As local business owners, we are writing to express our support of the current ownership and management at Harbor View Hotel. We own Sonnyside Rides, offering horse-drawn carriage and wagon rides for weddings and private events and most recently guests of the Harbor View Hotel. We partnered with Harbor View Hotel in order to offer guests of the hotel and visitors of the Island a unique, memorable experience that showcases the beauty and charm of Edgartown during the slower months.

This partnership has made a meaningful impact on our business, especially in the Fall and winter of 2020 when our revenue was impacted significantly by cancellations. It is refreshing to see businesses, like Harbor View Hotel, support the local economy and residents of Martha’s Vineyard.

HVH hotel owner and management have been very sensitive to the neighborhood and designed a plan to minimize any disruption to the neighbors. For example, they specifically asked us not to load or unload passengers in front of the hotel. All the loading and unloading is done on the Harbor View Hotel property. The carriage rides also are being offered only on select weekends and holidays during the shoulder or off-seasons and not during the busy summer season.

Our primary route is 30 minutes long and passes by many quintessential Edgartown sites. Much of the ride is on quiet streets, and when a vehicle or two is behind the carriage, we immediately pull over to let them pass. When we drive the team down Main Street, we trot to avoid any congestion, while remaining vigilant for pedestrians. All horse waste is immediately removed from the pavement, bagged and returned to West Tisbury for disposal.

Regarding noise, we used holiday bells on the horses from Thanksgiving through New Year’s. The public seemed to truly enjoy this festive addition. However, if requested, we would limit sleigh bell use.

Participants and members of the public who have passed the horses at Harbor View Hotel or during our route have had a joyful reaction to them - smiling, taking photos and commenting on their magnificence. People seem to love viewing Edgartown from our carriage, and we have had comments of support from other town business owners. It allows the very young and those who are less mobile to see the town in a relaxed manner. We appreciate the opportunity to continue working with Harbor View Hotel to provide this quaint experience to guests of Martha’s Vineyard during the spring and fall of 2021.

~Bruce & Laura Marshard