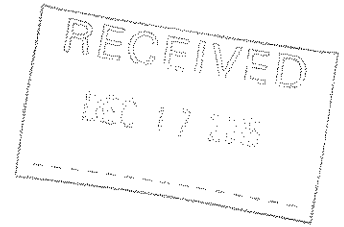




Town of Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts
Shellfish Department
P.O. Box 1327
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December 17, 2015

Martha's Vineyard Commission
New York Ave
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

Dear Commissioners:

I support the proposed North Bluff Project. The current cement sea wall has failed and continuous to crumble and expose the bluff to storm damage and erosion. This short piece of shoreline is subject to the forces of storms including the nor'easters. I have worked with the Liz Durkee (Oak Bluffs Conservation Agent) and Carlos Pena from CLE Engineering in the planning and permitting of this project. This is really the third phase of an ongoing bigger project. The two previous phases were the restoration of the bath house and the public accessible fishing dock. The fourth phase is to re-create/nourish the beach in front of the seawall. The permits to place sand there are being sought now. The nourishment of the beach is as important as replacing the seawall. The sloping beach will reduce some of the wave energy before reaching the seawall. That said, the wall must be replaced first to stabilize the foot of the bluff.

The existing sea wall was placed there to protect the north bluff from eroding into the sound. It needs to be replaced to continue to protect the bluffs and road on the top of the bluff. We are facing climate change that will deliver both a rise in sea level and increased and more severe storms. The proposed seawall is proactive and designed to address climate change. The Town of Oak Bluffs is considered a leader in planning for the inevitable effects of climate change. Oak Bluffs has been named a "Storm Smart Community" by MA Coastal Zone Management. Oak Bluffs was the first town to adopt new zoning regulations to help protect properties in the more vulnerable areas of the town. We should not be fooled by short sighted objections but continue to plan for the future.

The walkway proposed for the top of the seawall will certainly be more attractive than what is there now, crumbling infrastructure. The north bluff is one of the first things tourists and visitors see when arriving by ferry – especially if arriving on a steamship authority ferry. The walkway will also provide a much safer path between the steamship authority and Oak Bluffs Harbor.

I have heard that there are objections to using sheet pile. The sheet pile is proposed to be driven 30 feet down thus providing much stronger and stable footing for the walkway. The sheet pile can be painted gray to blend with the cement's color negating a lot of the aesthetic issue raised in regard to the use of sheet pile.

Sincerely,

David W. Grunden