

Neighborhood Issue: March 2022

Description

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33 BURTON WOODS LANE SHOULD BE RESTORED AND RETAINED AS PART OF OUR RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY

Tom Nickell (34 Burton Woods Lane)

Charlene Morse (36 Burton Woods Lane)

The New School (TNS) has purchased the property at 33 Burton Woods Lane (BWL) with the purpose of demolishing the residence and replacing it with a 0.226 acre green space of unspecified character and use. As two neighbors who live directly across the street it was important for us to present this information and our concerns.

The non-profit will spend several hundreds of thousands of dollars which includes the $250,000 listed on the Auditor page on 1/5/2022 to add that small patch of green (.226) to their existing 2.636 acre campus â??to enhance the natural beauty of our campus and neighborhoodâ?•. Whether the neighborhood *wanted* this enhancement was apparently not a consideration. All of which occurred while they are preparing to demolish the previous Catholic Parish (yellow building pictured below) and build the Kaleidoscope Center.


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School Annex (previous Catholic Parish) to be demolished when they demolish 33 Burton Woods.


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Proposed rendering of the new building after the Annex is torn down


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33 Burton Woods Lane



Establishing permanent vegetative cover on a demolition site is difficult and requires the skills of horticulturalists and landscape architects. There is no assurance TNS has the budget or the awareness to do this properly. If TNS miscalculates the demolition and landscaping, we may well be looking at 0.226 acre of weeds and mud every morning for the rest of our lives.




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These century-old homes are irreplaceable, as is the residential character of their neighborhoods. Community-minded individuals and organizations do not demolish these old houses without thought. Indeed, even homes in advanced states of disrepair are commonly restored to show-place condition; it is uncommon to see one of these old homes demolished.

Yet, The New School made its decision quickly and without consideration of possible opinions and concerns of its neighbors. They took ownership of the home on January 5 and hastily proceeded on January 14 to **permanently** disconnect the gas.



Digging hole in road to access gas line



Cement filled in after permanent disconnection of gas line

It happens that we live directly across from 33 BWL and so are very directly affected by this enterprise. One of us learned of TNSâ??s plans when Duke Energy began painting yellow lines as part of their permanent disconnection of gas service. TNS had not the courtesy to walk across the street before beginning excavation to tell the neighbors of plans that will profoundly affect them and the market value of their homes.

The rationale for this project, in additions to the Kaleidoscope Center, the manner in which TNS has handled it raises concern for the future of our neighborhood. If The New School intends to demolish 33 BWL **before** deciding what will replace it, seems to be an unusual and risky approach.

Incorporation of 33 BWL into the schoolâ??s curriculum requires a Conditional Use, which is in the Zoning Code to â??prevent potential adverse impacts on the immediate neighborhoodâ?•. Yet, in multiple communications with neighbors, the TNS director has stated that he will proceed to demolition *without* such a zoning change. Neighbors may be forced to live with whatever TNS provides or whatever it is that TNS ultimately does with this 0.226 acre.

In his Zoom meeting, TNS Director Jeff Groh stated The New School doesnâ??t need permission to proceed with this project, to expand into the neighborhood, demolish a century-old home and replace it with an unspecified development.





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The map shows the area we are talking about. **Black line** is the original area for the school. The **Green line** is where they took over 29 Burton Woods Lane and the **Red line** is the area they want to demolish.



This is not the first property the New School has taken away from the residential Burton Woods Lane. The first was 29 Burton Woods Lane, a beautiful $350,000 home they purchased from the bank for $240,000. Initially turned down Click Here to view decision for a Conditional Use zone change by the City. They then submitted and won their appeal, Click Here for Appeal Decision

These are unique homes that are irreplaceable and once destroyed change the neighborhood irrevocably. We donâ??t want to live on a street that is being taken over by The New School. We have no problem with them demolishing the previous church. In fact, we suggested they do that before they bought 29 Burton Woods. Though Charlene moved here when the school was there, it was also a church and had little impact on where she lived. Now, that is not the case and buying this property when TNS is trying to raise money for the new building seems to make no sense. We donâ??t believe they are considering the neighborhood and neighbors but only their school. Imagine how you would feel if a neighbor bought the property across the street from you, within a month permanently disconnected the gas line on the street and informed you they were demolishing the home to create an empty lot.



29 Burton Woods Lane before being purchased by the school. It is located between the school and the home they want to demolish.




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n discussions with the school, as a way to resolve these concerns, neighbors have asked to have a significant input into plans for 33 BWL before any further action to demolish the house is taken.

Given NANAâ??s recent involvement in other proposed projects and zoning issues in the North Avondale neighborhood, we hope NANA will become involved in this issue.

Editorâ??s note: please see Februaryâ??s NANA NEWS for TNSâ??s article concerning their development plans.

TNS will speak at the April NANA General meeting.

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Author
northavondale