To: Martha’s Vineyard Commission

From: Susie Smith

Re: Support for Construction of Navigator Homes of Martha’s Vineyard

4/4/22

To whom it may concern:

As a 30-year resident of Edgartown, I am writing in support of the building of Navigator Homes of Martha’s Vineyard. I am one in the fast-growing population of older adults on the island.

Many seniors will eventually need skilled nursing care. I have visited family and friends in several nursing homes over the years, including on island at Windemere (which must be replaced). I would not like to live in facilities I have seen.

Everyone wants to feel at home, no matter what age, and we all need companionship and activity, along with excellent medical care. No one wants to be in a “facility”.

It seems to me that this “Green House Model” is a better provider of care than your average nursing home. In an article in the *MV Times* on September 29, 2021, this stood out to me:

“Navigator Elder Homes of Martha’s Vineyard is providing a new method of nursing home care through Green House Model homes — individual homes where each resident has their own living space and private bath, with a large communal kitchen and hearth space that encourages interaction and independence. This model helps combat the three plagues of aging: loneliness, helplessness, and boredom.”

The designs are beautiful, and I love the idea of the private bedroom and bath along with shared community spaces, indoors and out. I do not think most nursing homes pay enough attention to the outdoor spaces for their patients, but Navigator Homes seems to have the importance of fresh air in mind. Who would not want to sit outside on a beautiful day on the Vineyard?

I know some residents nearby are concerned with the appearance of the project, but it seems to me that the hospital and Navigator are taking great care to treat the immediate surroundings and the larger conservation parcel with respect. These buildings and gardens will blend in to the landscape.

In addition to beautiful homes and skilled nursing care for the frailest among us, I also like the idea that there is a place for employees to live. Year after year we read about how hard it is for hardworking people to find a place to live, especially on the Island. Having housing for medical staff and others is crucial.

If I should need skilled nursing care, I want it to be on island, at Navigator Homes.

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