

ENTASIS PC
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July 28, 2014

Ms Linda Finucane
Land Use Committee
Newton Board of Aldermen
1000 Commonwealth Ave
Newton, MA 02459

Re: item #229-14
93 Bellevue Ave, Newton

Ms Finucane:

As Chair of the Recommendations Committee for Historic Newton I am writing concerning a request for a letter of support by Dena and Michael Rashe regarding the proposed driveway on lot 40 at 93 Bellevue Road. Unfortunately during the summer, with short notice, I am unable to convene the committee in time to provide a formal letter of support from Historic Newton for the July meeting of the Land Use Committee. Historic Newton will not be able to act of the request until its September board meeting.

However as a local architect deeply engaged in historic preservation in Newton as a Commissioner on the Upper Falls Historic District Commission, board member of the Friends of Farlow Park, Chair of the Newton Preservation Awards program and Vice President of Historic Newton I would like to express my personal support for the application.

I have walked the site with the owner, architect and landscape architect. I believe the proposed driveway will have minimal impact on the views across the natural landscape. The thoughtful layout conceals the drive throughout most of its length, traversing the lawn well below the elevation of the front yard. The proposed landscaping combined with the existing vegetation further mitigates the impact upon the open space. The design leaves the lot's pristine, natural quality intact. As such I believe the proposal conforms to the intent of the preservation and conservation restriction on the lot.

The Rashes have demonstrated a deep respect for the historic nature of the site. Their landscape architect is a specialist in historic landscapes. The scope of the restoration work for the existing building is truly extraordinary. The new construction is both respectful and deferential to the existing building and landscape. The proposed driveway is entirely consistent with the level of stewardship the applicant is providing for this incredible historic resource. I urge the city waive the existing preservation and conservation restrictions on lot 40 to allow the driveway as proposed.

If you have any questions please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay C. Walter". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a prominent vertical stroke on the left side.

Jay C. Walter AIA