



**TOWN OF WEST TISBURY
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

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June , 2020

Kate Warner, Chair
West Tisbury Climate Action Committee
Town Hall
West Tisbury, MA 02575

Re: Your letter dated January 12, 2020

Dear Kate,

Thank you for reaching out to the West Tisbury Conservation Commission (ConCom). We welcome the opportunity to participate in planning for the changes that climate change is bound to bring to the town and its wetland resources, which we are charged with protecting. Our concerns include everything from a vernal pool deep in the woods to the beaches that front Vineyard Sound and the Atlantic Ocean.

The ConCom is not a planning body, per se. Rather, our role is to review and regulate activities that affect the town's water and wetland resources, in accordance

with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the West Tisbury Wetlands Protection Bylaw. As you have pointed out, the purview of the ConCom includes storm water management, reducing the impact of flooding, and ensuring the community's water supply, both for public consumption and fire protection.

While we support the town's intention to plan for inevitable environmental changes, we feel it is premature for us to formulate specific plans without gaining additional information. Before we consider plans to address these issues, and to avoid overlapping efforts, we need to know what measures are already in place, are they currently sufficient, and do they address predicted and unforeseen exigencies in the future. For instance, the latest (2020) edition of the Martha's Vineyard Commission's Hazard Mitigation Plan is complete in draft form and is currently being reviewed by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

We are receptive to information developed by any agencies and organizations that are considering climate change, including Vineyard Conservation Society and Island Climate Action Network, among others. We also look forward to gaining information through our connection to your Climate Advisory Committee.

We will coordinate our efforts with any and all local, regional, and national managers to protect these

resources. We are also committed to applying the best available science and management practices to any projects that come before us, including the implications of climate change on them

We look forward to hearing about your committee's progress via our representative, Donna Paulnock. We would also be happy to have you come in and educate us further.

Sincerely,

Whit Griswold, Chair