

Dobbs Ferry
Conservation Advisory Board

Monday, December 6, 2021

Dobbs Ferry Planning Board
112 Main Street
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

Dear Dobbs Ferry Planning Board,

The Dobbs Ferry Conservation Advisory Board is deeply concerned about the proposed demolition and restructuring of the land at 253 Judson Avenue.

No site is ever a blank slate. This particular site has been cared for and its ecological benefit increased throughout the tenure of the previous owner. The house itself, the trees, and the shape of the land deserve preservation.

The most environmentally sensitive choice here is to maintain the current structure, to leave the trees, and not to disturb the soil. Soil stores carbon, as do trees. To destroy an entire house and replace it, even with the newest and seemingly eco-friendly materials, is not as environmentally progressive as it seems.

This particular site has three sensitive interactions: 1) the stream running in front of it, 2) the forest in which it lives and 3) the current neighborhood of people and their homes.

In biology, the precautionary principle is often invoked when considering whether to make a change. The principle deems the more cautious move to be the smarter move. Here are some questions to consider before moving forward: What will happen when four huge old trees are removed? How will the stream, just up the hill from a sanitary sewer pumping station, react when the earth has been regraded? Is there a way to take the existing structure and adjust it for the preferences of the new owners? Is there a way to leave the trees, that have been here since before all of us? Is there a way to leave the grade of the hill, which allows the stream to find its route to not disturb the existing homes down the hill?

And lastly, may we have our own arborist look at the trees on the property before further decisions are made?

Regards,

The Dobbs Ferry Conservation Advisory Board