

I wish to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak this afternoon.

For the past 30 years, I have poured much thought, energy, time, and care into my home at 100 Stanley Street, fully appreciating its beauty, workmanship, and heritage attributes. Twice this 125 year-old priority #1 designated heritage Queen Anne style cottage has been featured on the Geranium Walk, contributing greatly to the history and culture of our city.

In the garden, I have removed invasive species, nurtured cottage garden perennials and bushes and planted native trees, shrubs, and vines. The garden overflows with more than 30 varieties of native plants providing food, nectar, protection, and habitat for many birds, bees, butterflies and insects. Partly due to these efforts, I was indeed very honoured to be the recipient of the Urban League of London's Green Umbrella Award and, as well, to be added to the Mayor's New Year's Honour List in 2009 for "outstanding contribution to the environment in the City of London. The naturalized garden was created in response to an appeal from Dr. Henry Koch, a professor at the University of Guelph, to establish Carolinian corridors across our province for pollinators and migrators. Therefore, the preservation of the property at 100 Stanley Street would go a long way in supporting one of the London Plan's 10 Big Moves – "building one of the Greenest Cities in all of Canada"

The Riverforks Community is one of the oldest in the city, presently seeking to qualify as a Heritage Conservation District and the preservation of the home and property at 100 Stanley Street contributes greatly to the heritage identity and character of this community in the city of London. Mr. Unterman states in his Heritage Impact Statement that the "relocation of the residence from its original location permanently alters the value of the municipally designated property. The context and setting will be permanently altered and the associated trees, garden, and garage will be lost. Its historical linkage to its existing location will be severed. The authenticity of the original setting will not be preserved."

Not all of the caring for my home and garden has been for my own selfish reasons. There are many benefits to be gained and appreciated in this stewardship, for the neighbours passing by, for our Riverforks Community, for the City of London, and, yes, even for our planet earth.

I am greatly disappointed and frankly dismayed at the lack of respect and consideration demonstrated over the last few years of events regarding the widening of Wharnccliffe Road project, lack of respect and consideration for the bigger picture as well as for the human factor. The present plan is both unfair and wrong. There are 3 parties involved in this phase of the project- the CNRailway, the City of London and me, yet I have been totally excluded from all discussions, negotiations, and decisions. Three times I have unsuccessfully attempted to contact the CNRailway to voice my concerns and wishes to be included in ongoing dialogues. Despite my efforts to communicate my concerns and suggestions to City Hall Staff, there has been little response and the project planners remain committed to and intent on pushing forth their 6 lane, stream-lined design. I remain just an annoying speed bump in their path. The entire process has been neither democratic nor transparent.

Quite honestly, in my opinion there is no need to build a new train bridge. There is presently enough room under the overpass to add one more lane to accommodate the north-bound traffic in accordance with the Transportation Master Plan. That would be the same number of lanes as under the Wellington Road and Richmond Street bridges. Planners may say that the overpass is old and needs to be replaced, yet no-one is requesting that a much older bridge on Thames Street be rebuilt. There are many changes that could be adopted to resolve the difficulty of moving traffic in an innovative, "outside the box" manner. We need to plan the city to preserve our cultural identity and our green spaces, to celebrate the treasures we have already. Citizens of London deserve this. Many of the nearly 6,000 petitioners who frequently travel the route, communicate to me that they see no need for the drastic changes proposed. A Springbank Drive/Stanley Street bus driver tells me that he has no difficulty accommodating the present intersection and corner. Local residents driving by, or even waiting at the corners, call out that they would rather save 100 Stanley Street than proceed with the 6 lane road widening in order to save a few minutes.

If indeed it is determined that the road does need widening, the real impact on my home comes not from the widening itself but from the attending need to lengthen the CNR bridge. But for the road widening, that bridge would not have been rebuilt by CN. CN is piggy-backing a new bridge on this proposed widening, and that is the reason my home may now be demolished or relocated. CN has determined that the cheapest, most economical way [in their money, time, and effort] is to place cranes on my property to construct the new bridge. CN should not be driving this train! Surely CN should be challenged to provide an alternate bridge plan so that a temporary rail line is established to the south Horton Street side rather than impacting my home and property. As well, CN should absorb any additional costs accrued in the construction of a temporary rail line that need not interfere with 100 Stanley Street. How is it possible that a new bridge is costing 16 million dollars, 41% of the total cost of phase 1 of the project, yet CN is contributing only 15% of the required funds?

I recommend that the City Councillors postpone the vote on this issue until such time as an independent expert opinion determines an alternate suitable plan for the CNR bridge, a plan that does not threaten my home and property.

In the meantime, once again, I wish to invite you to visit my home, my garden, and me at 100 Stanley Street. Several years ago, when I moved to this historical home and environmental green space, I realized that my stewardship was vital to honour this very special corner of London and I dearly wish to pass forward this pleasure to the next generation. I do not doubt for a minute the planners' conviction and passion for the project, nor do I dismiss the responsibilities of the City Council, but I am not going to put aside my responsibility to stand up to defend my home and my property.

Thank you.