

Evan Lehrer

From: Elana Doyle <elanadoyle@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 29, 2021 3:10 PM
To: Evan Lehrer
Subject: Mashpee Commons

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Hello,

My friend Mary LeClair asked if I would pass this letter on to the planning board before the next meeting. She is unable to attend the meeting as she has a prior engagement but wanted to have her testimony recorded.

Please see letter below,
Thank You,
Elana Doyle

My name is Mary LeClair, and I have lived in Mashpee longer than some of you have been alive, and I am concerned. The first time I ever saw Mashpee Commons only two buildings existed, Hinckley's Lumber Yard and a little bank that looked more like an ice cream parlor than a bank. I had begged to join the bank's fledgling staff, as I loved building things from the bottom up. I fell in love with the bank and stayed there for 15 years.

They were not all easy years, some more difficult than others. You see, Mashpee was a very old community that had experienced hard times. The town had been under receivership under the state for years as they could not afford their own infrastructure. The town was just beginning to gain its independence. That little bank became a hub. In my second year there I was named manager, and my first battle was to change our name from the New Seabury branch to the Mashpee branch of the Barnstable County National Bank, since it belonged to all of Mashpee not just one part. I fell in love with the people. There were just 15 families in New Seabury at the time. I was very lucky working at the bank and interacting with our customers because many of them helped me grow as the little bank grew. We began doing construction mortgages and investments, and many of these retired people were willing to teach me and I was willing to learn. The bank grew as all of Mashpee was growing.

There were people like Bill and Ruby Mills. Bill was the fire chief, and Ruby and her brother ran the Wigwam, where many New Yorkers spent the summer on Cape Cod. Carol Lopez was the town treasurer. Colonel Bingham retired and took over the police department. I met Arnold Chace, Buff Chace's father, and we became

friends. Little did I know that friendship would grow for three generations, as I now work with Buff's daughter Sarah. New people were moving into Mashpee who wanted to help in the right way. We did things together to help the town: in one day we organized a community day and raised \$6,500 to buy the first Jaws of Life. We raised money selling candy bars to send Larry Frye to school to be our first juvenile officer. Thanks to the Chace family, we now had a grocery store, a drug store and a house and gardens store. I certainly cannot forget our first Bobby Byrne's. We also had the best restaurant on the Cape owned by Earl Mills, called the Flume. We survived the suit filed by the Wampanoags and stayed neutral. It was hard. Senator Ed Brooke helped us with small business loans through the federal government. As I said, we survived.

We continued to grow, and Mashpee Commons kept on growing in the right way. They never once tried to shove something down our throats or take a shortcut to do something they would not be proud of. There has never in my knowledge been a time, when given an opportunity to make Mashpee a better place to live, that Mashpee Commons was not on the front line. It was a proud night in Mashpee the year they made Buff Chace citizen of the year; the event was packed, and he was thoroughly embarrassed. Thanks to the Chace family and Mashpee Commons, we now have a library, a church and a heart and soul of this town where visitors and residents alike gather to shop, dine and celebrate with all the generations of their families.

Now to the point of why I am writing this letter. As I said back in the beginning, I am concerned. There is definitely a problem with communication in our town. We need to get back to basics. It is time to stop the lies and misinformation.

Time for supporters of Mashpee Commons who love to live here, shop here and play here to show their support.

We never used to doubt what a person said to us. Your word was your bond. When we talk about environment all you have to do is look at what Mashpee Commons has done already. They have a septic system equipped to handle what they are proposing for their next phase. The trees they removed have been replaced by new trees that are well cared for.

Let's talk about the alternative. If Mashpee Commons decided to sell the land they own to other developers instead of realizing their next phase of development, the land would be divided among many different developers, all doing their own thing. They would only have one goal. Build it, sell it and then move on. Mashpee Commons has provided a space where our school benefits by selling items the students not only make in school but learn to market and manage as an enterprise. Many students include this valuable experience in their applications for college scholarships. I know, because I support that store and communicate directly with the students. When the Cahoon Museum was being remodeled, they graciously donated vacant storefront space

so the museum could maintain a retail presence while they were closed, and it was a huge success. They have a Wampanoag store and Art Center there now. They provide space to house the Mashpee Chamber of Commerce. They do these things because they are a part of the community; their commitment has proven that they have no intention of leaving our town.

Any plan that will be presented by Mashpee Commons will be the product of hard work by thoughtful and experienced professionals. They have always done business that way. I am asking if you have questions, ask the right people for answers, not someone that may have an agenda that may not have been communicated openly, and please do your best to get the right answer. Be a part of your community.

Mary J. LeClair

Fountain Street

Mashpee