



**Mitchell L. Fischman**  
41 Brush Hill Road  
Newton, MA 02461

November 12, 2021

Mr. Peter Dimond, Chair  
City of Newton Historical Commission  
c/o City of Newton  
Department of Planning and Development  
100 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

Attention: Ms. Valerie Birmingham, Chief Preservation Planner

**Re:** 131 Dane Hill Road Demolition Review: Request to Demolish House:

Abutters statement in support of the Historical Commission's 11/04/21 demolition review status memo determining that the structure is **Historically Significant** and scheduling the Applicant's demolition application for further review at the Commission's regularly scheduled meeting on November 18, 2021

Dear Mr. Dimond:

My wife and I have owned and lived at 41 Brush Hill Road, the property abutting 131 Dane Hill Road ("131 DH") since November 1974. Our house was designed by the same architect (Earl C. Davis) who designed 131 DH and was built in 1934, approximately the same time period as 131 DH. During the past 48-years, we have had opportunities to visit 131 DH, view it every day and can attest that this house is a significant architectural property as that term is defined in the criteria of the Newton Historical Commission.

We believe that 131 DH is historically and architecturally important for its period, style, architect and context for the following reasons.

- **Period**

The 131 DH home was designed and constructed in the mid-1930s, a period during which Newton southside growth was occurring and new homes expanding rapidly due to the widening and improvement to Route 9, which became a major feeder from Boston to the new western suburbs.

When we purchased our house, the original owner provided us with the 1930s vintage brochure advertising the "Newton Countryside" containing "over sixty-five acres of rolling, picturesque land with beautiful trees, shrubs and rocks." You will see from the text that all the homes were either designed by Earl C. Davis or had the plans approved by his firm.

We are attaching a copy of this brochure which also contains photos of then existing homes which all still stand today.

Dozens of homes which were built during the period and form the immediate neighborhood still exist today on Brush Hill, Nod Hill, Leeward, Dane Hill and parts of Dedham and Bound Brook Roads.

- **Style**

131DH was built to last and is rich in detail from the Tudor Revival Style, with decorative faux timbers, a steeped pitched roof, half-timbered/strip board exterior façade used in conjunction with stucco and decorative brickwork and diamond shaped leaded glass panes. Earl C. Davis and D & V Realty Trust designed, and we expect constructed, this home and well as many others in this area, choosing revival architectural styles that were not cookie-cutter or replicated repeatedly. Each house home had different details and numerous design styles utilized including Tudor, Colonial, and Gambrel Colonial (for example, 20 Bound Brook Rd which this Commission voted to “Preferably Preserve at its meeting on May 27, 2021). The homes at 131 DH and 20 Bound Brook although reflecting different revival architecture styles were both designed by the same architect, Earl C. Davis, and both reflect a high level of understanding of the neighborhood architectural/ context.

- **Architect**

The architect who designed 131 DH and our home and many of the homes in the Countryside neighborhood and other parts of Newton was Mr. Earl C. Davis. He lived in Newtonville and worked as an architect designing homes throughout Newton until his death in 1977. We are confident that a search through the Newton Assessor or land records will reveal many of the home that he designed and which remain excellent examples of his talents and contributions to Newton’s neighborhood character.

- **Context**

The 131 DH property is a part of an assemblage of homes generally from the same period and these existing homes are extremely compatible in massing utilizing a variety of styles and materials, all creating a very supporting neighborhood context. There is a particular enclave of houses along Brush Hill, Dane Hill and Leeward Roads that were built during the 1930 by Earl Davis. The attached brochure and a walk through the neighborhood will attest to the sense of “Toute Ensemble” of which 131 DH is a gem. The design and materials of these homes have withstood the test of time.



## **131 Dane Hill Road Structural Report**

The applicant/new owner's structural report for 131 DH notes maintenance deficiencies that need to be addressed. Older homes need regular maintenance and, in some cases,

rebuilding, without the need for full demolition. The 131 DH home looks very appealing and well maintained from the outside. Its elevated siting overlooking Dane Hill Road with varied and balanced wooden and stucco forms, capped by a slate roof is very attractive. It is a house with "good bones" and all the deficiencies noted should be able to be remedied and affordable given Newton very strong housing market.

We have the original plans and specifications for our home prepared by Earl C. Davis. We recently reviewed these plans and note its careful attention to strong design and building construction principles calling, for example, metal mesh plaster walls and good structural timber for supports and interior floors. We are confident that the plans for 131 DH were comparable.

Please let me know if you have any questions. My wife and I (as do other neighbors) plan to attend the November 18, 2021 on line public hearing.

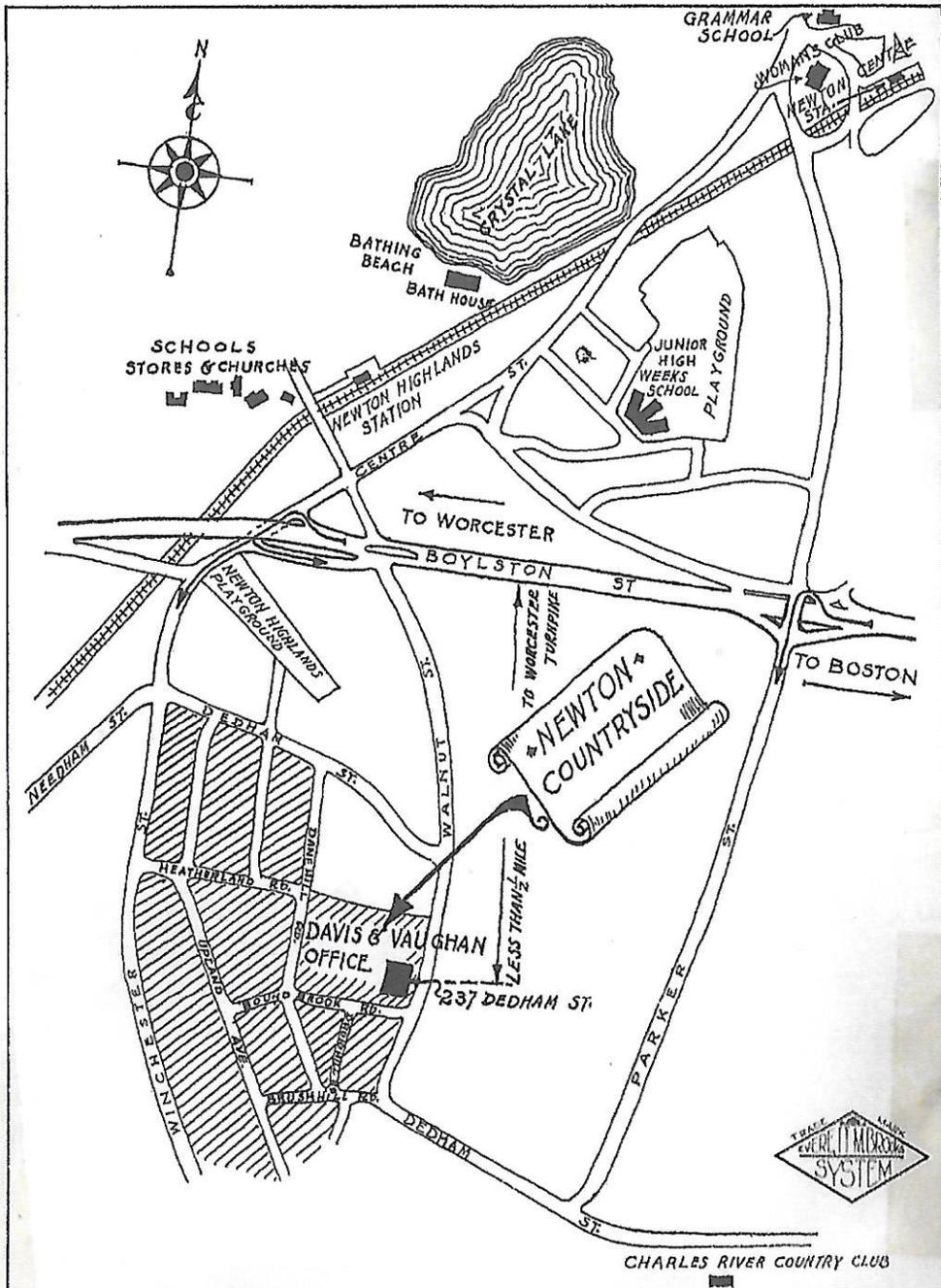
Sincerely,

*Mitchell L. Fischman, AICP*

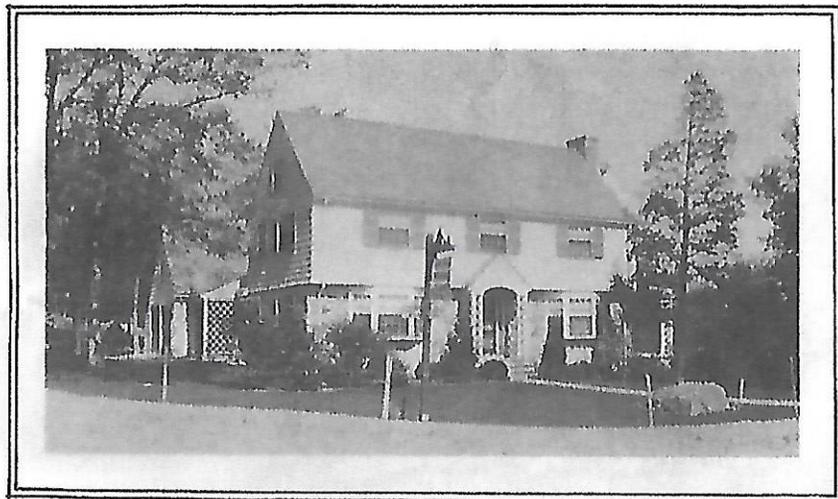
[mitchfischman@gmail.com](mailto:mitchfischman@gmail.com)

Tel: 781-760-1726

ATTACHMENT



# Newton Countryside



RESIDENCE OF ROBERT E. LEMONT ESQ.

Another Development of

## Davis & Vaughan

REALTY TRUST

• Homes & Homesites •

♦ Davis & Vaughan ♦  
Realty Trust

237 Dedham St. Newton Highlands — centre Newton—4540-4541





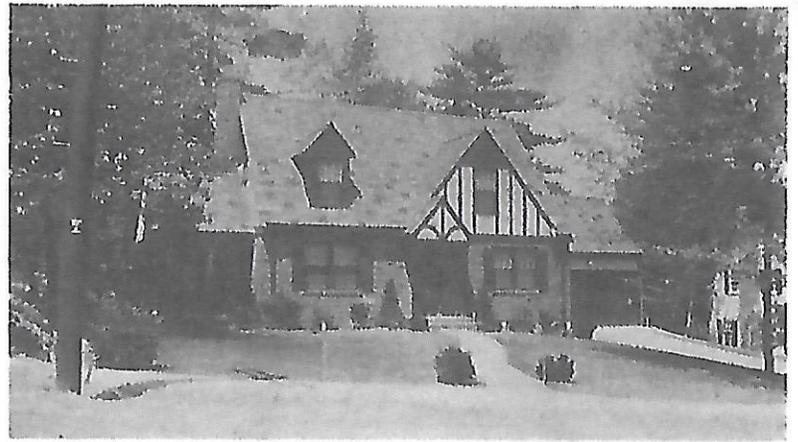
RESIDENCE OF ALLEN E. REED ESQ.

*Newton Countryside contains over sixty-five acres of rolling, picturesque land with beautiful trees, shrubs and rocks. It is high, dry and healthful country, yet within easy access, one half to three quarters of a mile to trains, stores, churches and schools and the new state highway to Boston. Bounded by beautiful homes and a short distance from the Charles River Country Club, the natural setting with no traffic problem, makes Newton Countryside an exclusive, quiet and refined place in which to live and bring up a family. No artificial playgrounds are needed here for the children can romp and play in its woodsy paths with all the advantages of a summer camp.*

*Careful attention has been given to the plot so as to insure most spacious lots and to take advantage of the natural beauty and contour of the land.*

♦ *Newton Countryside* ♦

SIMILAR TO 131 DANE HILL



MARCH

RESIDENCE OF SAMUEL INGRAM ESQ.

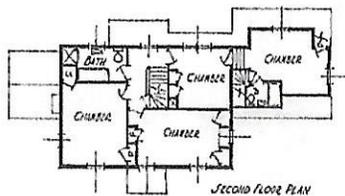
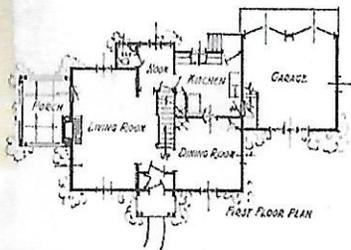
*Newton Countryside offers more in beautiful trees and shrubs and land for a moderate price, than any other section of Newton. Streets are to be finished according to specifications of the City of Newton, also gas, water and lights at no expense to the owner. There is probably no doubt now in the minds of the American Public that economic conditions are definitely on the upgrade. Therefore, the far sighted individual will look well to his living conditions before rising costs of material and labor make him pay the long price. Why pay rent when, by proper financing, you can own a home of your own? Whether one purchases a lot now for investment to build on or to sell for a profit, it behooves each individual to Act Now. As you doubtless know fortunes have been made on rising land values. Drive out to Newton Countryside where trees and hills reign supreme.*

♦ *Everything the name implies* ♦

atives to high civic interest and usefulness."—Calvin Coolidge.



RESIDENCE OF JOHN V. SPALDING ESQ.



Mr. Earl B. Davis, an architect of more than ten years' practical experience, is on the property at all times to expedite the work and personally supervise all homes under construction. The firm is also in a position to help estimate costs, draw sketches incorporating the client's wishes and help in financing the home. Why not select your HOME SITE NOW?

♦ NEWTON COUNTRYSIDE ♦

NEWTON • COUNTRYSIDE

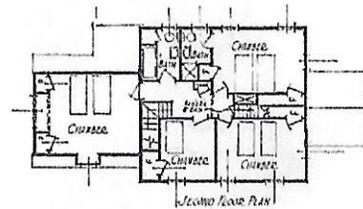
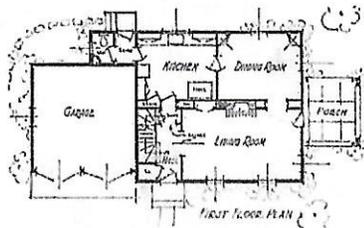
consider price only are this man's lawful prey."—John Ruskin.

"The ownership of a home—the feeling of Independence which

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RESIDENCE OF FRANCIS S. KING ESQ.



To further safeguard the home buyer all plans and specifications must be submitted to the Davis and Vaughan firm for their approval. No two homes shall be built alike and all must accede to the high character of the development. In connection with this, the Davis and Vaughan Realty Trust maintain an architectural service right on the premises and are more than glad to advise a client in his choice of a home site and plans for building.

"There is hardly anything in the world that some man o



**106 Danehill Road**  
Newton, MA 02461  
November 15, 2021

Mr. Peter Dimond, Chair  
City of Newton Historical Commission  
c/o City of Newton  
Department of Planning and Development  
100 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

**Attention: Ms. Valerie Birmingham, Chief Preservation Planner,**  
**[vbirmingham@newtonma.gov](mailto:vbirmingham@newtonma.gov)**

**Re: 131 Danehill Road Demolition Review: Request to Demolish Historically Significant House**

Dear Mr. Dimond:

We have owned and lived at 106 Danehill Road, in proximity to 131 Danehill Road since the 1980s. During the past years, we have had the opportunity to view this beautifully designed building and recognize this house as a significant historical and architectural property and part of the majestic tenor of our neighborhood.

Our neighbors, Mitch and Carol Fischman, at 141 Brush Hill Road have outlined reasons in their opposition letter to the Historical Commission. We share in opposing the demolition of the structure at 131 Danehill Road because of its historical importance of its period and style.

Homes along Danehill Road were mostly constructed during the 1930s, including ours. Dozens of homes built during the 1930s still exist today. These homes are on Danehill, Brush Hill, Nod Hill, Leeward, and parts of Bound Brook Roads, as well as along Dedham Street. The neighborhood provides an ambience of classical, older homes. New construction, likely dramatically larger in size, will detract from the characteristic and ambience of the neighborhood.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Joyce College  
Alan Goldman  
(Home) 617-965-2319

Helen M. Lebowitz  
30 Brush Hill Road  
Newton, MA 02461

November 16, 2021

Mr. Peter Dimond, Chair  
City of Newton Historical Commission  
c/o City of Newton  
Department of Planning and Development  
100 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

**Attention: Ms. Valerie Birmingham, Chief Preservation Planner,**  
[vbirmingham@newtonma.gov](mailto:vbirmingham@newtonma.gov)

**Re: 131 Dane Hill Road Demolition Review: Request to Demolish Historically Significant House**

Dear Mr. Dimond:

My husband Robert and I have owned and lived at 30 Brush Hill Road, near 131 Dane Hill Road, since September 1973. During the past 48 years, we have had the opportunity to see this house nearly every day and recognize it as a significant historical and architectural property.

Our neighbor, Mitch and Carol Fischman, at 41 Brush Hill Road has outlined reasons in their opposition letter to the Historical Commission that we share in opposing the demolition of the structure at 131 Dane Hill Road. We share our opposition because of 131 Dane Hill's historical and architectural importance for its period, style, architect and context.

Homes along Dane Hill Road were almost all constructed during the 1930s, including our home around the corner on Brush Hill Road, which is also a mid-1930s structure. In fact, dozens of homes which were built during the 1930's forming the immediate neighborhood still exist today on Dane Hill, Brush Hill, Nod Hill, Leeward, and parts of Bound Brook Roads, and along Dedham Street.

Please let me know if you have any questions. My understanding is that several neighbors plan to attend the November 18, 2021 on-line public hearing to oppose this demolition of 131 Dane Hill Road.

Sincerely,

Helen M. Lebowitz