Martha's Vineyard Commission:

Subject: DRI 670 M2 Modification

The Oak Bluffs Affordable Housing Committee urges the Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC) not to modify DRI 670 M2 Lampost Workforce Housing as requested by the applicant. The MVC’s Compliance Committee's findings, penalty, and recommendations should finalize before entertaining any modification. The removal of any workforce housing is a determent to local businesses and the community.

Evidence suggests the Lampost has been out of compliance with the MVC DRI 670 decision and Oak Bluffs Special Permit since 2019 by renting up to five of the ten workforce housing units over the past 3-years as short-term rentals through Airbnb or renting informally to family and friends. This single violation has removed year-round and seasonal workforce housing for approximately 20 or more workers vital to local businesses and the economy.

The Commonwealth defines Workforce Housing as residents earning between 61%-120% of the local Area Median Income. For Dukes County, a two-person household could earn $52,800 to $101,520 and still qualify for Workforce Housing. Standard 30% housing cost calculations would translate to monthly rents ranging from $1,320 to $2,538 per apartment.

The owner has requested the MVC modify DRI 670, asking to convert six workforce housing units to short-term Airbnb rentals. This request is a determent to Oak Bluffs and the entire Island. There is a severe workforce housing shortage, pushing local businesses to operate on restricted schedules. The requested modification only worsens the critical situation.
The Oak Bluffs Affordable Housing Committee requests the MVC uphold the original DRI decision and not approve any reduction in the number of local workforce housing units in Oak Bluffs. Removing year-round and seasonal workforce housing opportunities breaches the trust of the MVC, the Oak Bluffs Planning Board, business owners, and the entire community.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

K. Mark Leonard
Chair, Oak Bluffs Affordable Housing Committee

cc: Oak Bluffs Planning Board