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for

Martha's Vineyard Commission

December 18, 2020

Re: Proposed Harbor View Hotel Expansion

Ladies and gentlemen,

I write you as the owner, with my wife Helena Bienstock, of a home at 184 Meeting House Way in Edgartown, which we occupy primarily in the summer. Helena's grandmother first came to the Vineyard at the end of the 1920s, and built a home there shortly after. The family has continuously come to the Vineyard on a seasonal basis in the intervening 90 plus years.

While our primarily residence is in Princeton, New Jersey, and we vote there, we consider Martha's Vineyard equally our "home" and love our time on the island. That is because, as Helena's parents and grandmother felt, it is the most beautiful place in our lives, exciting and yet calming. I write to address the plans of the Harbor View Inn because they so threaten to undermine in lovely and historic Edgartown the character of the Island's most special village. (I use the term "village" because it so perfectly fits the nature of the place, at least until now.)

Others have surely spoken up about the proposed transformation of the Inn into a destination spa/resort more along the lines of what is offered in places like Myrtle Beach, Fort Lauderdale and even Las Vegas, which will take place in the heart of an especially beautiful neighborhood occupied largely by families.

Besides being so large and so out of character with the Vineyard, or perhaps because of that, the metastasizing of the Inn will harm the economy of the island. Perhaps if this were planned for some outlying corner of the Vineyard, that would be less so. But to undermine the village that attracts people from around the nation and the world for its charming character with a resort spa and party facility is killing the goose that lays the golden eggs for the Martha's Vineyard economy.

I need not tell you that the site of the Inn is adjacent to great architectural 18th and 19th Century architectural gems, and a splendid waterfront park, with great views of the harbor and of Chappaquidick. The high levels of traffic that will be generated by the expansion of Inn facilities,

the noise, and the spillover into the streets of people partying at the Inn will undermine the special, fragile character of this wonderful part of the village.

You are by statute stewards of the heritage that has made Martha's Vineyard a vital economic engine and a magnet for tourists seeking the special beauty and quality which is the genius of the place. Please protect it from exploitation for short term economic gains.

Sincerely,

Peter Beantock