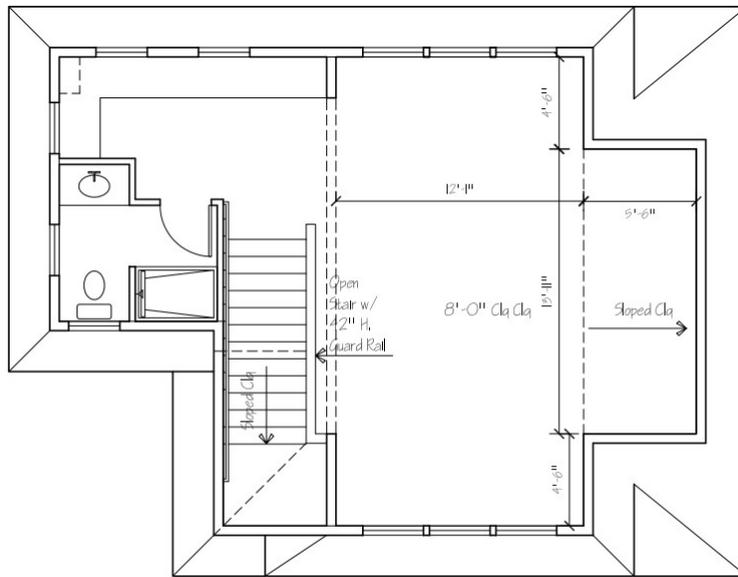


Dissent to the construction at 155 Monument Street of a third car garage with second storey apartment for 155 Monument Street

Dear Mr. Nobile, Chair of the HDC

As abutters of the Gray property (the entire Gray property backs up to our property) we would like to register our strong dissent to the construction of a **third-car garage with second story apartment** at the back of that property. We are quite concerned about the intrusive nature of this **large two story** structure that is 21.5 feet high (almost as tall as the existing house) and includes:

- A third-car garage (22' x 16');
- A storage shed (12' x 7.5')
- A second story which includes:
  - An office space (20' x 12')
  - Full bathroom with shower stall
  - An alcove that looks like an L-shaped kitchenette (see image below from plans submitted by the Grays)



⑥ Second Floor Plan  
1/4" = 1'-0"

This structure is clearly not subordinate to the main house and in fact looks like a live-in apartment replete with a living area, full bathroom, possible kitchenette and single car garage. In addition, taking into account the lack of green space in the area where this large two-story third-car garage is intended to go, it is not proportional to the size of that area and will result in that area looking overcrowded with buildings that are clearly visible from the public ways. We feel that a structure of this scale, which will be **30 feet by 22 feet and 21.5 feet tall**, will be an intrusive presence in an area so close to key historic sites (North Bridge, Old Manse, etc.) where visitors from all over the world walk by enjoying the beauty and history and character of this area.

Notable points:

\* **Clear visibility of the structure from public ways in three different directions.** The structure is visible (and more so in fall, winter, and early spring) from all 4 compass directions. Three of them include public ways: multiple points on Reformatory Trail; passing by 145 Monument Street on Lang Street; and Monument Street itself (see photos in Appendix A).

\* **There is no precedent in the vicinity of a third-car garage with a second story apartment.** Further, there is no recent precedent of a detached third-car garage or detached third-car garage with second story all the way from the intersection of Liberty Street and Monument Street down to the last residential dwelling on Monument Street (41 Monument Street), or from Lowell Road after the Colonial Inn all the way to Bow Street, or on Bow Street or Lang Street.

\* **No precedent in new construction approved by HDC of a detached third-car garage with a second story apartment.** Looking at the garage structures that have been built in the past few years, all detached structures that exist are single story, one car or two car garages (50 Monument Street, 60 Lang Street, 51 Lang Street, 12 Bow Street (see images below)). There are no detached third-car garages or detached third-car garages with a second story apartment (see Appendix B).

\* **There are precedents of reductions in garage size and scope by the HDC.** The original plans for 12 Bow Street were for a two-car garage with two-car depth plus storage for bikes, snowblower, etc<sup>^</sup>. There were multiple iterations of garage plans for 51 Lang Street including, a three-car garage with a live-in apartment on the second floor. None of the three car garage structures passed the approval of the HDC committee and all were reduced to a proportional, subordinate to the house, single story two car garage.

**<sup>^</sup> 12 Bow Street comparison**

3/2/16 HDC Meeting: Proposed **primary** garage was 22' x 36' with an 18' height. The HDC pushed back on size, scope, subordination and massing of structure over multiple meetings. The garage was ultimately reduced to 22' x 24' with a height of 15.6' and approved around 8/17. Note: House height is 25.8'. Plot size is 19,148 sq feet.

Visible from one public way – Bow Street

In comparison, the 155 Monument St **third** car garage structure will be 22' x 30' with a height of 21.6'. The house height is approximately 22.5' (much lower than 12 Bow) and the plot size is 14,751sq feet (smaller than 12 Bow).

Visible from 3 public ways (Monument Street, Reformatory Trail, Lang Street) and is one door down from the Northbridge Historical Area.

\* **Visual appearance of over 50 feet of building structure.** Visually, from 20 Lang Street's backyard (and other backyards beyond ours), the structure will look like a widening of the main house resulting in the perception of a two-story high, over 50-foot wall of structures. In addition, this appearance will be visible from the Reformatory Trail especially in fall, winter, and early spring.

\* **Setting a precedent for future construction of a third-car garage with second story apartment.** As stewards of this historic district along with the HDC, our fear is that the allowance of this construction will set a precedent for similar structures to be built in the historic district. Do we really want a proliferation of such large-scale buildings to be built in the historic district, which draws visitors from all around the world? The whole point of the historic district is that we preserve the visual essence of how this area was developed. We should not overwhelm the history with new structures and new additions. The Concord Historic Districts Act states, "*The purpose this Act is to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of buildings, **places and districts of historic or literary significance** through the development and maintenance of **appropriate settings** for said buildings, places and districts and through the maintenance of said buildings, places and districts as sites and landmarks compatible with the literary and historic tradition of Concord.*"

\* **The large third-car garage with apartment-on-top building structure cannot be considered subservient to the main house.**

The Historic District Design Guidelines, amended August 2015 state:

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*The scale of the garage should be clearly subordinate to that of the main house, and it is recommended that it be no more than two bays wide unless well screened or distant from the public way.*

*Likewise, garages in any form may not be appropriate for prominent and highly visible sites which lack any means of minimizing or otherwise screening a garage's visual impact on the streetscape.*

*When considering a new garage, it is important to view the structure in terms of its impact on the overall site. In addition to considering the proposed size, scale and placement of any new garage, the HDC will also consider its relationship to the size of the overall lot, other structures, and adjacent and nearby lots. Visually filling a site by situating the garage in a prominent location adjacent to the main structure can detract from the landscape component of the historic streetscape and is appropriate only for certain architectural periods. Likewise, garages in any form may not be appropriate for prominent and highly visible sites which lack any means of minimizing or otherwise screening a garage's visual impact on the streetscape.*

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The guidelines above are for garages and here we have a **third-car** garage **with an apartment** on the second floor which will lead to a substantial increase in the volume of the structures on the property and which will almost be as tall as the house. We need to consider why do we have these limitations for structures in the Historic district to begin with? What is the purpose of the limitations in the Historic District, if not to preserve the vision of how this area developed over time and to see that we do not overwhelm the history with new structures and new additions that are visible from the public way? This new construction will be clearly visible from the public way on the Reformatory Trail, Monument Street and Lang Street.

As an abutting neighbor we are very opposed to the construction of a **third-car garage with second story apartment**.

Thank you for your time,

Kindly,  
Neela Srinath and Srinath Tupil  
20 Lang Street

**Appendix A**

***View from Reformatory Trail (multiple points new construction will be seen, more so in winter)***



***View from end of 20 Lang street property that is 5 feet away from the Reformatory Trail and will be clearly visible through the trees, more so in Spring/Fall and Winter.***



*Street view from Lang Street*



## Appendix B

No precedent for third car garage, or third car garage with an apartment on top in recent construction. In both cases below, the original plans included a request for a three-car garage with varying second floor structures from live-in suite to storage. None of them passed the approval of the HDC committee and were all reduced to a single story two car garage.

