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April 11, 2007

Martha's Vineyard Commission
P.O. Box 1447
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

Re: Middle Line Road Housing Project Chilmark, MA

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing this letter to formally express our interest in the above listed housing project. As everyone is aware, the proposed location and adjacent lands identified in the project area are archeologically sensitive and most definitely culturally sensitive; and have certain elements indicating the potential importance of a much more significant nature to us as a Tribe.

The Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) Tribal Historic Preservation Office would like to discuss our concerns and begin a dialogue as to how we can work cooperatively to ensure that each of our respective responsibilities and needs are met. We are committed to finding a balance between the need for progress and our obligation for the preservation of the integrity of our Ancient history. With this in mind, we offer these comments and suggestions.

While an archeological survey will not identify traditional, cultural properties (TCPs) or areas of a ceremonial or sacred nature, it will provide a baseline for determining the absence or presence of cultural materials located within a testing area. Additionally it will add to the information previously collected by archeologists prior to today's technology and understanding. So, I would like to begin by endorsing the initial recommendation of conducting an intensive (locational) archeological survey. Then once that has been completed, I would like to recommend that we have a joint meeting of all stakeholders in order to discuss the findings, compare them with what we know, then determine what additional steps should be taken to identify, protect and preserve any other significant elements that are present on; or in proximity to the project site and the entire area of potential effect.

I will be happy to arrange to meet with each or all of the stakeholders, as well as participate in a joint site visit and site walkover. Please feel free to contact me via my cellular phone 508-328-8178 or via E-mail at cmaltais@wampanoagtribe.net. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

In Balance, Harmony and Peace,

Cheryl Andrews-Maltais
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

C: Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) Cultural and Historic Commission
Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) Tribal Council
Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Office
Town of Chilmark
Chilmark Historic Commission