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| TO: | CHAIR AND MEMBERS PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE |
| FROM: | JOHN M. FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER |
| SUBJECT: | REQUEST FOR DEMOLITON 104 COMMISSIONERS ROAD EAST J. & B. BLACKBURN MEETING ON MONDAY, JUNE 1: NOT BEFORE 7:15 P.M. |
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| RECOMMENDATION |
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That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning & City Planner, with the advice of the Heritage Planner, with respect to the request for the demolition of the residence located at 104 Commissioners Road East, the following report **BE RECEIVED** and;

- i) that Municipal Council advise the Chief Building Official that Council does not intend to issue a notice of its intent to designate the property under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- ii) that the existing residence be photo documented by staff prior to any demolition and that salvageable heritage materials be retained for reuse on the site or elsewhere.

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| PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER |
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None.

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| BACKGROUND |
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The property at 104 Commissioners Road East contains a residence built in 1936-37 in the Tudor Revival style. The property is located on the north side of Commissioners Road East between Highland Place and Carnegie Lane. (Appendix 1) It is listed on the *Inventory of Heritage Resources* (the Register) as a Priority 2 structure. A request for the demolition of listed properties must be resolved by Council within a 60 day period and provide for a public participation meeting and consultation with the London Advisory Committee on Heritage. The request for the demolition was made in late March, 2015 and the applicants met with the LACH at the LACH meeting of April 08, 2015.

The Property

The residential structure is a wood frame two-storey with white brick veneer constructed in 1936-37 for Alex Jeffery. It is an impressive residence at first glance. Over the years various alterations have been made, in a sympathetic manner, to the residence. The roof and dormer above the garage are new, put in place around 1999. In 2005 a kitchen renovation was completed. This also affected the west exterior of the house. (Appendix 2)

The current owners are seeking its demolition for a number of reasons. In terms of its basic structure, the floor under the main floor seating room, master bedroom, guest bedroom and home office is a poured concrete assembly. The concrete floor structure has made it difficult to access or rehabilitate services. For example, the mechanical ductwork system serving these spaces is cast into the concrete floor and appears to be deteriorating with mould detected. The original layout of the house placed the living room on the second floor but this presents

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problems for the owners in terms of living arrangements and entertaining guests. Relocating the living room to the main floor would necessitate walking across the entire house and through a guest bedroom. According to the owners, the costs to undertake any type of major renovation to the house would be far more than building new.

The owners have occupied the property for over 25 years and wish to remain on the site. Thus, they propose building a new house while retaining elements of the character of the existing house.

Designation Under the Ontario Heritage Act

Should municipal Council wish to prevent the demolition of the house, its normal practice has been to issue a notice of its intent to designate the property under *Section 29* of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. A recommendation to designate under this section requires an analysis of the cultural heritage values and attributes as they relate to *Regulation 9/06* of the *Act*. This regulation establishes three broad criteria, any one of which, or a combination of which, may justify designation.

1. Design Values - Architecturally, the residence is in the Tudor Revival style, popular in the 20s and 30s. This particular building was designed by a London architect, William George Murray. From information obtained from the *Biographical Dictionary or Architects in Canada*, Murray designed over 40 buildings in London between 1904 and his retirement in 195. This included both institutional structures, especially churches, and residences. Notwithstanding this record, though, this particular structure is not the best example of the style and, as has been noted, the residence has been altered from the original design. While original elements remain, others have been removed or altered. Its listing as a Priority 2 structure suggests a recognition that the design values are not strong.

2. Historic Associations - Historically, the residence has cultural heritage value with respect to its ownership by Alex H. Jeffery who had the building constructed c. 1936-37. Alexander Haley Jeffery (1909-1987) was a Vice-President of London Life. Alex Jeffery also served a single term as a Member of Parliament for London between 1949-1953. Alex Jeffery's family did not always live on the property. At one point it was sold and the family moved elsewhere returning to repurchase the property in 1952. Since that time it has been occupied by the family. Are these historic associations sufficiently strong to justify designation? This is somewhat problematic. There may be more appropriate building to acknowledge the Jeffery contributions. The Jeffery family legacy in London is strongly connected to the London Life building in the downtown, and, in the case of Gordon Jeffery a brother of Alex, to the Aeolian Hall and the Jeffery Trust for music awareness.

3. Contextual Values - This criterion is related to the context of the property with respect to its surrounding properties and whether or not the building may be considered a landmark. The property does complement the estate lot properties along this section of Commissioners Road. However, since the road was widened many years ago, a brick fence blocks the view of much of the property. The house itself is set back from the road. Unless one stands in the entrance to the driveway, it is difficult to view it fully.

In the opinion of staff, no single criterion is sufficient to justify designation while a combination of criteria, while more supportive collectively, does not present a solid case for designation.

LACH Consultation

At its meeting on May 13, 2015, the LACH received, from its Stewardship sub-committee, a recommendation which did not propose designation noting that the *Inventory of Heritage Resources* had identified it as a Priority 2 structure, the presence of the brick wall obscuring the building from the street and the concerns of the owners with the functionality of the existing

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house and their desire to remain on the property.

The sub-committee noted both the offer made in writing by the owners to enter voluntarily into an agreement to build a new single family residence on the site to ensure that the estate character of the property would be retained and the owners' pledge also to incorporate unique architectural details of the original residence into the proposed new residence where feasible.

The LACH concurred with these opinions and its comments will be presented as part of its report to PEC on June 1.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that municipal Council not issue a notice of its intention to designate the property under Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act; and,
2. It is further recommended that the existing residence be photo documented prior to its demolition; and,
3. Salvageable heritage materials should be reused, where possible, on the site or elsewhere.

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| PREPARED BY: | SUBMITTED BY: |
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| DON MENARD HERITAGE PLANNER URBAN REGENERATION | JIM YANCHULA, MCIP, RPP MANAGER, URBAN REGENERATION |
| RECOMMENDED BY: | |
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| JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER | |

May 19, 2015
DM/

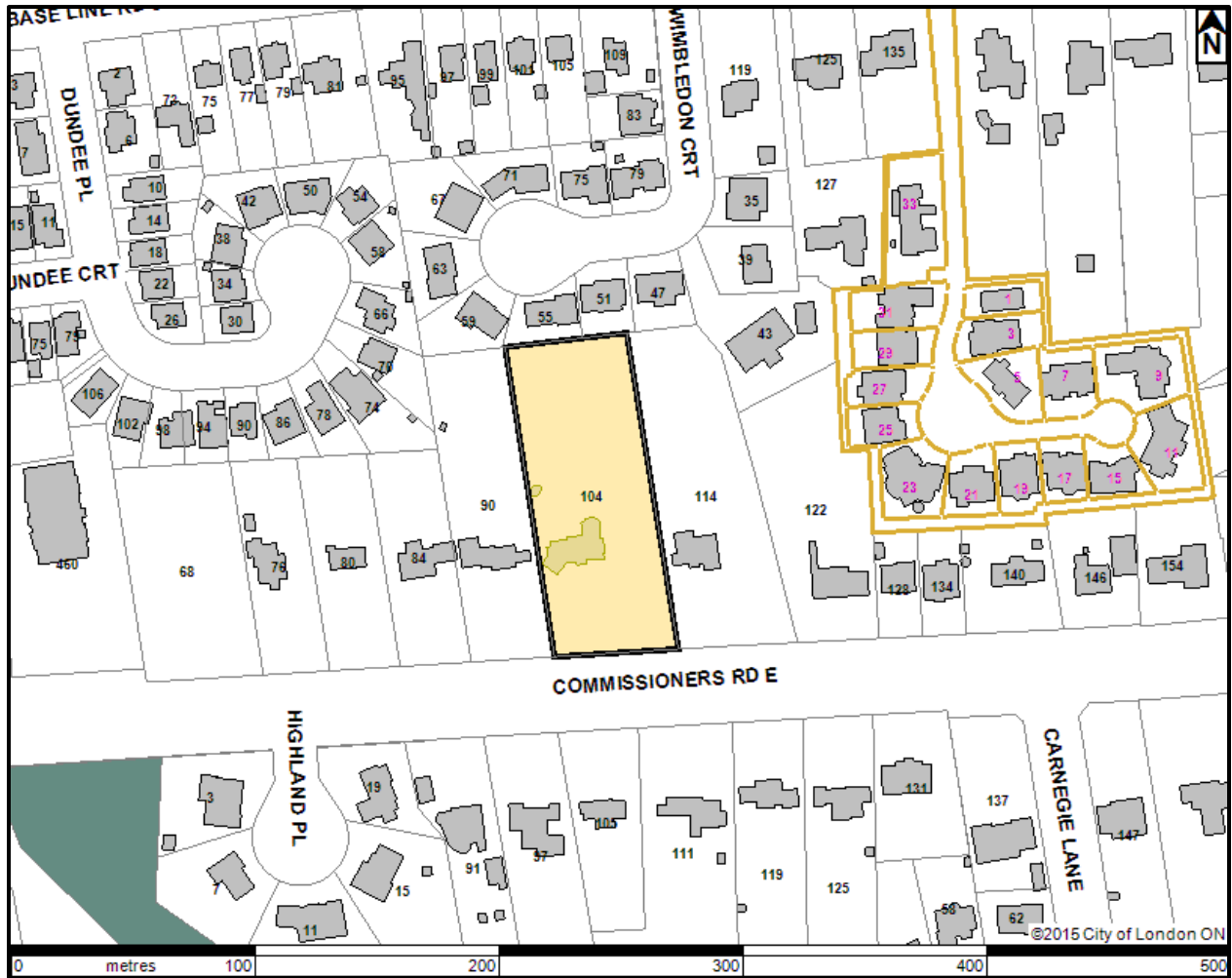
Attach: Appendix 1- Location map; Appendix 2- Photos

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Appendix 1: Location Map -104 Commissioners Road East



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Appendix 2: Photos (submitted by owners to note alterations)



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Appendix 2: Photos- Existing House



Appendix 3: Photo- Proposed New Residence

