

Dear Committee Members,

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you two items regarding built heritage.

- 1) Heritage designation for 651 Talbot including the garbage. Please see attached photo.
- 2) Expropriation recommendation for 172 Central Ave.

172 Central Ave received heritage designation in 2020, and has since been left to rot. This building has the potential to be repurposed as affordable housing. I am asking the Committee to support my request for expropriation to both preserve its historical value and provide housing, ideally for indigenous folks.

1. The first known occupant of this house was Dr. Oronhyatekha, a Mohawk from the Six Nations who practised medicine in London. "Dr. O.", who lived in London from 1874 to 1889, was respected as a skilled and learned physician in Canada. In 1878, while living in London, he applied to become a member of the Independent Order of Foresters, a fraternal and financial institution. By 1881 he had become Supreme Chief Ranger of Foresters (IOF), the organization's international leader, and held the position for 26 Years.

Dr. O. played a pivotal role in the growth and financial stabilization of the IOF during his tenure, enforcing rigorous medical underwriting procedures and expanding product offerings. Between 1881 and 1907, the organization grew from fewer than 500 members to more than 250,000.

Dr. O. was designated a Person of National Historic Significance by Parks Canada in the early 2000s. A 2016 biography, *Dr. Oronhyatekha Security, Justice, and Equality*, by Keith Jamieson and Western University Professor Michelle Hamilton, has increased the profile of this accomplished member of Ontario's indigenous community.

In 1889, Dr. Oronhyatekha moved to Toronto where IOF had relocated. In Toronto Dr. O. has been honoured with a Toronto Historical Board plaque dedicated in 1995. The house he rented at 209 Carlton is listed in the Cabbagetown Heritage Inventory and a nearby street has been named Doctor O. Lane. It seems a shame for Dr. O. to be so honoured in Toronto while his London home is at risk of being demolished! Furthermore, all other buildings associated with Dr. O. are believed to be gone, including those at Six Nations and Tyendinaga. Approval of this demolition request could be construed as a statement that the City of London does not have value and does not wish to commemorate the significant contributions of this indigenous resident. of our community.

1. This solid Italianate-style home built c.1881 makes a strong heritage statement due to its as a modified Italianate design with typical symmetry, height and mass, projecting eaves, pronounced brackets, and a small central gable reminiscent of Ontario cottages. The home's powerful structure features a three-foot thick stone foundation and sturdy roof rafters formed from three trunks split in half.

Most homes with this three-bay Italianate design are two rooms deep with the main stairway parallel to the wall in a long centre hallway. The main block of this unusual plan is only one room deep with a stairway turning to run along the back wall. This

allows for three upstairs bedrooms all at the front. The home is relatively unaltered with high ceilings and doors and probably its original mantles.

2. This home is a significant historical and architectural gem within the Talbot North district which is next in line for consideration as a Heritage Conservation District. The history and stateliness of 172 Central contributes to the collective character of the area and to the cultural mosaic of London. This is a building and story of national significance. It must be preserved.

Sincerely,

AnnaMaria Valastro

