

Paul Foley

From: Richard Toole [richardtoole@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2015 9:19 PM
To: Paul Foley
Subject: Oak Bluffs North Bluff

Commissioners, MV Commission,

Once again you are faced with what appears to be a difficult decision. I was aware of this project when it was first proposed quite a few years ago but lost track as time passed and the scope of the work changed. During this time our awareness of the potential impacts of climate change and sea level rise have increased and most of us now see Oak Bluffs is directly in the line of fire. To truly address all of the town's vulnerable areas will require a lot of money. A priority list will need to be developed for our town as well as the whole Island. Hopefully this is something the MVC will begin to work on. After attending the two MVC hearings I have been convinced that the proposed replacement North Bluff sea wall is the best opportunity we have to correct a very dangerous situation as quickly as possible with the promised funding. I have carefully listened to the town's engineer and can see he has come up with the best solution. This is probably the most important spot to start the fortification process. Oak Bluffs's very knowledgeable Conservation Agent Liz Durkee's letter to you and the Gazette presents a very convincing argument to approve this project.

The very vocal testimony against the project makes very little sense to me. I visit this area a few times a week, riding my bike along the existing wall and out on to the new fishing pier. Even at low tide there is very little sand beach left. A plan to add sand to this beach is part of the next phase but I am not convinced this is a wise use of our limited resources. The other concern is the look of a steel bulkhead and the fact it will be substantially higher. I think this is also a non issue. To not raise the wall would really be a missed opportunity and the cost and complexity of building a new concrete wall is a luxury we cannot afford. Some of the vocal opponents will receive substantial protection for their properties from the new wall.

I am afraid some of the opposition is aimed at the process more than the project and may stem from hurt egos.

This project reminds me of another controversial decision we as an Island and you as a regulatory board had to face. THE ROUNDABOUT! As we all know and most will admit, this has not changed the character of the Island or created a dangerous situation. On the contrary it has vastly improved this busy intersection. Thank you for all you do. As a former Commissioner I know your job is not easy. Please vote to approve the North Bluff Seawall project as soon as possible.

Sincerely, Richard Toole, Oak Bluffs