



Martha's Vineyard  
Agricultural Society

Martha's Vineyard Agricultural Society  
Panhandle Road  
P. O. Box 73  
West Tisbury, MA 02575

5/25/2020

West Tisbury Zoning Board of Appeals  
1059 State Road  
West Tisbury, MA 02575

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Brian Athearn

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Re: Letter of Support – Farmers Market

Dear Zoning Board of Appeals:

The Trustees for the Martha's Vineyard Agricultural Society welcome and fully support the Farmers' Market move to the Society grounds this season. Supporting member farmers' efforts to sell their locally produced food is at the heart of what we do. While moving the Market to the Society grounds will allow for proper social distancing, it also tangibly connects the Society's efforts to promote local agriculture by providing a market for agricultural products to the entire community.

The Farmers' Market has been operating its winter market at Society property for the past 4 years without a special permit. This has been an appropriate and lawfully exempt use; a seasonal shift doesn't change this. The Farmers' Market special permit application is not to be deemed the Society's agreement that other current or future uses of its property, including for this or other agricultural markets, requires a special permit.

Regardless, we think it appropriate that the Farmers' Market application be allowed without conditions or restrictions. The Society's property is already heavily restricted by current zoning bylaws and an agricultural preservation restriction. Cumulative conditions and restrictions have a real impact on the Society's ability to perform its core missions of promoting local agriculture and providing agricultural education. In the event the ZBA imposes new restrictions or conditions which unreasonably complicate the Society's missions, then the unintended consequence will be closing the 2020 summer Farmers' Market.

I look forward to the ZBA's hearing and opportunity to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

*Brian Athearn*

Brian Athearn  
President