

September 29, 2023

To the Martha's Vineyard Commission:

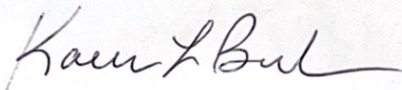
I am writing today to encourage you to support Island Grown Initiative's efforts to establish a permanent home for the Island Food Pantry at 114-116 Dukes County Avenue.

I have been a volunteer at the Food Pantry since 2020 and recently joined the Board of IGI. In that time, the Food Pantry has been located at the Stone Church in Vineyard Haven and at the PA Club in Oak Bluffs. Not only has it been an exemplary tenant, but the pantry has been a good neighbor as well. The management and staff have always ensured that volunteers, delivery trucks and clients follow parking rules, and they created schedules that kept traffic and noise levels to a minimum. I'm sure this will continue at the new location.

Additionally, IGI and the Food Pantry are well-managed, flexible and innovative organizations. This has allowed them to switch to contactless 'shopping' and delivery during the pandemic, then reopen with social distancing. In the move to the PA Club, they were able to adapt to a new space with new hours and procedures, all with the best interests of their clients, volunteers and neighbors in mind. I have seen how they continually assess what is best practice and adjust as needed. Currently they are moving to on-line ordering to create an easier and faster experience for their clients.

There is no doubt that there is a need for a food pantry on our island. The Island Food Pantry needs a permanent home to best serve its clients. 114-116 Dukes County Avenue, with its central location and easy access, is an ideal place to make this happen. Please vote to allow IGI to move forward with its plans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Brush".

Karen Brush