation of a pressure-washing, waste-water capture system in its current harbor-side facility demonstrates their commitment to minimize the impact of their operation on the environment.

Working in concert with other stakeholders, the Hales have already modified their initial proposal in response to their expressed concerns. This is a further demonstration of their commitment to remain responsible stewards of the Vineyard Haven waterfront.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Stimola

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