

## Paul Foley

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**To:** Mimi Davisson  
**Subject:** RE: TO the MV commission - please read this, or have it read at the next meeting. Thank you.

-----Original Message-----

From: revdocmom@comcast.net  
To: mimi davisson <Mimi02557@aol.com>  
Sent: Fri, 16 May 2008 9:07 am  
Subject: TO the MV commission - please read this, or have it read at the next meeting. Thank you.

To MV Commission,

Ever since moving to the Vineyard almost ten years ago, my husband and I have driven or walked past the “Bradley” property and watched it slowly falling into ruin. We entertained dreams of buying it ourselves and using it as a home/studio where I could make and sell my art and where we could offer affordable rentals to other artists in the developing “Soho” area of this wonderful island.

So, now to have a viable plan to make this a reality for so many people on so many levels is a dream come true. Imagine it, affordable living and working space in a great location for artists who don’t have the means, **or the heart**, for mega-mansions. Affordable housing for people who desperately need it--and the revitalization of a historic neighborhood where a number of derelict and/or abandoned houses blight the area for the rest of the residents and home owners. And yet, there are those who would so constrict the development of the Bradley Square Project as to render this all but impossible.

What really is the problem? Why is there venom dripping from the trees? Why are long time friends and neighbors turning against one another? I don’t believe it is all about parking on the streets for at best 3 or 4 days a year for a couple of hours. Is it covert opposition to affordable housing? Is the NIMBY (not in my back yard) principle at work here? We all know what people who need affordable housing are like. I certainly do, **I’m one of them**. Is it fear or distrust of change? Is it concern, or fear, over the kinds of strangers who might move in and alter the ambiance of the neighborhood? Is the stonewalling a hedge against future profiteering? These are questions that come to mind. If I had the answers, I wouldn’t be asking them, but I do believe they need to be asked.

What I do know is that over the years of my living here, I’ve seen a funky little tumble-down neighborhood, slowly blossom into “The Arts District” of Martha’s Vineyard. It is like no other place on the island. Here you find artists and shop keepers and just plain folks, living and working together, helping each other, improving the neighborhood, and bolstering the economy of both the town and the Island. More of the same can only be better.

I want to go on record, as a working artist, a working minister, and a voting resident of Oak Bluffs, to say that we are indeed our brother and sister’s keepers. Remember, when the last tourist leaves in October, who do we really have but each other? Whatever we can do to provide affordable living and creative working space as well as community meeting and worship space to the many faces, and facets of our uniquely diverse community, so be it.

Rev. Judith Campbell  
Oak Bluffs

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