

December 30, 2022

DPH.DON@massmail.state.ma.us

Dennis Renaud

Determination of Need Program

250 Washington Street

Boston, MA

RE: DoN Application #NHMV-22090717-LE

Dear Mr. Renaud:

I am writing in support of Navigator Homes of Martha's Vineyard's above referenced Determination of Need application to re-locate and re-build Windemere Nursing & Rehabilitation Center.

Martha's Vineyard is at a critical point for how it provides skilled nursing and long-term care services to residents of the Island. If approved, Navigator Homes will not only expand access to long-term care, but create on-Island access to short-term rehabilitation. Just as importantly, these services will be provided in a home-like environment with a focus on quality of life. This project is vital to the ability of the Island to offer these services within the community, as well as in a manner that prioritizes high quality care, resident dignity, and improved health outcomes.

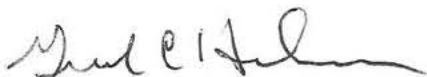
Windemere Nursing & Rehabilitation Center is the only on-island option for long-term care. There is no on-island option for short-term rehabilitation. The facility is out-dated and it is scheduled for closure.

The need for a replacement facility is real - 35% of Martha's Vineyard's year-round residents are age 65 and older. As the population ages, demand for a long-term care facility on Martha's Vineyard is projected to increase. Assuming just 2.3% of residents over the age of 65 will need skilled nursing, the Island will need more than 100 beds to meet demand.

The main reason the current Windemere facility has closed more than half its beds is due to staffing. Windemere cannot retain staff because of the limited options for affordable housing on the island. The Proposed Project includes on-site, subsidized housing for Windemere staff. In partnership with Martha's Vineyard Hospital, 30 one-bedroom apartments will be available on a sliding rent scale. Instead of commuting by ferry, staff will be able to walk to work. Staff will be members of the community – increased personal satisfaction, economic boost, reduced call-outs due to weather.

For the reasons discussed above, I encourage the Department of Public Health to vote in favor of this project.

Thank You.



Gerard C. Hokanson





Post Office Box 9000-221 | Edgartown, MA | 02539

mvdiversitycoalition.org

December 30, 2022

To whom it may concern:

The Martha's Vineyard Diversity Coalition-Health Disparities Committee would like to express our support for the Navigator Homes Green House Project on Martha's Vineyard.

The project will support housing for up to 70 senior citizens. Despite the large senior population in Dukes County, estimated to be near 25% of the population, there is no option for assisted living, aside from our nursing home which is scheduled to close down in 2023.

During the pandemic, the housing crisis on Martha's Vineyard grew with more people moving to the Island year round and many rental homes sold and used as second homes. The year-round population has an estimated median income of approximately \$71,000 and median housing price exceeding \$1 million. Seniors on fixed incomes are particularly impacted by rising costs and housing shortages, with no ability to increase income.

The mission of the Health Disparities Committee is to bring awareness about how people of color are often disproportionately impacted in health care settings. The Committee is comprised of community leaders from Martha's Vineyard Hospital, Martha's Vineyard Community Services, Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard, Island Health Care, Inc., Councils on Aging and retired medical professionals. The Committee believes this project will improve health care access and health outcomes for Island citizens and for many people of color.

The Navigator project will be affordable, provide necessary assisted living services and provide housing for seniors and health care workers. Please give every consideration to make this project possible.

Sincerely,

Sandra L. Pimentel

Sandra L. Pimentel (Dec 30, 2022 15:01 EST)

Sandra Pimentel

MV Diversity Coalition

Board Chair

From: Mary Holmes <mholmesmv@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 29, 2022 7:00 PM
To: Renaud, Dennis (DPH) <Dennis.Renaud@mass.gov>
Subject: Fwd: DON #NHMV-22090717-LE

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December 29, 2022

Dennis Renaud

Determination of Need Program

[250 Washington Street](#), 6th Floor

Boston, MA 02108

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We need a long term care option on island. Over this holiday season is a great example-boats were cancelled and many could not get off island. I thought of our families with loved ones in Falmouth or Cape facilities that could not be together.

Windemere Nursing & Rehabilitation Center is the only on-island option for long-term care. We are currently experiencing a care crisis on island and for island residents with more acute and complicated care needs there are no options available.

I know that the needs are growing. Martha's Vineyard is a naturally occurring retirement community whose population has exploded since the pandemic. In my work as the supervisor for a elder social day program, I see a huge increase in demand. Our numbers exceed 2019 numbers and we recieve calls about our services 2-3 times a week. For many, we are not the correct service although we do say yes to anyone willing to try our program. As an island resident, I also see an aging community in my residential neighborhood as well.

We are an aging population that needs a quality care facility desperately. And while I know that Windemere is dated in its style, I have worked with the staff and know what a stellar organization it is. The new and improved green house model with more capacity and the big heart of Windemere will solve our care crisis.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Mary Holmes



12/30/2022

Dennis Renaud
Determination of Need Program
250 Washington Street, 6th Floor
Boston, MA 02108

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I would like to share a recent personal story that has impacted our family and reinforces the need for such a facility on Martha's Vineyard.

On November 5, 2022 my father (Philip J Norton Jr.), passed away peacefully at the Martha's Vineyard hospital. However, the preceding 5-6 weeks was highly stressful for my mom (a resident of Edgartown, MA), my brother (a VA resident), as well as myself (a NC resident). During this time, my father had been transferred from the Martha's Vineyard hospital to a pulmonary rehab hospital in New Bedford for continuing care. This was a less than ideal situation for him, as well as for my mother, who had to endure navigating Steamship Authority reservations and available ferry space at great expense, just to be able to spend a few hours with her husband 2x per week for over a month. In addition, there were no familiar faces that my father could see – he knows no one in New Bedford and hence, had no visitors. This took a huge toll on his mental health during his stay. At 81 years old, my mom had no other option but to make the 45 min ferry ride, plus 1-hour drive, each way. One cannot understate the stress that comes with this travel necessity and often is not even considered when larger health care decisions have to be made due to the limited options available on the Vineyard.

It was very important for our family to be able to get our father back to Martha's Vineyard, where he was born and raised and made his livelihood, so that he could continue his rehabilitation. Our only option was Windemere but there was a big issue – they had no room available at the time – largely due to the lack of skilled nursing employees. I learned that only half of the available beds in the facility could be utilized as a result. The stress our family endured thinking about our ailing father sitting in a horrible room in New Bedford, with next to

no visitors, took a mental toll on all of us for several weeks. This is time we will never get back but will never forget.

On October 28, 2022, we finally got word that Windermere had a room become available and we were able to transport our father back to the island. His first words to us when he arrived were, "everything is better now". He knew he was back "home" and immediately had familiar faces visiting him, including my mom who could be there daily. We cannot express our gratitude enough to the leaders at both Windermere and the MV Hospital for helping our family make that happen. Unfortunately, he ended up in the ICU at the MV Hospital several days after arriving, and later passed from pulmonary complications. It is also noteworthy to share that he refused to be moved back off island and chose to spend his last days surrounded by his friends and family – who were afforded an opportunity to say goodbye.

It was during this time that our family spent in the ICU that we got to know many of the nurses and doctors who cared for him. Many spoke of their "short-term" contract with the hospital and that they would love to be there year-round but housing options are limited and expensive. Additionally, we learned that the lead Social Worker for Windermere commutes every day from the Cape. When I hear these stories of limited housing, it is no wonder that a facility like Windermere is stretched thin with the lack of available skilled nursing employees. This is a tragic outcome for an aging island community dependent on health-care.

I share this letter with you in hopes that it reinforces our family's strong support for the proposed Navigator Homes project and construction of subsidized housing for the staff. I mentioned that my mom is 81 years old. She has no plans to ever leave the Vineyard but when the time may come for her to need skilled nursing care, my brother and I honestly hope that there is a world-class facility that she can move to and remain "home" like my father wanted.

In full disclosure, it was my family who sold the 26+ acres to the Martha's Vineyard Hospital with the sole purpose of providing land for this new skilled nursing facility and associated staff housing. While we had ample opportunities to sell to home developers over the years, it was important to us that the land, which has been in our family for over 50+ years, be utilized for the benefit of the island community.

For the reasons discussed above, I encourage the Department of Public Health to vote in favor of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip J. Norton III", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Philip J ("Jeff") Norton III