

ALTHEA NORTHCROSS
REGISTERED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
77 SECOND STREET APT 2
MEDFORD MA 02155

June 10, 2022

Town of Ossining Planning Board
Village Hall
16 Croton Avenue
Ossining, NY 10562

MEMORANDUM

Re: 68 Somerstown Road - Landscape Plan Revision Requests and Further Community Input

Dear Planning Board,

After receiving comments from board members and further communications regarding the continuing revisions to the landscape plan, this memo serves as a record of the requested changes, as well as the continued response of the community, regarding those requested changes.

Though significant arrangement changes were made, the final tree count stayed constant at 40 trees and the shrub count was reduced overall by 10. The number of perennials, and amount of conservation meadow mix also remains the same.

Below you will find a record of responses to the requests for plan changes to be submitted to the public record.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these matters.
Sincerely,
Althea Northcross

BOARD MEMBER REVISION REQUESTS
received by email May 12, 2022

1) All plantings should be outside of the dripline of existing trees, especially the 48" dbh Sugar Maple (*Acer Saccharum*).

RESPONSE: Understory plantings (Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Redbuds and Magnolia) have been removed from outside of the dripline of the 48" dbh Sugar Maple. Additional adjustments have been made throughout the plan to provide more distance between existing and proposed trees, and the note below has been added to alert contractors to potential root zone conflicts requiring special consideration. Since broadleaf evergreens are naturally an understory species and a major component of the screening requirements for this plan, not all understory plantings could be placed outside of existing drip lines, though their final placement in the field must be reviewed and approved by the Owner's Representative before digging.

Note reads as follows: “Locations for understory planting to be scouted and staked in the field with approval of Owner’s Representative before digging occurs. Once approved, all understory planting locations to be dug by hand with caution to avoid potential root damage or root zone conflicts. Where conflicts occur, Owner’s Representative to approve root zone conflict-free location before relocation occurs.

- 2) The 12 *Juniperus Virginiana* should be substituted for species which are more tolerant of wet soils.

RESPONSE: Though *Juniperus virginiana* ‘Emerald Sentinel’ is adaptable to both dry and wet soil conditions, this species will not tolerate standing water. According to the survey, each of the *Juniperus virginiana* species is currently planted at or above the elevation of 493’ which is equal to or greater than the elevations at the base of the proposed home foundation, safely outside of the range of the top of the groundwater table. On 1/13/2022, the survey cites the elevation of the pond at 484’. With additional seasonal groundwater fluctuation, a nine foot elevation difference provides a sufficient elevational gap to assure that though this species may encounter wet conditions seasonally, it will be safely above the insupportable conditions of standing water.

- 3) The 3 *Betula nigra* (River Birch) and *Quercus Bicolor* (Swamp white oak) should not be planted in the shady area as they are shown on the landscape plan and should be moved to a sunnier location. One of the *Quercus Bicolor* should be planted where the ash and elm trees are being removed.

RESPONSE: These seven shade trees have been relocated to more freely benefit from the southern sun exposure available at this location. In order to better position each of these shade trees, the pond’s edge shrub plantings have been relocated and the trees have each been moved to locations where they can each have the maximum amount of southern exposure and less competition with the existing wooded brush at the edge of the pond.

- 4) The roots of the *Catalpa* tree located on the 62 Somerstown Rd property should be protected along the 68 Somerstown Rd driveway. Notes should be included on the revised landscaping plan identifying how this condition will be met.

RESPONSE: The following note has been added in reference to the access driveway: “Contractor to utilize construction plates along that section of the driveway to protect the root systems of existing trees to the maximum extent practical.”

- 5) The knotweed along both sides of the 68 Somerstown Rd driveway should be eradicated. Notes should be included on the revised landscaping plan identifying how this condition will be met.

RESPONSE: The following note has been added in reference to the knotweed along the entrance to the driveway: “Contractor to remove knotweed along the driveway maximum extent practical.”

- 6) All new plantings should be protected from deer - both deer browse and deer rub. Notes should be included on the revised landscaping plan identifying how this condition will be met.

RESPONSE: The following note has been added in reference to deer protection: All shade tree plantings with exposed bark to be covered with 48” minimum height with mesh tree bark protection. Contractor to apply EPA-approved deer browse resistant spray to new plantings and reapply product according to manufacturer’s recommendations for the duration of the plant guarantee period.

Though not included in the note on the drawing, monitoring requirements during the guarantee period assure that if a revised deer resistance method is required, such as other types of deterrents or a physical barrier for certain species, the contractor must proactively suggest and implement such measures with the review and approval of the Owner’s Representative. In the event that these mea-

asures are not taken, the Contractor must replace the damaged plants at their own expense and re-establish more effective deer browse prevention methods moving forward.

BOARD MEMBER REVISION REQUESTS

recieved by email May 27, 2022

1) Re: The 3 Betula nigra and Quercus Bicolor: Will one of the Quercus Bicolor be planted in the location where the Ash and Elms are to be removed?

RESPONSE: The recommendation is that the Quercus bicolor will remain on the northern side of the lot in order to benefit from the most advantageous light conditions as their current location has the most prolonged sunlight exposure of any area on the lot.

2) Additional question: Will all the ash trees infested with Emerald Ash Borer be removed?

RESPONSE: The certified arborist reviewed, assessed and recommended tree removals on site. Please refer to civil site preparation and removals plan for more information.

3) Re: Knotweed eradication: There should be a multi-year eradication plan.

RESPONSE: Continued invasive species monitoring and eradication planning is contained in the planting specification as a requirement under the three year plant guarantee that includes monitoring new plant health for the duration of the guarantee period until final acceptance, among many other requirements. The following phrase was added to the drawing: "This requirement to be fulfilled for the entirety of the three year plant monitoring and guarantee period."

4) Re: deer protection: The first bullet should indicate that ALL new plantings will be sprayed.

RESPONSE: Edit to drawing made to include phrase above.

COMMUNITY CONCERN LETTER - 7 TAVANO ROAD RESIDENTS

sent by email June 7, 2022

Subject: 68 Somerstown new landscape plan

To members of the Ossining Town planning board:

We have reviewed the new proposed landscape plan, dated June 6. Thank you for posting them.

The board's minutes will show that at a prior hearing we noted with concern that no screening aside from (low) shrubs was being provided for our house, and that evergreen trees would be needed.

The new landscape plan contains even fewer shrubs and no trees between our house and the proposed construction. This is completely unacceptable. The applicant is proposing to build a house and provide us with no screening. "Meadow grass" is not screening!

Respectfully we trust that the board will recognize that screening is necessary, and that it is appropriate and the duty of the planning board to ensure that this would be part of any plan.

Sincerely,

*Jean and Des Fitzpatrick
7 Tavano Road*

RESPONSE: The factors that have affected the two consecutive revisions to the landscape plan have been based on the thoughtful and important considerations stemming from discussion and feedback from the community as well as members of the board. The request from the Town Board that most affected the original plan's screening approach between the proposed house and 7 Tavano Road was the following request, received from the Board by email on May 12, 2022:

BOARD REQUEST: All plantings should be outside of the dripline of existing trees, especially the 48" dbh Sugar Maple (*Acer Saccharum*).

This thoughtful and important request, reflected in the changes to the June 6th dated landscape plan, distanced the largest of the plantings from the immediate root zone area closest to the trunks of the large existing Sugar Maples (including the 25" Sugar Maple directly between 7 Tavano and the proposed home). The plan does not, however, remove all plantings from under the dripline of existing trees, but rather makes an important accommodation by distancing them from the trunks of existing large trees. Furthermore, this new plan adds extra precautionary language for their installation, as the neighbor's screening requests were to be honored to the maximum allowable degree without endangering the existing large trees. The following point was responded to as noted in the beginning of this memo. The key response excerpt:

Since broadleaf evergreens are naturally an understory species and a major component of the screening requirements for this plan, not all understory plantings could be placed outside of existing drip lines, though their final placement in the field must be reviewed and approved by the Owner's Representative before digging.

Though there will be a gap in the screening planting to allow for the safety of the critical root zone of the existing 25" sugar maple, the broadleaf evergreens planted on either side are both selected to provide maximum screening throughout the year, as they do maintain their foliage year round. Both native species were selected for their preferred deep shade environment. In these environments, both Rosebay Rhododendron and Mountain Laurel can grow to 15' tall and wide.