



Tisbury Shellfish Department

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January 31, 2018

Mr. Ewell Hopkins, Chairperson
Oak Bluffs Planning Board
56 School Street
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557
RE: Lagoon Ridge

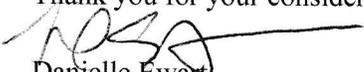
Dear Mr. Hopkins,

This is a letter for the consideration of the health of our Lagoon with regards to the Lagoon Ridge project. My name is Danielle Ewart and I am the Shellfish Constable in Tisbury. While I like the idea of providing housing for people on the island, I have a deeper love of the land and water and I try to keep our ponds as productive as possible. However with a housing project this big, the impact of pollution to the watershed will be greatly amplified in the upper part of the Lagoon Pond. Building any house has negative effects on a watershed; removal of trees and plants to build a foundation- to build roads remove the very things that help mitigate some of the nitrogen, and building a community of houses will remove even more thus magnifying the problem.

I know you have received letters from others in opposition about this project; stating that we have to reduce the TMDL of Nitrogen from upper portion of the Lagoon by 35% and that means that we have to reduce the existing nitrogen loads by 50% in that area alone. And you may also know that any new nitrogen produced by the project must be dealt with directly before any of it hits the pond. I am just going to reinforce those words and also say that our ponds natural ecology is dying from the additional nitrogen. Untreated nitrogen coming out from the septic systems leads to an increase in algal blooms, a reduction of oxygen, thus leading to a decline in our natural species. Not so long ago our embayment's once saw an abundance of shellfish and marine life, today we are seeing less and less. It has been over 5 years that we've set of bay scallops in the upper part of Lagoon and I don't even recall the last time I have seen eelgrass present there.

We all know that the Pond's health is declining and any new nitrogen added could be detrimental for some of our fragile species and it's up to us to protect what we have. We have the power to make a change for the better and make conscientious decisions with respect to our environment. Septics aren't the only problem, but it is one we have the ability to deal with. For the past few years the Towns of Oak Bluffs and Tisbury have worked together to develop regulations on how to proceed with new construction, existing septic, fertilizers, etc. I am on committees devoted to clean water and cleaning up our ponds. I hope that the Oak Bluffs Planning Board will consider this letter and the letters from others and suspend the current Lagoon Ridge project.

Thank you for your consideration,


Danielle Ewart

Tisbury Shellfish Constable

cc: Dave Grunden, Oak Bluffs Shellfish Department
Doug Reese, President of LPA
Gerry Hokanson, President of TWI