

Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission

June 2, 2015

Martha's Vineyard Commission
Post Office Box 1447
Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts 02557

Dear commissioners,

I am writing, at the request of the land bank commission, regarding your designation of the Old Coach Road as a special way.

The land bank understands that the West Tisbury town meeting voted in April to protect only a portion of this way. This is less than the town had originally nominated and the MVC had designated. As a result, the MVC is now being asked to reconfigure the special way district so that the MVC boundaries coincide with those in the town meeting's vote.

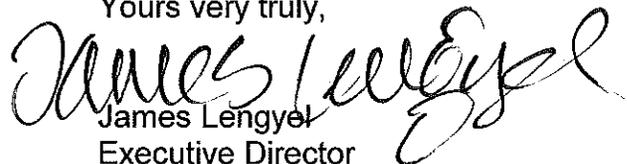
The land bank recommends against such a reconfiguration, as doing so will drain the special way designation here of its logic and coherence. The purpose of these overlay districts is to protect their resources irrespective of underlying ownership — the resources know no lot lines. The land bank hopes both that the town meeting will re-examine this matter and that a continuing designation of the full resource area by the Martha's Vineyard Commission will be helpful in this regard.

It should also be noted that, absent a full designation, the owners of the McKacou Trust property will be able justifiably to assert that they alone have been singled out to carry the weight of the district, as no other property is in it.

As with all ancient ways, the entirety of the way is crucial to long-term trail planning. These ways offer the prospect of wide-ranging connections between the island's various villages, neighborhoods and conservation areas. A lacuna in the trail will mean that the continuity has been severed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours very truly,


James Lengyel
Executive Director

copy: West Tisbury planning board
West Tisbury byways committee

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