

Donna Conkling

From: Mayor
Sent: Wednesday, January 6, 2021 12:41 PM
To: Joan Weissman
Cc: Trustee Crandall; Trustee Lewis; Trustee Arest; Trustee Ross; Trustee Waldman; bceptron@gmail.com; Steve Pappalardo; Building Department; Donna Conkling; Trustee Whitestone
Subject: Re: 4 Kingston Road

Hi Joan,

Thank you for your email.

Senior members of Village staff are aware of this issue and are engaged with the Building Department, which is working with the BAR and the Planning Board.

As you may also be aware, there is a new Chair of the BAR, Brad Cetron, who you've copied on this email. Brad has been doing a very good job at the BAR and we hope this personnel change helps the process with this application.

The BAR is an independent land use Board and, per NYS guidelines, the Board of Trustees does not involve itself in the decisions of any of land use boards.

Please participate in the upcoming BAR meeting to ensure that your voice is heard about this application.

Wishing you a healthy and happy new year.

Best regards,

Marc

On Jan 4, 2021, at 1:47 PM, Joan Weissman <ws1930@aol.com> wrote:

CAUTION: External sender.

Dear Mayor Samwick, Trustees and BAR Members,

On June 2nd I wrote to the Board of Trustees regarding the BAR zoom meeting for 4 Kingston Road that I had attended the previous evening. In that email I expressed my concerns regarding the Chair's comments and the lack of BAR review of the landscape plan for 4 Kingston Road.

The BAR will once again hear the contractor's application for 4 Kingston Road on January 11th. I have reviewed the documents that the contractor has submitted and have the same concerns as I had expressed previously: (1) underreporting of the trees on the property, especially native flowering dogwoods and paw paws which are DEC- and Village Code-protected; (2) underreporting of the DBH of many of the trees listed for removal; (3) noncompliance with section 281-5 of the Tree Code; and, (4) lack of a variety of trees in the landscape plan, especially trees that will grow to a similar size as those larger ones being removed, which also relates to section 281-5.

In addition, I am opposed to the construction of retaining walls along the south side of the property. The destruction of the hillside as it now exists--with its diverse plants and trees--will be detrimental to the character of our neighborhood. The contractor's proposed planting of rows of arborvitaes along the retaining walls will not lessen that adverse impact but will instead create a sterile, monotonous landscape. Moreover, nothing guarantees that any of those arborvitaes--or any plantings--will survive, thus leaving a barren hill with unsightly retaining walls. Also, it should be noted that the contractor's proposal to plant English ivy to overhang the retaining walls is unwise due to the fact that it is an invasive species.

If they have not yet done so, I urge the BAR members to visit the site so they can see firsthand how the house sits on the site, the 32 trees that are listed for removal (they are tied with red tape), and the hillside where the retaining walls are proposed to be built. Equally as important, I urge the BAR to review the landscape plan. The proposed addition is very large, and because the house sits on a hill, its bulk will have a substantial impact on the surrounding neighborhood. There is very little in the current landscape plan that will reduce that impact. More diverse plants and trees (ideally more native species like flowering dogwoods); trees that will grow to a similar size as the oaks, tulip trees and white pines that are designated for removal; more trees planted in the front yard; and, relocation of the small paw paws are a few suggestions. On a positive note, it does appear that a Hawthorn and a flowering dogwood, both of which are on the Village right of way, are no longer designated for removal since there is no red tape tied around them.

A healthy and diverse environment that is aesthetically compatible with its surroundings is essential to the well-being of our community, and I urge the Village to ensure that such an environment is retained at 4 Kingston.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Joan Weissman
3 Kingston Road