To the Editor

We are writing to express our vigorous and urgent opposition to the height increase that Zero Nodine LLC seeks from the Hastings Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) for their luxury townhomes abutting the Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park (OCA), just south of Quarry Park. The height increase would have a significant adverse impact on the views looking west from the OCA in this View Preservation District.

Raising the building’s height by 4 1/2 feet would put the roof more than 3 feet above the level of the OCA Trail, which would seriously diminish renowned views of the Hudson River and the Palisades. Having the top of the building above the OCA and so close to it, would create a 125-foot wall. In addition, the View Preservation statute allows for the installation of solar panels on roofs as a matter of right; their installation would further obliterate views.

We regard these impacts as serious encroachments on the experience of OCA Trail users and as a damaging precedent for future development.

In order for the ZBA to permit these protected views to be diminished there must be a compelling reason. Has the developer presented such reasoning? If extra height is the only solution, then why not do as New York State Parks suggests, dig the foundation deeper. Or how about giving up the taller ceilings they now desire? Or by eliminating the 3rd floor family room and extending the decking across the rest of the 2nd floor roof? In The Enterprise’s February 17 article, “Proposed height increase incites objections”, one of the developer’s arguments is that a nearby building is 9 feet taller than their proposed structure. Shouldn’t the serious obstruction of views by that building make rejecting this proposal even more important?

Wouldn’t granting the permanent impairment of views in a View Preservation District render meaningless the establishment of such a district? Wasn’t it meant to protect the Village’s residents from infringements precisely like this one? Let the developer adjust, not the public.

We will attend the ZBA hearing on March 23 at 7 PM in Hastings Village Hall to voice our opposition. If you also oppose it, please inform others and consider appearing in person to add your support. Please also consider sending email(s) asking the ZBA (zoningboard@hastingsgov.org) and Village Trustees (boardoftrustees@hastingsgov.org) to turn it down.

Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct. Dobbs Ferry