



Richard Oberlander
Certified Arborist

12/2/13

Spencer Kanis, Chairman and Board Members
East Hills Architectural Review Board
East Hills Village Hall
209 Harbor Hill Rd.
East Hills, NY 11576

Dear Mr. Kanis and Board Members:

I am an arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture (IAS), the major national accrediting body for tree experts (certification number NY0918A). (I am also a resident of Nassau County and have been for about 45 years.) I have been a practicing arborist for about 10 years, and I am the owner of Nassau-Suffolk Tree Service, a firm with about two dozen employees. We work throughout the North Shore and beyond. I was an appointed member of the Village of East Hills Architectural Review Board and helped write the Village's Tree Preservation law several years ago.

I also hold a BS (1962) in Agricultural Science from Cornell University, and I have received additional extensive training in arboriculture in rigorous continuing education seminars required by the IAS.

I would like to comment on several applications whose properties I visited. I find the wholesale removal of trees as is being proposed by new residents

and developers tonight highly damaging to our community and environment. In almost all cases multiple healthy trees are being removed under subterfuge like "root tripping hazard," or to make room for a house that is obscenely large, or for grading which is avoidable and unnecessary.

A few of the applications:

25 Ash Dr -- It is appalling to propose removing 23 of 29 trees. It will severely damage the environment. It is unnecessary and unjustified. I could not see all the trees -- as you do not allow independent observers and residents to have access or accompany you, nor do you provide photos, despite having been formally asked to accommodate us -- but the ones I saw seemed healthy.

Grading is unnecessary and violates the ARB code requiring harmony with the current topography, especially where it requires the destruction of trees.

The proposed house of 5248 square feet just does not belong here on such a plot, and as a long time resident in addition to professional arborist I oppose it.

50 Redwood Dr -- Again the trees are healthy and important for the environment. It is unbelievable you might allow this developer to remove half the trees, especially for "grading". Grading is unnecessary and violates the ARB code requiring harmony with the current topography. There is a 36 inch Oak proposed to be destroyed. That is appalling. The current house has a reasonably sized envelope. There is no reason to destroy the environment to expand into a 5725 sq ft home as proposed given the ecological impact.

60 Crescent Lane -- I repeat what I said last meeting. I disagree with the Tree Health report, which lacks all specifics on why trees 'should' be cut down. I live nearby at 73 Holly Lane -- and have for several decades.

The eight trees proposed to be removed all appear to me to be healthy, with the exception of one tree in the rear, a Beech, are healthy and attractive trees. These trees are assets to the community and essential parts of the local ecosystem.

In addition this property is well balanced architecturally and aesthetically

with its trees. It is a classic Norgate/Strathmore property surrounded by mature trees. It should remain that way.

32 Woodhollow --

I strongly oppose the removal of six trees there. The only reason given for removing these trees in the application is for construction of the house and driveway. These are unacceptable reasons. Too many trees are just coming down.

103 Willow Gate --

I know the ARB requested an arborist report. I don't see any arborist certification from the letter submitted. The letter argues that roots are a "tripping hazard". They are grasping at straws. That is no reason to remove healthy trees. No one tripped there in 25 years. The letter refers to unhealthy trees but the writer lacks appropriate credentials according to his letter.

I saw the trees there and I found them to be healthy and an asset to the community.

In sum, as a principal author of the tree protection law, I strongly oppose the actions of the Architectural Review Board in permitting healthy canopy trees to be removed. This practice is counter to the law.

We are seeing again and again, there is no balance or respect for the tree canopy and existing ecological and architectural conditions in the new applications. Grading is a new issue, but EH Village law provides for requiring homes to conform to the topography.

I urge the Board to deny the tree removal requests and the excessively large houses.

Sincerely yours,

Richard Oberlander
Certified Arborist, Nassau-Suffolk Tree Service
Tel. (516) 456-3968