

Martha's Vineyard Commission
c/o Paul Foley, DRI Coordinator
33 New York Ave
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

Dear Commissioners,

Please consider my argument for approving the Meetinghouse Place development in Edgartown.

I have lived on Martha's Vineyard for almost 22 years, working here year-round. I love this Island and hope I can continue to call it home. Unfortunately, my dream of owning a house is probably never going to be realized. At my current salary of \$60,000, single, 52 years old, and with the average price of a house being \$650k, it is highly unlikely I can achieve this dream. My only hope for a permanent residence is to buy a reasonably priced condominium or town house. And as you all know, these are in short supply.

The Developers of DRI 682 have offered, among many other things, \$1.1 million towards affordable housing (plus future revenue of 1% of house sales). *'Too many houses, disruption of moth and bat habitat, loss of open land....'* I don't care. To care about these issues is to already own a home. I care about \$1.1 million dollars, and what it could buy. With all due respect to the moths and the bats, **I** am an endangered species here on Martha's Vineyard – the middle-aged office administrator is being forced off the Island and will not be back. My habitat is being destroyed.

When the 54 acres of land was sold in July of 2017 the argument for keeping that parcel wild and open ended. The MVC does not decide what land remains open; the Land Bank, Sherriff's Meadow Foundation, The Trustees of Reservations and the Vineyard Land Foundation are all chartered to take on the task of buying up available land so that it will not be developed. When all of these organizations passed on the land at 139 Meetinghouse Way, it was sold for \$6.6 million (a steal) to developers. Developers develop.

I have spent much of my 22 years on the Vineyard working in the local construction industry. In my experience, construction is incredibly destructive and wasteful. I worked on single owner properties as an administrator facilitating multi-million dollar, large second or third homes, complete with guest houses plus other auxiliary structures, swimming pools, tennis courts, horse stables, and yes, a 1-hole golf course. The owners of these properties did not have to appear before the MVC. There were very few building restrictions. There were no conditions on behalf of natural habitats or displaced wildlife. There was no consideration to lawn size or plant species to mitigate nitrogen loading. And there were no required financial give backs to the community.

Currently, there is a 46.6 acre property for sale on the south shore of West Tisbury for \$20million. The property is currently sub-divided so it could be parceled and sold, or multiple large buildings could be

constructed, all without a visit to the MVC. No conditions, no give back. \$20million dollars will be spent, and not a dime will go towards housing options for the workforce of this community.

In the past couple of weeks I watched 2 news programs interviewing multi-billionaires (Ray Dalio on 60 Minutes and Steve Ballmer on CBS Sunday Morning). Both self-made men said the same thing... TAX THE RICH. We are losing our middle class and we are losing the American Dream. The only way to level the playing field is to take every opportunity to do just that – take from the rich and give to the poor.

This is your opportunity as stewards of our community to tax the rich. The land at 139 Meetinghouse Way will be developed – done deal. Either it will be subdivided into the 5 already partitioned lots, with as many buildings, bedrooms and accessory structures as each owner can legally put on the clear cut land, or 34 houses will be built with the conditions you stipulate. Make the best deal possible with these developers who are standing in front of you willing to negotiate.

Please.

Thank you for your time and dedication to what is, I am sure, a challenging and disheartening lesser of evils decision.

Becca Rogers

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