

**PETITION TO THE WELLESLEY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
FOR DENTON ROAD TO BE DESIGNATED
A NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT (NCD)**

We, the undersigned property owners of Denton Road, Wellesley, Massachusetts are petitioning the Town of Wellesley to designate our neighborhood as a Neighborhood Conservation District under the provisions of the Town Bylaw that were adopted in Article 58 at the Wellesley Town Meeting of May 1, 2007. Following the requirements of the Bylaw, this Petition consists of four parts.

PETITION

- I. Character of the Neighborhood
- II. Map and Definition of the Denton Road NCD Boundaries
- III. Guidelines Proposed for Review of New Construction
- IV. Signatures of the petitioners

I. CHARACTER OF THE DENTON ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD

Residents of Denton Road feel that they are part of a unique and distinctive neighborhood that is walking distance from the center of Wellesley yet is wooded, quiet, and protected from noisy through-traffic by its U-shape that both begins and ends on Washington Street. It is stable and as one neighbor said, "not cookie-cutter." The street is enjoyed by many pedestrians including children from the Montessori school at St. Andrew's Church whose classes regularly walk along it. The neighborhood that surrounds this horseshoe-shaped road gently slopes away from its more densely built-up ends near Washington Street and leads to larger wooded lots at the southern end from which a public footpath runs to Fuller Brook Park.

Many of the neighbors do their own gardening, raking, and snow shoveling and neighborhood children, teens, and adults are able to socialize easily with friends and neighbors outside on porches, front stoops, front yards, and in the street. The loop configuration makes the street safer than if it were a through street and contributes to a sense of neighborhood. Properties and houses are modest in scale with well-maintained yards and gardens that open to the street. Abundant natural vegetation and hedgerows along lot lines balance privacy with this open friendly quality. The well-maintained century-old trees that shade and enclose the neighborhood are a defining feature of Denton Road and contribute significantly to its quiet wooded character.

The architecture is eclectic representing many different styles including colonial, Dutch revival, arts and crafts, Cape Cod, and split-level. What they have in common is a consistency of scale with the larger homes near Washington Street and somewhat smaller homes closer to the Fuller Brook. A number of the houses are nearly a century old and contribute to a sense of

history and continuity. All except one (# 60 with three condominium apartments) are single family residences. Within the neighborhood there are a number of individual clusters with houses of similar style and scale.

Several structures are of historical interest because of their connection with the Denton family or with the early years of Dana Hall School. The home of Dr. O'Sullivan (#14) began as the residence for the headmistress of Dana Hall, and a couple of the houses on that side of Denton Road (# 6 and # 16) served as faculty or student dormitories for Dana Hall. The home of Gene Cox and Owen Jander (#72) was originally the carriage house for the Denton 1860's mansard that occupied the acre of land on which the four neo-colonials (#s 9, 11, 71, 75) were built in 1970 behind St. Andrew's Church. The charming coral colored house at #24 originally housed the famous butterfly collections of the Denton family. The Giele house at 32 Denton was built by William Denton in 1910. (Many other interesting details on the history and architecture of the other houses on the street are still to be gathered.)

II. MAP AND DEFINITION OF THE DENTON ROAD NCD BOUNDARIES

The natural neighborhood of Denton Road includes properties lining either side of the street, with its eastern end beginning at Washington Street and its western end abutting 626 Washington Street. St. Andrew's Church at 79 Denton Road and its residential property that contains two rental apartments at 7 Denton Road border the Washington Street end of the proposed NCD.

The total number of privately owned properties within this area is 34 (counting the three condominiums at # 60, but not counting the church property at #7. At this time, given the pattern of signatures to this petition, we propose that the boundaries of the district be slightly smaller than the natural neighborhood and that it encompass 31 properties running from #9 to #75 Denton Road. See map attached.

The NCD bylaw requires that 80% of the property owners in the proposed district support the initial petition to investigate the merits of such a designation. For the purposes of meeting that requirement, we request that the 24 signatures we have in hand be counted as 80% by excluding the property of the late Don Regal (# 65) from the total of 31, thereby bringing the total to 30. Our rationale for this request is that we know that while he was living, Don was a supporter of the NCD idea for Denton Road. He died in October, 2007 before we were able to get his signature. His property is now in probate and there is no single heir who is empowered to decide on this matter. Using 30 properties as the base, the 24 signatories meet the requirement of 80% support for the initial petition to establish an NCD.

III. DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW OF NEW CONSTRUCTION

What Denton Road residents want to accomplish with their NCD guidelines is to ensure that any new construction (such as major additions to the existing structure or major changes to the landscape) will be generally in keeping with the neighborhood's existing character. What we do not intend to do is freeze the street in time or micro-manage choices in building style or architectural detail. Thus we would generally exempt from review temporary structures, choice of colors, windows, siding, interior alterations, etc. The neighborhood primarily wants to prevent construction of houses that are too large for their lots, and the degradation of the landscape that often accompanies such construction. Given the recent adoption of the Large House Review for structures 3600 square feet and larger in a 10,000 square foot district, a key purpose of the NCD is to use similar procedures to review smaller structures that fall outside the jurisdiction of LHR. The NCD guidelines are intended to apply only to new construction in the neighborhood. Unless significantly changed, all existing structures or landscape features would be "grand-fathered," in the sense of not being subject to the provisions of the NCD. These existing homes and landscapes make up the context we are trying to conserve. New structures or additions should fit into this neighborhood context with respect to scale and design, placement on the site, topography, and vegetation.

Rather than draw up separate and quantifiable standards for height, floor area, or changes in grade and landscaping, etc., the following guidelines use fairly simple conceptual criteria to distinguish between proposed plans that are compatible or incompatible with the neighborhood. Unlike broader regulations for Large House Review and zoning rules, the NCD guidelines are derived from the particular context of Denton Road. Because Denton Road includes a number of styles and periods of architecture, the guidelines outlined in this document are intended to promote the compatibility of proposed new construction by referring especially to the immediately surrounding cluster or "micro-neighborhood" in which the structure is to be located.

1. Compatibility of Scale and Design. New structures should relate to the scale and proportions of neighboring homes on either side and across the street and should not expand the size of the original structure beyond what is compatible with the immediate neighborhood. No structure should be allowed to loom over its immediate neighbors. The bulk and size of new homes and additions can be visually moderated through variations in height and setback. Roof forms should be similar to those traditionally seen in the neighborhood so as to visually reduce the apparent size of the structure.

Garages and parking areas should be located at the side or rear of the house, if feasible, while minimizing the amount of driveway seen from the street. Where possible, garages should be subsidiary to the main house and not contribute to its apparent bulk and size.

2. Placement on the Site. New construction should be located and oriented on the site in a manner compatible with its neighbors. In general, it is desirable to orient the facade towards

the street. Where side yard or rear yard set backs are narrow by necessity, care should be taken to reduce heights and to slope roof lines to avoid overshadowing neighboring properties.

3. Conservation of Natural Topography And Vegetation. We value the visual continuity from a pedestrian's viewpoint that now prevails along the street and that has been created by gently sloping lawns, shrubbery, and flower gardens that lead to front doors. Radical changes in grade, steep driveways, and artificial mounding of dirt to raise foundations are discouraged.

New construction should preserve as much natural landscape cover as possible with priority given to retention of mature trees. Where significant disturbance to established stands of trees is unavoidable, developers and home owners should plan to build back the vegetative border to neighboring houses with ground covers, shrubs, and sizable new trees. Paving that reduces natural ground cover should be minimized to the greatest extent possible and be set back from property lines.

4. Placement of Other Exterior Features. Much of the charm of Denton Road comes from its open lawns, gardens, and green slopes as seen from the street. For that reason, open fences and low hedges and walls facing the street are preferred in new construction, although we recognize that several older existing properties understandably have taller and denser screening to enhance privacy conditions where sidewalks and property lines are very close.

Given the low intensity of light along Denton Road and the charming pattern of porches and front door lights that presently exists, excessive or glaring exterior lighting should be avoided.

To preserve the uniquely quiet nature of the neighborhood outdoor appliances should be maintained to operate quietly and should be located away from immediate neighbors.

IV. SIGNATURES

The following list represents signatures for 24 properties as of December 3, 2007. (Although somewhat unlikely, there is also still a possibility that one or two signatures may be added in the next day or two.) The actual signatures are available on separate sheets and can be attached to the petition if needed. Names marked with an asterisk represent members of the Denton Road Neighborhood Steering Committee.

	Property Owner	Address	Contact information
1.	Williams*	# 9	781-431-1814; tedmaximo@aol.com
2.	Fernald	# 10	781-235-4496; denton1024@msn.com
3.	Canadian Consulate (Tetu)	# 11	(781) 237-0662 (Home – Tetu)
4.	O'Sullivan	# 14	781-235-1007, 1102; no e-mail
5.	Bacon	# 15	781-431-8731; d101bacon@verizon.net
6.	Marsh	# 16	781-237-4899; jmarsh@iocama.com ; cmarsh@iocama.com
7.	Dewar	# 19	781-235-1225; mdewar@comcast.net
8.	Swan*	# 24	781-239-0079; cygnets@verizon.net
9.	Hayden	# 28	(781) 235-5744; jeff.hayden@comcast.net
10.	Slocum*	# 29	781-235-8297; edint@gis.net
11.	Nolan*	# 31	781-431-6121; herbnolan@solomonfund.org
12.	Giele*	# 32	781-237-9863; jzgiele@comcast.net
13.	Bones*	# 44	781-235-3284; no e-mail
14.	Latham	# 46	781-237-1421; lymalat@verizon.net
15.	Kunk/Kruse	# 48	781-237-9523; jkruse@wellesley.edu
16.	Zimmerman	# 55	781-283-3019; czimmerm@wellesley.edu
17.	Wise	#56	781-235-9034; betsyw1@comcast.net
18.	Humphrey	# 60, # 1	781-235-3853; sehmphry@comcast.net
19.	Fencl	# 60, # 2	781-237-4715; sfencl@comcast.net

	Property Owner	Address	Contact information
20.	Carr	# 60, # 3	781-235-7501; deborah.carr@gmail.com
21.	Wilson	# 61	(781) 235-1328; enidw@bu.edu
22.	Weller*	# 71	781-237-7557; anweller@comcast.net
23.	Cox/Jander	# 72	781-235-4856; ojander@wellesley.edu
24.	Griswold	# 75	781-239-9749; kamgris@aol.com

Submitted on behalf of the Denton Road Neighborhood Steering Committee:

Janet Giele, Convener DRNA, 32 Denton, 781-237-9863, jzgiele@comcast.net

Bill Bones, 44 Denton, 781-235-3284

Herb Nolan, 31 Denton Road, 781-431-6121, herbnolan@solomonfund.org

Joel Slocum, 29 Denton, 781-235-8297, edint@gis.net

Tucker Swan, 24 Denton, 781-239-0079; cygnets@verizon.net

Anne Weller, 71 Denton, 781-237-7557; anweller@comcast.net

Ted Williams, DRNA, 9 Denton, 781-431-1814, tedmaximo@aol.com

Denton Road
Wellesley, MA



*II. NCD map
+ Petition*

12-4-07

 *Signatory*