

Ray Taylor
11 Stanley Street
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

Sunday, December 13, 2015

To the Martha's Vineyard Commission,

I serve as an elected member and Chairperson of the Oak Bluffs Finance Committee, but I am not writing this letter in that capacity- it is a personal letter written on my own behalf and does not reflect the opinions or concerns of the Finance Committee.

I am writing to you with my concerns about to the proposed use of the steel sheet piling as a sea wall at the North Bluff.

In the current final design plans dated 08/12/2015 submitted by CLE, the new steel sheet wall extends 6"-18" away from the existing wall and back filled with granite stone. In order for the steel piling to be straight and level it will have to be functionally placed away from the existing sea wall, (See design plans of the existing footings) and extended seaward. This will have the effect of pushing the current and proposed new revetment into what is now at low mean tide an existing beach.

I have looked to find real world examples of epoxy coated steel sheet piling used as a sea wall in the Northeast corridor and maintained under the supervision of a local municipality for maintenance cost comparisons. What I have discovered is that exposed NE ocean-facing sea walls are either concrete or natural rock.

If nearly 27% of our Massachusetts coastline is armored and this method of epoxy covered steel sheet sea walls was a common practice, there should be several examples of its use in Eastern Massachusetts and Cape Cod & Islands area. There are not. Its standard use, unpainted, appears to be for bulkheads and cofferdams with limited exposure. The real world pictures I have found show the steel sea walls turn into rusted zippers. There are plenty of examples of those.

Steel piles suffer from corrosion and oxidation issues and it is unrealistic to expect, due to the constant harsh New England weather conditions of seawater, wind, heat, cold, and abrasion that the integrity of the epoxy, regardless of color, will remain without substantial maintenance costs to keep the rust contained.

It is unrealistic to imagine all that is required is two workers touching up exposed rusts spot annually, as the proponents have told us.

Furthermore, are applicable Federal and State Environmental Protection agencies, going to grant the town authority at will to grind, chip, and paint a sea wall, with the byproducts depositing between the revetment, onto the beach sand, and entering the water without permits?

There are other options of proven coastline and landscape management and protection that use more natural materials and techniques then armoring our coastline with a rusted Berlin Wall to keep natural processes at bay.

A rusted zipper at the gateway to our community is not in the best interest of the residents of Oak Bluffs, Island residents, or visitors and does not reflect the character and natural beauty of the island I truly treasure.



Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raymond Taylor". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Raymond Taylor
Oak Bluffs Resident