



**LYDON**

**Landscape Design**

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Town of Ellicottville Planning Department  
Ellicottville, New York 14731

**Re: Balkin Project**

12 Sno Way  
Ellicottville, New York 14731

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on a project that Patricia Bailey and I are working on together. I will be involved in the landscape design for the project.

**Existing Conditions**

The Balkin property includes a nice native stand of *Acer rubrum*, Red Maple, *Prunus serotina*, Pin Cherry, *Pinus strobus*, White Pine and *Picea abies*, Norway Spruce. Currently the house is located on a steep slope that has stabilized with vegetation since it was originally built in 1970's. The existing slope groundcover includes native ferns and naturalized vinca. The Balkin family is planning to rebuild their home and would like to utilize the existing footprint of the building, but the existing house location does not meet current setback requirements.

There are strong considerations for rebuilding the house in the same location instead of moving the location to meet current zoning requirements. Please consider the following site conditions as they impact the location of the house.

**Building Location**

Zoning requirement now include a 35' setback, placing the proposed building envelope (per required zoning) right in the middle of the existing Red Maples. The mature Maples will need to be removed to make room for the new building.

The current plan keeps the house on the same foundation, and it expands it in a location that does not do harm to any existing vegetation. Moving the house location to meet the current setback requirements will involve excavation for a new foundation, disruptions of existing grades and slope vegetation.

**Existing Views**

The current house location has an existing and expansive view that would be lost if the house location is changed. If the building site is moved to current requirement setbacks, vegetation will need to be removed for both building and for opening the view.

**Environmental and Cost Considerations**

Building on the existing footprint is more ecologically sound: there is less disruption to site, less tree removal, decreased costs to dig and build a new foundation. There would be less impact with tree clearing for views and less impact on the existing slopes to re-establish vegetation once disturbed.

In summary, there seem to be many more advantages to building on the existing footprint instead of creating a new one that complies with current zoning requirements. Thank you for reviewing this summary and for your consideration as you assess the zoning and building implications.

Respectfully submitted,

**Constance L. Lydon**

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