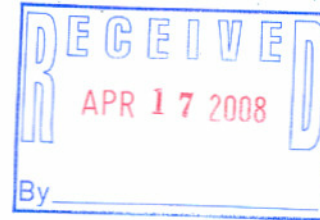Renee Balter
P.O. Box 106
64 Winemack Avenue
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

April 17, 2008

MV Commission
New York Avenue
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

Re: <u>Bradley square project corner of Masonic and Dukes County Avenue</u>

I am 100% in favor of the proposed Bradley Square project.
My reasons are many.

When Oak Bluffs (Cottage City) was founded, the first major and heavily populated neighborhoods were downtown. Businesses and residents lived side by side in a very compact and totally integrated location. This tradition that helped to define the character of Oak Bluffs still exists today.

As the population grew, the residential areas spread out. In 1974, zoning became more definitive with the classifications of Residential 1, 2, 3 and Business 1 & 2.

There are a total of approximately 4,500 acres of land in Oak Bluffs.

There are approximately 11 acres of B1 zoned property in Oak Bluffs.

In 1998, the Town voted to accept a Master Plan that stressed the wishes not to expand the business B1 zoning and to keep businesses in the downtown neighborhoods.
Since 1880, there have been many changes in our town. The permitted area for businesses has changed very little. Home businesses have increased enormously.

It is vitally important that what little land we have in Oak Bluffs that is devoted to B1 business be utilized as such.

Currently we have a mixed use in the B1 Dukes County Avenue neighborhood. Residents are finding more and more businesses opening very close by.

The use of the property proposed by the Bradley Square project is an ideal combination for this neighborhood. It is not an intense business use, it fits more with the residential component and will help to enhance the growing community of galleries and retail shops that have begun to establish a presence in the area.

It will provide affordable housing and workplace for artists and retail space for their work. It will preserve an important historic landmark and restore the public use of a building that was once a center for the African American community. It will promote the original character and tradition of our town that encouraged a symbiotic relationship between businesses and residential properties.

Oak Bluffs is a vibrant Victorian Seaside summer resort that has developed into a vibrant community of year round residents who have chosen to live in a vibrant Victorian Seaside summer resort that has become a vibrant year round community! We are unique to the island, to New England, to the United States and to the world. What a treasure! The Bradley Square project will only enhance this unique and wonderful town we call home.

Sincerely,

Renee Balter

Ps As an artist, I just want to say that I have lost many artist friends who have had to leave the Vineyard because they could not afford to live and work here. This project will help to change that and give artists the opportunity to own a home and work space as well as a place to show and sell their work.