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Sent: October 23, 2017 9:07 AM
To: 'hysynsk@london.ca' <hysynsk@london.ca>;
Subject: Locust Mount Wall

Locust Mount Wall

The stone wall in front of the Locust Mount property at 661 Talbot Street is a heritage asset that could and should be saved. It was a gateway to the historic home of Elijah Leonard Jr. (1814-91), one of London's most prominent industrialists manufacturing engines and boilers in his iron foundry on Ridout and Fullerton Streets. He was a founding director of Huron and Erie Trust Company, and later a Senator.

The house, known as Locust Mount, was built in 1853-54 for the Leonard family. It became later a fashionable boarding house, then a private girl's school and music conservatory called Harding Hall, then back to a private home in the 1930s, followed by a fraternity house, and finally left vacant until the inevitable fire that paved the way for demolition in 2008.

With the house gone a little more than 10 years, we still have as evidence this well-constructed vestige of the past--a beautiful stone wall in apparently good condition, save for some graffiti which the owner has not found the time to remove.

It will be said that this wall was not there when the heritage house was built but constructed later in the century or early in the last century, and therefore not worth the effort to retain. Regardless, it has been there for a long time and stands now as the only tangible touchstone to the property's storied past. It brings a tidy finish to the north end of the beleaguered Talbot streetscape.

Surely Mr. Drewlo, by all accounts a reasonable man sympathetic to heritage, will find a way to make the "pedestrian-friendly" wall a part of his development. He could even use it to display the promised commemorative plaque.

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