

7 December 2011

Town Board Members
Town of Rhinebeck
80 East Market Street
Rhinebeck, New York 12572

cc: Town of Rhinebeck Building Department
Planning Board
Zoning Board
Conservation Advisory Board

Re: Imminent Collapse at 25 Wyndclyffe Court, Town of Rhinebeck
(Parcel # 811770)

Dear Town Board,

I am writing this letter to express my great concern for what I feel will be an eventual and imminent collapse of the existing structural ruins at 25 Wyndclyffe Court. As a licensed professional engineer in the State of New York, I feel that it is my obligation to make this report in the interests of public safety. This site does not appear to be kept secure and the close proximity of the ruins to Wyndclyffe Court make it a danger to all people driving or walking by. The ruins appears to be a magnet for young kids who want to explore. This is all dangerous.

I am currently providing engineering design services for a client who lives in close proximity to the Wyndclyffe ruins. As such, I have had the opportunity to drive down Wyndclyffe Court many times over the past year and observe the general conditions of 25 Wynclyffe Court both from my car and on foot. I have viewed the existing building from a number of angles and feel that there are a number of internal and exterior wall conditions that should be classified as being "in danger of imminent collapse". Most significantly and alarming is the brick-faced dormer on the North side of the upper (4th?) floor level. I have personally noticed progressive deterioration and movement of this very heavy section over the past year. Any benign action, such as children playing within this ruin or a normal moderate snow or wind storm could trigger a progressive collapse that could bring down much of this building.

As a design & forensic engineer, preservationist and hands-on construction consultant, I feel that the deterioration of this building has progressed beyond any level that would be reasonable to rehabilitate or restore. While remnants of the building are quite beautiful and make most viewers nostalgic for the original grandeur of the house and surrounding estate, it would be prohibitively expensive and very dangerous to attempt any such work.

I do not know the owner of 25 Wyndclyffe Court and have no special interest, other than public safety, to write this letter with the recommendations herein. I encourage the Town Board of Rhinebeck to take some action on this property in the interest of public safety. This derelict building is in danger of imminent collapse.

Best regards,



Robert J Murray, PE