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Spencer Kanis, Chairman and Board Members  
East Hills Architectural Review Board  
East Hills Village Hall  
209 Harbor Hill Rd.  
East Hills, NY 11576

Dear Mr. Kanis and Board Members:

This written testimony has 3 pages.

I wish to submit this written testimony as follows for the hearing tonight.

I am an East Hills resident, having grown up here beginning in 1960 and currently residing at my childhood home at 15 Laurel Lane in Norgate.

I am an organizer of the Keep East Hills Green Civic Association, writer of the website Planet-in-Peril.org, environmental advocate, and environmental-defense litigant. I am also a resident who enjoys and spends substantial time visiting and enjoying the flora and fauna throughout the community of East Hills.

I examined some or all of the files for this meeting. I reviewed the files and visited 60 Crescent Lane. I am in general familiar with all the neighborhoods of this community from my visits in the past two years of intensive analysis and civic involvement.

I register the following objections individually, in addition to the overall 'due process' objection to all the applications noted in my letter to the village of October 30, 2012 that without full access to the property at issue the public (and experts like certified arborist Richard Oberlander -- a founding member of your Board), cannot fully knowledgeably testify to the issues at play in the various applications.

A further blanket objection is that there has been no effort apparent to place these applications for public scrutiny on the Village website as required by state law.

60 Crescent -- The trees eight are healthy and assets to the community, except a hollow Beech tree in the rear according to Richard Oberlander. They are essential to the tree canopy of the community. The proposed house is very much too large at 4500 square feet,. The application does not list the current size (or FAR or lot coverage) but it appears closer to 2500 square feet. As such the current t house fits the new one does not. The new lot coverage of over 18%, FAR of 34% and height of 28 feet are too large to be in harmony with the neighborhood.

In a time of global ecological crisis, it is inexcusable to unnecessarily remove healthy trees when these trees provide a way to mitigate CO2 emissions, provide habitat for animals, and free of cost provide numerous other ecological benefits. It is up to your Board to tell builders and residents "no" when trees are healthy and important assets to the community, as these are.

A neighbor, Gary Hsiao at 49 Crescent Lane asked me to submit a letter he signed opposing the removal of the trees.

30 Chestnut -- I commend the builder for listing all the proper values in his application. However, the plan to almost double the floor area and FAR are excessive, and the appearance of the house is not consistent with the more classical designs in this community.

The new porch should be carefully analyzed for its impact; on Laurel Lane one new porch is bathed in bright lights and looks like the rear utility area of a commercial establishment. Lighting in porches needs to be evaluated by the ARB.

145 Mimosa -- This house is really too much of everything. The proposal more than doubles the house size -- from 2410 to 4843 square feet. The height soars to over 29.5 feet. The design is massive and fortress like. This house does not fit architecturally.

103 Willow Gate -- The removal of healthy trees here is objectionable, though they are smaller trees. But in that area of East Hills trees are at a premium and should not be casually removed. It appears five trees are to be removed per the survey, but it could be four. In any event there is no removal application or tree warden report.

The proposed house is very large -- 3306 square feet and 21.6% lot coverage. The FAR was unintelligible. The house does not conform with the classic East Hills home styles Nor is a gazebo a typical East Hills feature.

In my prior written testimony to you I have referenced the Village code language embracing the desire to protect the "tree canopy" for its numerous advantages and the Village code statements describing the need to preserve the neighborhood harmony and architectural quality. The objections above reflect my strong belief that these applications violate those principles in the ways specified, and/or are procedurally defective.

I further reiterate, as I did in prior testimony, that in each case where trees are to be removed, absent Tree Warden reports as specified in the ARB statute the proceedings are defective.

I urge you to uphold the laws of this Village and preserve trees and the community character and quality as the law provides. This is a policy whose neglect is resulting in massive environmental damage to East Hills and to the aesthetic degradation of the community due to overbuilding and deforestation.

I reserve the right to expand on my comments in person or otherwise. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Richard Brummel  
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