

Paul Foley

From: Constance Messmer [constancemessmer@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 8:10 AM
To: Paul Foley
Subject: Stop & Shop Expansion

A letter to the DRI Coordinator, Paul Foley, and the M.V. Commission Members:

I stand in support of local retail food stores and stands: Farm stands, Farmer's Market, Cronig's, Reliable, Tony's, Menemsha Market, Chilmark Store, Cash & Carry, Jim's, Your/Our Markets, Vineyard Grocer, Ackee Tree, Katama General, Rosewater, Morning Glory, The Larder, and other small, local retail food stores here on our beloved Martha's Vineyard.

Because of this, I am concerned about the potential expansion of Stop & Shop, a retail food supermarket chain owned by the Dutch/German company Ahold Delhaize. I am still amazed that this chain store was allowed to add a pharmacy outside of their current footprint. I support my local pharmacist (islander, owner ran) instead. And I am not surprised that a company, with far-off shareholders, has no plan to support alternative energy within any local remodel to date.

The desire for this expansion is a Development of Regional Impact, not only with a significant visual impact for Edgartown or any island location, but also as an island-wide, local economy, and character issue.

We are an island that does not have (big) chain stores, for a number of reasons. We support local living. For example, one HOME DEPOT would be an unfair advantage to businesses owned by our friends and neighbors, including each of our local hardware stores, our electrician and lighting stores, our lawn and garden supply stores, outdoor living, small and large appliance stores, our flooring and carpet stores, plumbing supplies, bath and kitchen stores, window treatment, paint stores, storage sheds, heating, cooling, and air quality supply stores, and our family-owned building materials and lumber stores.

The Dutch/German company, Stop & Shop wants to expand its location on the island of Martha's Vineyard. Its Edgartown location is already the largest food store on island. Chain stores are not (really) allowed here, due to the concern they would eventually put local stores out of business with their unfair economic advantage. This particular chain store was grandfathered in because it bought out the A & P supermarket. The expansion of this European based, chain store will put local business at risk with an unfair advantage, especially with the current food pricing changes caused by changing weather patterns. Plus, they shouldn't even be here. And if they are, why not add a Home Depot too? (Rhetorical question.)

I ask the Martha's Vineyard Commission to deny the expansion thereby continuing in their effort to "promote the enhancement of sound local economies." It is understandable to remodel and update for alternative energy in this day and age. But, I ask the Commission to set the current square footage limit of this large retail chain corporation as is. And deny its expansion, thereby creating a more fair trade market in the light of big business versus local business, no matter where this store sets its location.

And I continue to stand with my neighbors and friends in their local businesses and services that "preserve our unique environment and character of the island."

With all due respect for the good work of the Martha's Vineyard Commission,
Constance Messmer
Chilmark, MA