

Blackfriars /Petersville Study

Presentation to City Council

Tuesday December 10, 2013

My name is Paul Warden

I live at 199 Lorraine Ave., London Ontario

My family and I have lived for the past 27 yrs as owners/residents west of Wharncliffe (w.o.w.) on Lorraine Ave. Our daughter attended Empress public school and continued to stay with Jean Suave' until she graduated.

Knowing that my area was the last subdivision to be completed 63 years ago in 1950. I was astonished, to find out that Our property abuts the Historical survey of 1850 and subsequent 1855 survey and plan of subdivision of Empress Ave west of Wharncliffe.; indicated on page 22, figure 5 of the study. Empress Ave was completed, in fitting with the historic 1855 survey of subdivision. The west end of Empress Ave is now dedicated by the city as Empress Park and abuts our property.

Access to our property is via the 1855 survey and plan of subdivision w.o.w. on Paul St. Paul St was started 1855 - 1930 and completed by 1950-52, in fitting with the historical layout detailed in the 1872 image on Page 23 of the study.

Historical facts, maps, Architecture, street design and permanent geographical signatures relating to the west side of Wharncliffe road, are abundant and irrefutable.

I stand respectfully before city council, the planning department and the Petersville Steering committee out of sense of betrayal and total abandonment by those that are supposed to represent us as a whole community. In light of the Steering committee's astonishing decision to ignore Historical maps and facts that include the **WHOLE STUDY DISTRICT** and focus solely and narrowly on a particular area are fundamentally flawed and I feel, of only "special interest". The fact that the study **CONSISTENTLY** alludes to a variety of continuity within the Whole Study Area starting in 1808 up to the present and in light of the fact, that I sat shoulder to shoulder in attendance and support, at all city Hall meetings pertaining to both the infill policy by-law change and the application for district Heritage designation with members of the steering committee, friends and fellow home owners at large in the Study area.

I feel compelled and respectfully ask City council to consider the following:

- 1) To seriously question whether the Steering committee and our elected ward councillor fully represented **ALL** home owners in the **WHOLE STUDY AREA**.
- 2) To seriously question the validity, merit and intention of the steering committees reasons for wiping out and negating half the study area that is full of Historical facts and maps that inter-twine the whole district as one community.
- 3) To seriously question if the integrity of Historical facts and maps has been given proper respect and place for their importance in the history of our study area.
- 4) To fully appreciate the cause and effect of endorsing this "new "proposed Heritage area by;
 - a) Understanding the enormous pressure that will now be on the west side of Wharncliffe road with respect to the "near campus" infill policy. As this was the main concern initially.
 - b) To evaluate the detrimental effect imposed on home owners negatively impacted by the steering committees decision to exclude the whole area west of Wharncliffe road.
 - c) To question who benefits when same style houses on both sides of Wharncliffe road have different Property market valuation due to heritage designation.
- 5) Enquire, as to how many of the 8 residential steering committee members reside in the in the "new" **PROPOSED** Heritage designated area.

The study does allude to higher House valuation in areas designated "Heritage districts".

Historical Timeline of Blackfriars/Petersville Study

Note: East of Wharnccliffe = E.O.W. West of Wharnccliffe = W.O.W

- ✚ **1808** – All property in the Heritage study area is owned by **Applegarth** who lived at the west end of Charles St W.O.W. very close to the natural geographic boundary of the escarpment. Page 14, image 3
 - ❖ **1823** – **Applegarth to Kent** approximately 192 acres of land E.O.W. that straddles the north branch of the Thames river, from Blackfriars St., south to the river and west to Wharnccliffe road.
 - 1830 – Kent, Stiles and 10 others petition for the creation of Blackfriars St.
 - ❖ **1834** – **Applegarth to Nixon** 185 acres of land that encompasses the whole study area W.O.W. from Oxford St. south to the river.
- 1830 – Kent, Stiles and 10 others petition for the creation of Blackfriars St.
- ✚ **1848** – **Kent** plan of subdivision **e.o.w.** Page 20, image 6
 - ✚ **1854** – **Peters** plan of subdivision **e.o.w.** Page 21, image 8
 - ✓ 1854 – Campbell survey for Paul St. w.o.w. Page 32, image 9
 - ✓ 1855 – Rich survey for Empress Ave w.o.w. Page 32, image 19
 - ✓ 1855 – Moir survey of Wharnccliffe rd and Wison Ave. e.o.w.
 - ✓ 1860's – Surveys for south of Blackfriars and e.o.w.
 - ❖ 1869 - **Stiles to Peter's** property **e.o.w.** and **w.o.w.**
 - ❖ 1872 – **Nixon to John Walker** property **w.o.w.** and south of Riverside dr.
 - ✚ 1872 – **Walker** plan of subdivision **w.o.w.** page 29, image 18
 - ✚ 1874 – **Kensington and Petersville** incorporate to **"Village of Petersville"**.
 - ✓ 1878 – Lots surveyed **w.o.w.** on Charles St and Mt. Pleasant are surveyed.
 - ✚ 1881 – **"Village of Petersville"** becomes **"Village of London West"**.
 - ✚ 1897 – **"London West"** is annexed and becomes part of the "City of London"
 - ✚ 1898 – Water mains **to both sides** of Wharnccliffe road
 - ✚ 1921 – St Joseph's school opens on Wilson Ave. **e.o.w.**
 - ✚ 1954 – St Joseph's new school and church moved over to Charles St. **w.o.w.**
 - ✚ **(Ironically, very close to the Site of Applegarths original homestead of 1808).**

Excerpts and comments from Blackfriars/Petersville Study

Page 79, 4.1

- The Study area as whole, as discussed earlier, is a flood plain area of fertile soil, defined along the east and south by the Thames River and along the west by a shift in topography that forms a high ridge above the consistently level elevation of the Blackfriars neighbourhood. The elevated rail line that runs across the north end completes the definition or experience of the study area. *Given these clear boundaries the area has often been thought of as a single, coherent entity, possessing one definable character.*
- The study team does not share that conclusion.

Page 79, 4.1 2nd Paragraph.

- *The study area is an eloquent history of the evolution of modest 'worker's' housing in London over the 80 years between 1850 and 1930.* The narrative of this consistent form of development and urban planning is written, throughout the area, in the architectural vernacular based on British and European models.
- *Apparently an interwoven community*

Page 79, 3rd Paragraph

- The pattern of this evolution of affordable housing generally started from the north-east, moving south along the River east of Wharnccliffe, then to the west and north again along the west side of Wharnccliffe. This continuity of change can be visualized as a clock-wise pattern, moving from the mid-1800's, Georgian Cottages in the north-east, to the Victory housing of the mid 1900's in the north-west
- *This statement is incorrect as the Historical timeline for surveys and plans of subdivision clearly indicates a back and forth development on both sides of Wharnccliffe road. Page 32, image 19*

Page 79, 1st bullet

- The one and one-half storey house form is found consistently throughout the entire study area.
Generally the consistently oldest homes are within the study area east of Wharnccliffe, where 78% of the existing houses were constructed from 1850 to 1930. Within the study area west of Wharnccliffe, only 44% of the houses were built within the same 80 year time span.
- *So, what we basically have is e.o.w. at ¾ complete and w.o.w. ½ complete. Why is the word "only" used when referring to w.o.w?*

Page 79, 3rd bullet

- The street patterns, lot sizes and lay-outs vary within the study area. (See Section 2). Generally the streets on the east portion are oriented at right angles to Wharncliffe, while on the west they are at an acute angle that reflects a later and much larger survey.
- They are only focusing on the subdivision built in 1950. What about south of Paul St that was built from 1850 – 1930?

Page 80, 4.2.1

- As discussed earlier the overwhelming scale of the housing throughout the study area, or 88% is single to one and one-half storey cottages or bungalows. **This ubiquitous, small scale built form, reflects a consistent history of almost 100 years of modest, economical home building**, with a significant percentage of these homes being considered as prototypical “Ontario Cottages” or vernacular versions and evolved types of the same.

Page 96, 5.4

- Based on the streetscape inventory presented below, there are a diversity of streetscapes within the Study Area, **and no strong patterns that are specific to any of the four identified Character Areas.**

Page 100

- Further, there is a general sense of care within parts of the Study Area. Community gardens, public spaces that have been adopted by residents, and common signage indicate a sense of community pride pervasive in the area, but more commonly on the east-side of Wharncliffe, in Character Area 1.
- I take exception to this statement! The words and sentences used through-out this study to downplay the significance of w.o.w.’s important and integral place in the history of this Whole study area. **The signs WERE ERECTED out of Protest** to the infil policy at the time what is happening through-out our entire neighborhood!

Page 107 – Ontario Heritage Act Section 13.3.1

- OP outlines the evaluation criteria that are used by Council in consideration of designating
- *(e) The presence of physical, environmental, or aesthetic elements which, individually, may not constitute sufficient grounds for the designation of a Heritage Conservation District, but which collectively are significant to the community.*

Page 119, 7.5.1 Development Activity

- There has been some development activity taking place within the Study Area, and we understand that much of the development has been for multi-unit or multi-bedroom development catering to a student market. This section of the report summarizes the new developments that have been proposed and other planning activities that are ongoing.

7.5.1 Recent Development Proposals

City staff has advised of the following development interest in the Study Area.

- **96 Albion Street, 12 Leslie Street, 108 Wilson Avenue, 186/ 188 Wharnccliffe**
- **Was Paul St and Wyatt (w.o.w.) not on that list?**

Page 136, 9.3.1 Historic Context

- In many ways, the area west of Wharnccliffe Road has a history shared with that east of Wharnccliffe. Both possessed the same fertile alluvial soil, both experienced devastating floods, those in the southern part were close enough to the river to have a strong sense of its presence and to enjoy river-related activities. Both have an early settlement history. The first settlers within the study area -- Applegarth, the Montagues, Nixon, and possibly even John Kent, lived west of what is now Wharnccliffe Road prior to the founding of the City of London. The west side of Paul Street and Empress Avenue west of Wharnccliffe were among the 1850s suburban surveys, Now, however, little remains of any very early settlement west of Wharnccliffe Road.

- Interesting, the great lengths to describe the relationship between e.o.w. & w.o.w., but then once again with the last sentence, making the west side of Wharncliffe road look rather absent and insignificant!

7

IN CONCLUSION

The Ontario Heritage Act Part V

Heritage Conservation Districts are created under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for the purpose of conserving **something of heritage value that is common to a whole district.** The emphasis in a Heritage Conservation District **is the collective character of the overall area,** as defined by its *historical context, architecture, streetscapes, landscapes and other physical and visual features.* **There is no minimum size for heritage districts** and they may be comprised of residential, commercial, or industrial areas or any combination of these uses and buildings. **Heritage designation under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act is not focussed on individual buildings** nor concerned with the interior of buildings.

Through the Chair,

I respectfully ask this City Council to **“not approve”** this study **as it stands.**

I, respectfully ask the following;

- 1) That this recommendation goes back to the Planning department for further examination of the issues and history regarding the west side of Wharncliffe road and to be inclusive of the WHOLE ORIGINAL STUDY AREA.
- 2) Make suggestions for home owners on the west side of Wharncliffe road to be present on the steering committee as there is no representation from this side.

Respectfully submitted

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