



RIVERDALE NATURE PRESERVANCY

January 12, 2015

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Charles G. Moerdler, Chairman
Land Use Committee
Bronx Community Board No. 8
5676 Riverdale Avenue, Suite 100
Bronx, NY 10471

Dear Chairman Moerdler:

The Riverdale Nature Preservancy ("Preservancy") opposes the construction of three houses, known as the Bloomfield Development, at 4680 Fieldston Road, Bronx, NY 10471. Applications are currently before the City Planning Commission (No. N 100337 ZAX) and the Landmarks Preservation Commission (Docket No. 09 6026).

The Fieldston Historic District was designated by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission on January 10, 2006. The Designation Report describes the District as ða rare, largely intact example of a romantic planned suburban community that has evolved over time.ö

The proposed design and site plan are not appropriate to the historic district. As proposed, the three new buildings will be highly visible and prominent, engulfing and distracting from the existing historic house currently on the site. The new buildings will also obscure the primary entrance to the existing historic house, which has a unique siting from which the house draws its distinction.

With respect to the streetscape, the proposed buildings do not fit Fieldston's usual pattern of setbacks and distances between buildings. They are closer to both the street and to other buildings.

The Preservancy believes that the proposed development both distracts and detracts from the Fieldston Historic District's sense of place and the historic setting of the existing home. It is not appropriate to the historic district.

The Preservancy is also concerned for the future quality of Delafield Pond, adjacent to the site of the proposed development, and the loss of mature trees from Fieldston's urban forest.

The Bloomfield Development demonstrates the limits of the Special Natural Area District (SNAD) zoning regulations to preserve the environment as they were intended. The Preservancy believes it is time to review the SNAD regulations and modify and strengthen them where appropriate. To this end, the Preservancy asks

c/o Riverdale Neighborhood House
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that the Committee undertake a thorough review of these regulations, and offers to assist the Committee with this review.

Given its size, Delafield Pond provides a remarkably important habitat for many species of wildlife, including fish, turtles, amphibians, ducks, egrets, night herons, blue herons, swans and a large number of migrating species. However, water quality in the pond has degraded over the past two decades. The loss of mature trees from the project site will change the dynamic between vegetation, soil and storm water and invite increased pollution from surrounding properties and streets.

Fieldston's urban forest contributes to a continuous corridor of trees and wildlife habitat stretching from Riverdale Park through Riverdale, Fieldston and Van Cortlandt Park to Tibbetts Brook Park in Westchester County. Piecemeal loss of trees over time will degrade this corridor to a patchwork of isolated green areas, destroying habitat and subverting the intent of the SNAD zoning regulations.

We believe that the proposed development is inappropriate for its location in the Fieldston Historic District and beyond what can be tolerated by the natural environment. We ask for changes in the design and site plan that will respond to the design issues detailed above and reduce the number of mature trees removed from the site. We will, of course, offer any assistance or expertise in support of such goals that we are able.

Sincerely,



Sherida E. Paulsen
Chairman



Robert Lynch
Co-President



Peter S. Kohlmann
Co-President

cc: Honorable Andrew Cohen, NYC Council Member
Honorable Jeffrey Dinowitz, Assemblyman
Honorable Jeffrey Klein, NY State Senator
Honorable Ruben Diaz, Jr., Bronx Borough President
Honorable, Eliot Engel, Congressman
Honorable Letitia James, Public Advocate, City of New York
Mr. Carl Weisbrod, Director, NYC Department of City Planning
Kenneth J. Knuckles, Esq., Vice Chairman, NYC Department of City Planning
Ms. Carol Samol, Director, Bronx Borough Office, NYC Department of City Planning
Charles Moerdler, Esq., Chair, Land Use Committee, Bronx Community Board 8
Mr. Daniel Padernacht, Chairman, Bronx Community Board 8
Ms. Nicole Stent, District Manager, Bronx Community Board 8
Honorable Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller, Office of the NYC Comptroller
Honorable Bill de Blasio, Mayor of New York City
Honorable Melissa Mark-Viverito, Speaker, NYC Council
Ms. Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Mr. Michael Goldblum, Bronx Representative, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Ms. Emma Wolfe, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, City of New York
Ms. Emily Lloyd, Commissioner, NYC Department of Environmental Protection