

TO: MV Commission, Lucy Morrison, morrison@mvcommisson.org, Alex Elvin, elvin@mvcommisson.org

From: Linda Austin Forrester, 128 North Water Street, Edgartown

Re: Harborview Hotel Proposal

We began coming to the island regularly in the late 70's, renting homes long term in Vineyard Haven and Edgartown until we purchased our home on North Water Street in 1984. I lived year-round on the island from 1988 to the early 90's managing the business we owned at the time.

We have always been concerned about our special neighborhood, and have actively participated with neighbors, the town and the hotel on a variety of neighborhood issues and projects over the last 30+years.

When we purchased our home, the Harborview was a seasonal hotel that attracted many of the same people year after year for extended stays, and often for family overflow in the summer months. The relationship with the hotel has been one based on mutual understanding, although there have been issues that did come along at times with management changes. In the early 90's the hotel tried to do weekly outdoor concerts open to the public with sound amplification. It was then that the 1992 policies were established for the hotel with the help of the town, the hotel, business owners and neighbors. What we all learned at the time was how far crowd, music and party noise carry to disrupt the enjoyment of our special part of the island. Hotel managements took notice, and there was better understanding between the hotel and the neighbors until recently.

We appreciated the personal individual attention the new owner and manager initially gave some neighbors. We expressed our support. We want the hotel to be successful! However, we also shared concerns and issues that had caused issues in the past. (parking, group noise, alcohol consumption, trash noise, large buses). 2019 the first summer under current management was particularly difficult at best. Noise pollution from air conditioners, trash at 5:15 am, large outdoor events on the front porches with bars and outdoor service. Regulations that were in place, were not adhered to. There was little understanding shown by management or staff that they worked in a residential neighborhood, even when issues were raised. Actions certainly do speak louder than what we had been told initially by the new team.

Edgartown in general has recently experienced much more car, bike and foot traffic. The open Light House attracts many visitors. Lighthouse and Fuller Street beaches have become tourist destinations. Parking, taxis, and tours regularly cause congestion, particularly on North Water Street.

The HVH should not be allowed to expand the spa, or make changes to what was previously approved by the commission. Their actions throughout the neighborhood, have shown little respect for our special part of town. They have sought to go around or disregard previous regulations that were in place. They have tried to commercialize other parts of our residential neighborhood. In addition, the town owned light house area is regularly used for hotel events, often limiting its use by residents and other visitors.

The commission needs to take an honest look at the overall scope of the hotel. There have been incremental changes that were not properly vetted in context of the overall impact on the neighborhood. This issue has island wide impact! We are not the only island area that is experiencing "commercial creep" to the detriment of the residential right to "quiet enjoyment" of our properties.

I am reminded almost daily; how special and unique our neighborhood is. Local folks come regularly to walk their dogs, sit on the benches to take in the view. Some come on a lunch break, and eat in their cars. Its vitally important to preserve the character of the area for everyone to enjoy, particularly those who live, work, and relish being on island because it is special.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. J. ...". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.