

February 24, 2020

To the Martha's Vineyard Commission,

I am writing to you in support of the Menotomy project at 14 Kennebec in Oak Bluffs as a friend of Gary Jones, a fellow business colleague of Ben deForest and Sarah Omer, and an island (albeit new-ish) resident.

As the lease holder and seasonal manager/operator of Chilmark Tavern, I have come to know Gary Jones over the last 10 years. Gary has become a dear friend and avid supporter of me, and my establishment. A few years ago, I found myself in a bind and called Gary for advice and assistance. Gary not only helped me out of my bind, but he guided me through a process that I had no idea I even needed to go through. Gary helped me strengthen my business, my self-esteem, and in that process became a very dear friend and mentor. I have seen the care that Gary shows in all aspects of his life and am confident that Gary, along with Brian, will re-create a spot that is cherished and well cared for.

As a fellow restaurateur on Martha's Vineyard, I send my support to Ben deForest and Sarah Omer and hope that Red Cat Kitchen will be able to operate for many years to come. I have been in the existing building, and I have seen the struggles that they face with the aging and dilapidated structure. It is amazing that they are able to do what they do there. Hopefully, with a new and improved building, Red Cat will be able to be open year-round and provide much needed employment to many in the off-season months.

As island residents, we are blessed to live in a place where there are people who want to help make the island more viable for businesses. We are so fortunate to live in a place where there are people who are willing to step up, make absolutely necessary improvements, and give an opportunity to a small business owner at the same time.

I hope that the Menotomy project is able to proceed as proposed, and not subjected to unrealistic financial demands by the MVC on the building's new owners.

Sincerely,

Jenna Petersiel