

March 7, 2021

Dear members of the HSAB and HDC,

I sincerely appreciate all of the time and attention you have given to the proposal for 14 Lowell place, and all of your efforts to ensure that the new home to be built there will be consistent with the historic nature of the street. I also appreciate many of the significant changes made in the latest proposal:

- The new footprint of the home, at 61 feet deep is much more in keeping with other homes on the street.
- The positioning of the house further back on the lot will reduce the visual effect of the difference in height between the original 14 Lowell structure on the front of the property and the new home behind it.
- The introduction of a one-story section to the front (east elevation) of the home - with a ridge height of 16 feet 4 inches - introduces an element on the street side of the home that is in keeping with the height of the other Lowell Place homes around it.

I do, however, have some remaining concerns that I hope you will consider:

- The square footage of the *living space* of this home, at over 3,000 square feet, is more than 2.5 times the average square footage of living space of the homes on the street. With respect to living space, it is not in keeping with other homes on the street.
- The footprint of my *home* (not including the garage that sits on my property) at 12 Lowell Place is 1,460 square feet. The proposed footprint of the *home* at 14 Lowell is 2,143 square feet - 683 square feet larger than my home rather than only a few hundred square feet larger, as was presented by the owners.
- The owners have stated that their proposal will “preserve substantially more green space than the rest of the street has done on their undersized lots”. This does not take into account that the lots at 12 Lowell and 8 Lowell are larger than the current 14 Lowell lot and both homes have preserved significantly more green space than is proposed for 14 Lowell.
- The most recent letter from the owners states that “*All* homes on the street have made large improvements with second floors, dormers and additions. They have maximized their space.” In the early 1990’s, the previous owner of 12 Lowell Place added an approximately 440 square foot addition to the home. Since purchasing the property I have made no additions - my home has no dormers or second floor. With a lot size of approximately 13,500 square feet I have definitely not maximized my space. I believe the same is true of 8 Lowell.
- The owners also stated that the home, as proposed, is only visible from a specific location on Barnabus Lane during the winter months. I do not understand how it will not be visible from Lowell Place, year round. Any mature plantings that once stood between the proposed structure and Lowell

Place have been removed and will no longer block the house from view. The smaller home that will remain on the front portion of the property is significantly shorter and narrower than the proposed new home. The new home, as best I can tell, will be visible both around and above the existing cottage when viewed from Lowell Place.

- The owners have stated that they “want to preserve the historic character of Lowell Place and we want to preserve that history...namely in the existing front cottage. While the back lot is not historic, we want to respect the history with this new build.” Last November, the owners listed the front cottage for sale, specifically noting 367 square feet of ground coverage remaining for expansion. If the owners do sell that property, as they have indicated interest in doing, they will have no control over how the history of the front cottage - which will most likely be expanded - is preserved. Whatever precedents are set by the construction on the back of 14 Lowell will determine what will be approved for the front lot as well, regardless of who owns it. Additionally, whether or not the back lot is deemed to be historic, it exists in the historic district and therefore is subject to all of the same concerns and limitations as the front lot.

I realize that this process has been long and I understand the owners' frustration - I too would like to be done with this and arrive at a resolution that everyone can live with. As I said at the beginning, I truly appreciate the many changes they have made to date. No matter what changes are made from here forward, however, this home, when constructed, will be the largest home on Lowell Place, and as such will set the precedent for what will be built in the future. For that reason, I would like to see a home that is still smaller in square footage (living space) and shorter at it's tallest point than the 26 foot height that is currently proposed. I hold no ill will toward the owners and I understand their desire to fight for the home they want to build. I also trust that the HSAB and the HDC will determine the right decisions for the neighborhood, even if their opinions are different from my own. Lowell Place is a wonderful street, and I look forward to welcoming the Norris family to it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Victoria Rakov