



Architectural Conservancy Ontario – London Region Branch  
Grosvenor Lodge  
1017 Western Road  
London, ON N6G 1G5

Sunday, November 26, 2017

Members of the Planning and Environment Committee:

Tanya Park (Chair) – [tpark@london.ca](mailto:tpark@london.ca)  
Maureen Cassidy – [mcassidy@london.ca](mailto:mcassidy@london.ca)  
Jesse Helmer – [jhelmer@london.ca](mailto:jhelmer@london.ca)  
Anna Hopkins – [ahopkins@london.ca](mailto:ahopkins@london.ca)  
Stephen Turner – [sturner@london.ca](mailto:sturner@london.ca)

**Re: 467-469 Dufferin Avenue**

Dear Chair and Members of the Planning and Environment Committee,

The London Region Branch of Architectural Conservancy Ontario (ACO) wishes to draw your attention to our concern over the possible demolition of this double cottage at 467-469 Dufferin Avenue, which is a very early example of vernacular architecture in the centre of London.

We have seen and heard the evidence for its early date – although it appears on City registries from about 1875, it is, as is apparent from its design, layout, and construction, of a considerably earlier date. Vernacular cottages of this type are very rare in the core of the city and especially in Woodfield. Its presence adds variety and depth to an historic streetscape that is distinguished but a product of a later period. Most of these earlier ‘cottages’, which were quite prevalent in this neighbourhood, have disappeared. They represent the early homes for working people, which were superseded in time by grander houses. It would be a real pity to lose all trace of this period in our city’s story.

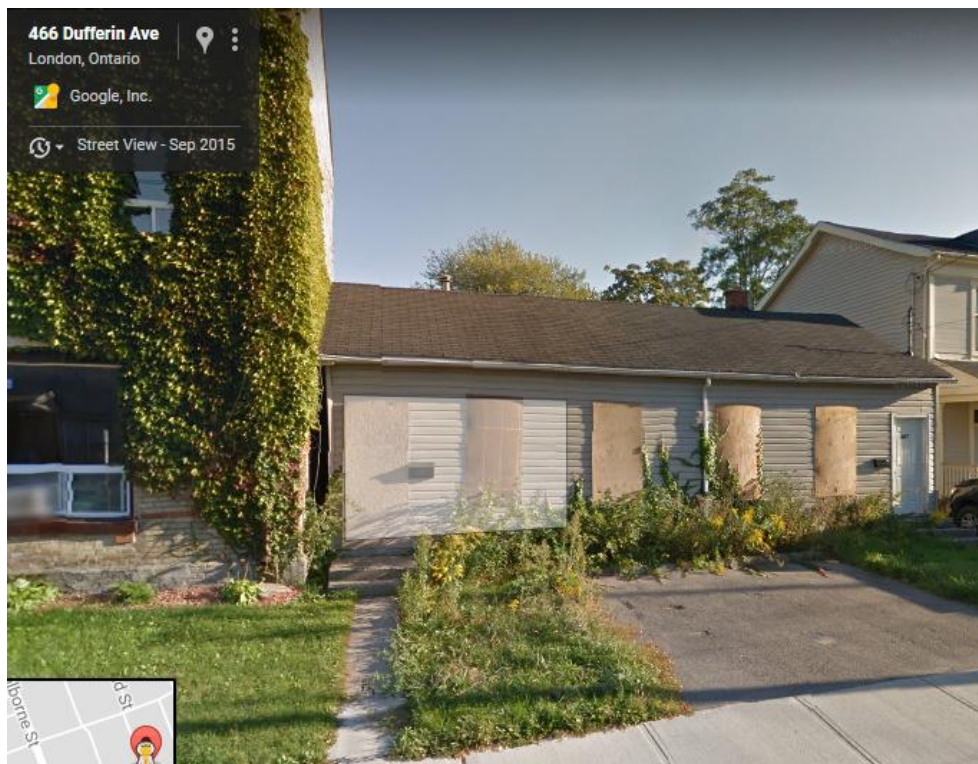
We know that an exact date is difficult to assign as records were not kept with the care that was employed by the latter decades of the 19th century. We have heard of the research that has posited that this may be a Garrison building originally located in today’s Victoria Park, and have been moved and repurposed. We believe that this is entirely feasible, and there is no doubt that the building (467 Dufferin) achieved further significance by becoming the location of the United Labour Hall in 1891. As such it represents an important site an early home of the beginnings of the labour movement – in London and in Canada. It was also a reading room and housed a printing press for the movement. The first referenda for establishing a London Public Library were promulgated from here which were ultimately successful.

It is evident that these two structures have considerable historical significance for London and an historic architectural integrity that cannot be replicated.

It is a shame that we see before us another example of ‘demolition by neglect’. Buildings bought and allowed to disintegrate by having been left vacant and not maintained in any way even by proper heating over a long period, especially vulnerable older buildings that are so valuable to us. We do hope that PEC, and Council, will wake up to this infamous practice which so endangers London’s history and architectural record for all our community.



467-469 Dufferin Avenue – April 2015 (Google Maps)



467-469 Dufferin Avenue – September 2015 (Google Maps)



The photos above emphasize how the building went in a span of less than five months from being lived-in and well cared for to – in our opinion – being intentionally left to rot by a careless landlord. This sort of abuse of responsibility must not be rewarded by allowing demolition, and instead rehabilitation of the property is expected.

Thank you for considering our comments. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Mike Bloxam  
President, London Region Branch  
Architectural Conservancy Ontario

CC:  
Cathy Saunders, City Clerk – [csaunders@london.ca](mailto:csaunders@london.ca)  
Heather Lysynski, PEC Committee Secretary – [hlysynsk@london.ca](mailto:hlysynsk@london.ca)