

July 27, 2022

Select Board
Town of Arlington
730 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476

Select Board,

We are writing to request an appeal hearing regarding our recent request to remove a tree on the sidewalk near our property at 261 Hillside Ave (the tree is located on George St). We were denied our initial request and were advised by the Tree Warden, Tim Lecuirve, to apply for an appeal with the Select Board. The tree in question has been deemed healthy, however, it has been an invasive tree during our 13+ years at our location. The tree is a Honey Locust, which is indigenous to New England, but naturally inhabits riverbeds and water locations. The tree releases it's seed pods on a biennial cycle and causes massive damage to our drains and gutters, and those of our neighbors. The roots have also damaged our clay sewer lines that drain from our under-house garage. These two factors have caused flooding into our garage and basement during heavy rainfall.

We are currently completing a renovation to our attic to accommodate our two children as they enter their teens. We requested the removal of the tree to also allow for us to add a driveway to off-set the prohibition of street parking. I have just started an Arlington based art transport company (Boston Art Transport and Services) and do not have adequate space to park the commercial vehicle. My partner and I are both environmental humans and understand the need for our neighborhood canopy and beauty. In 2020, new owners took over the residence next door to us on Hillside Ave. On their private property, they felled 12 existing trees which changed everything for us and our neighbors. In response, we planted six trees on our property to bring back the beauty and canopy.

Based on the information I've provided, I believe it is clear that we are not callous when it comes to nature. My partner is a Sustainable Architect (LEED AP) and I am a private business owner with a LEED Green Associate certification. We are both incredibly sensitive to the importance of preserving nature, however, we also have understandable concerns and necessary needs. We hope you consider this information in your decision. We are very much a part of our town. My partner is an Arlington Soccer coach and I have been and Arlington Baseball (AYBSA) coach for over 5 years. We have no intention of leaving our town and only want to add to it.

I hope that this information is helpful and that you will consider our request. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,
Rob and Eileen Gainfort (261 Hillside Ave)