

Izak Gilbo

From: Jonathan Booth <jboothhome@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 2, 2024 4:30 PM
To: Planning Info
Subject: Comments for HDC meeting of January 3, 2024

Hi,

We are Cheryl and Jonathan Booth and we live next door to 37 South School Street. We have lived in this house for 28 years and also five years in the house next door on the other side. We have a couple concerns about the project proposal for 37 South School St.

First there is the question of the impact the plans will have on the character and the preservation of this historic streetscape. The combination of the original building, plus the planned addition, which both sit on a rise, and plus the planned double driveway makes for an uncharacteristic large presence on the street. It also adds to the building density of the neighborhood.

For 220+ years the four colonials on this street have preserved the original front parts of the buildings.

Especially notable is the triangle of three colonials, mine next door and the one directly across the street from #37, and #37, which all so far preserve the old look of the street.

Also, this plan necessitates the removal of two old trees, a Magnolia and a Katsura - a type that is also present in Strawberry Banke.

Our second concern is specifically with the width of the proposed double driveway. It would inhibit us from easily getting to our back yard from the left side of our house, given the driveway is 3.1 feet from our property line and very close to our house and bushes. It would require the removal of the stone walkway we added years ago. And basically we will have a very close-up view of 2 cars.

Also, the existing driveway, on the right lies immediately adjacent to a berm of ledge and earth that serves as a retaining wall of 1 to 2 feet higher than the driveway and continues to the foundation of our house. The new driveway plan would cut the width of the berm in half and the proposed plan shows no plan for a new retaining wall there. If a retaining wall is to be added - that would make the double driveway addition even closer to our house. And we're not sure what impact the loss of half the berm would make to the water table there and potential flooding of our basement.

Also, there is an old Japanese Maple tree at the corner of the new driveway plan that we have maintained over the years whose roots will be damaged by the new larger driveway.

Thank you,
Cheryl and Jonathan Booth