

## Vineyard Open Land Foundation

P.O. Box 4608, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568 TELEPHONE & FAX: 508-693-3280 E-MAIL: [office@vineyardopenlandfoundation.org](mailto:office@vineyardopenlandfoundation.org)

April 1, 2016

### TRUSTEES

Eric L. Peters, Chairman\*  
Glenn F. Provost, Treasurer\*  
Dennis P. daRosa, Secretary\*

Martha's Vineyard Commission

P.O. Box 1447  
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

by: e-mail

Re: **DRI No. 661 and DRI No. 338-M2**

Dear Commissioners,

The Squibnocket Ridge subdivision is the result of over ten years of study, planning, and design by the Vineyard Open Land Foundation. It was approved in 1992 after lengthy and thorough review by the Chilmark Planning Board and the Martha's Vineyard Commission, as well as the adoption of the Squibnocket District of Critical Planning Concern. VOLF also supervised the construction of the road and utility infrastructure for the subdivision. Appropriate permits were obtained from the Chilmark Conservation Commission.

VOLF supports the efforts of the landowners at Squibnocket to construct a more suitable roadway for safe and convenient access to their properties by the owners and emergency vehicles, such as police, fire trucks or an ambulance. There is as much a municipal interest in maintaining the viability of the subdivision, as there is over \$175,000,000 of assessed valuation of real estate all served by the access through Squibnocket Road.

VOLF owns and maintains 235 acres of open space within the subdivision and our only access to this property is also via Squibnocket Road.

VOLF also recognizes the need for the Town of Chilmark to secure more beach access for its residents. If nothing is done at Squibnocket, the small leased beach will soon be of little use, if not a liability to the Town.

As you heard at your public hearing, an exhaustive public review process has already taken place over the last two plus years

*Preserving the natural beauty and rural character of Martha's Vineyard  
through conservation land use planning*

Arthur Yorke Allen  
Augustus D. Ben David\*  
William J. Connolly\*  
Daniel J. Culkin  
E. W. Finley, Jr.  
Brian M. Hurley  
Ivo Meisner\*  
John D. Vibberts

\*executive committee

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Carol L. Magee

concerning these projects and these two DRI applications are the outcome. They are consistent with the recommendations of the Town Committee on Squibnocket established by a vote of the Chilmark Town Meeting.

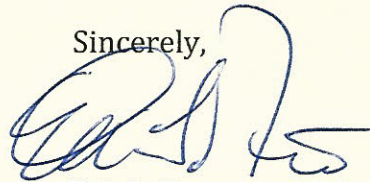
The arguments of those who promote a more "natural" solution have often seemed to suggest that the homeowners should expect to access their property by Duck Boats or helicopter, given the inherent impermanent nature of their "solutions." Many of these suggested alternatives would, in the long term, cause more environmental damage than the current proposals before you.

Finally, suggestions that the access road be lowered ensure only that the lifetime of the road structure will be shortened, causing an unnecessary long term regulatory and financial burden to the Town and the homeowners without contribution from the complaining neighbors. In other words, the neighbors are proposing a shorter life expectancy for the project improvements. The MVC should not encourage or sanction such a form of planned obsolescence.

As you also heard, these projects have the approval and support of Coastal Zone Management, the Department of Environmental Protection, and Natural Heritage and Endangered Species.

Certainly the benefits to the property owners served by this new access road and the benefits to the Town of Chilmark, if not the entire island, outweigh any detriments or inconveniences that might impact abutting property owners.

Sincerely,



Eric L. Peters  
Chairman