

City of Newburyport  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
Re: 2 Neptune Street

To Whom It May Concern:

New England is speckled with towns that have failed to protect their history. Newburyport isn't one of them. This is precisely why my father, who passed away in 2019, chose to purchase 2.5 Neptune Street, the property abutting (or really, connected to) 2 Neptune Street.

I do not enjoy standing in opposition to plans submitted by my neighbor, but feel compelled to.

Newburyport is charming because it's defined by an architectural aesthetic that is a tribute to its past. For me, the structures that have been protected are a source of perspective, and a daily reminder that life was once slower and simpler. And that it can be.

That doesn't mean life was (or is) perfect...

Both my father and Pattiann purchased a home built as early as ~1656, and they bought it with open eyes. The ceilings are low, the framing is warped, and the stairs are steep. The bathrooms and closets are small. The purchase price reflected these known limitations – these charming imperfections. The purchase price also reflected the understanding that renovation would be limited by historical commissions and zoning boards. If not for that understanding, the home would have almost certainly been purchased and knocked down. While this proposal is not a demolition, I believe it would be the tipping point for this old home.

The saltbox roofline of 2 Neptune in its current state is iconic. It is experienced by all who pass by on Water Street, and is a distinct landmark for anyone lucky enough to experience the Joppa coastline from the Merrimack. To change the roofline as proposed would alter the structure beyond recognition – perhaps leaving little left to protect. I realize that there is no *single* source of a town or a home's charm. It's an undefinable and ethereal sentiment, and it's hard to know when a town or structure crosses a tipping point. But every town -- and every structure -- has one.

I personally understand the allure of more space, bigger windows, and higher ceilings. But those of us who value the spirit and character of Newburyport (as I believe Pattiann does) must challenge each other not to withdraw our contribution to it when convenient. Sometimes, a home is exactly what it is – the history, the charm, and the imperfection.

As someone who loves Newburyport, and for historical reasons, I ask the Zoning Board to protect the original roofline of the 2 Neptune Street property. As a neighbor and homeowner, I ask the Zoning Board to treat the property line that divides the 2 and 2.5 Neptune Street

properties as a true property line, and uphold any/all zoning requirements and protections – including the 3'6" setback requirement from our property line.

Sincerely,  
Adam Weisman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam B. Weisman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Adam" being the most prominent.

Adam B. Weisman  
2.5 Neptune Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950  
m. 617-767-3376

Adam B. Weisman  
150 Willow Street, Apt 2  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
m. 617-767-3376