

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

13. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING – Properties located at 467-469 Dufferin Avenue, East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District - Request for Demolition
- Lisa Lansink, applicant – see attached presentation.
  - Gil Warren, 16-624 William Street, Chair, Heritage Committee, Woodfield Community Association – indicating that this issue has been going on for a couple of years now and he has some comments to make; noting that he has spoken to this Committee before and he will not repeat his previous comments; responding to a couple of comments by the developer; indicating that one of the comments were that they were never invited to talk to staff about this but both Mrs. L. Lansink and her father were in attendance at London Advisory Committee on Heritage meetings where staff and the community were present and they had every opportunity to talk to the staff; reiterating that it is not that no one ever talked to them and ignored them; relating to the comment that the Engineer says that the building should be demolished, if you go back and look at what the Engineer said, the Engineer said the building could be fixed up or if it is not fixed up, it is not safe, it should be boarded up and then demolished, so the first part they keep dropping the part about if it is fixed up then it would be fine; believing that this is a question of, with old heritage buildings, is it maximum profit for a developer or is it some reasonable profit for a developer or do they break even or do they lose money; indicating that the criteria most developers use is if it is not maximum profit they tear it down; stating that they have a different opinion in Woodfield that if a building can be saved, it should be saved even if it might be a situation where it broke even; discussing the building being derelict, just before the current owners bought it, it was being rented out and it has been derelict since they bought it; indicating that they boarded up the windows even though the windows were intact and technically you do not have to board up the windows but it made it look really bad but it helps the neighbours think it is really bad and it should be torn down; advising that there has been quite a campaign going on here to convince everybody that the building is derelict but it does not quite match the situation; indicating that the previous speaker referred to the racism of the Labour Movement at that time; noting that that has been well documented and it revolved about the issue of Chinese workers coming to Canada and taking work from non-Chinese English workers; indicating that that was a regrettable position that the Labour Movement took at that time, it was not just and it was not equitable; but at the same time they were arguing for women to have the right to vote when women did not have the right to vote so if you look at the whole context of what the Labour Movement was arguing in that building at that time it was very progressive for the time; advising that before the next Municipal Council meeting, there will probably be a letter from the London and District Labour Council that will be included in the Agenda, which will say that the Labour Council supports saving the building; noting that he spoke to the Labour Council about this issue in the past; further noting that he is the past President of the London and District Labour Council; advising that the London and District Labour Council today is very multi-ethnic and multi-racial and they will say the same as the Prime Minister of Canada that they apologize for past behavior of their organizations; thinking that the owners are desperate because there is so much history here to cherry pick at little things that in the Labour Movement they did not like and ignore the rest; stating that, in terms of the position of the Woodfield Community Association, they had a recent meeting about this at the Executive and their position remains the same, they support the Planning Department's position that the building should not be demolished and they support ideas like it being repurposed; responding to Councillor Park, in the Planning and Environment Committee Agenda, on page 253 is an article from The London Free Press that talks about the history of the building in terms of the founding of The London Public Library; noting that it is quite a good article.
  - Janet Hunten, 253 Huron Street – indicating that another aspect of the history is that these buildings are an example of much of the early housing of Woodfield, most of which has disappeared; stating that in the 1888 Insurance Plan, across the other side of Dufferin Avenue, you can see three very small houses, each smaller than one half of this building but all of those others seem to have disappeared so these are a reminder of a past type of housing.
  - Nancy Tausky, Heritage Consultant – repeating what she has said before, that she is still doing research for the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, London Branch, and she is still convinced that the building is very old, certainly pre-Confederation and probably considerably older; finding research that suggests that but does not actually prove it; planning to continue studying the situation; hoping to give the Planning and Environment Committee something more definite in the future; believing this building is tremendously important because of its excellent exemplification of the Georgian style, it's role as the center of Union efforts during the nineteenth and twentieth century and its importance as

the site of London's first public library; stating that she can provide more evidence of that; reiterating that it is well proven; admiring Mrs. L. Lansink's research on this as she has certainly delved into some kind of tricky material and she thinks that is quite wonderful; stating that it is always hard to know what to do when we discover something from the past that we really do not like but it was there; thinking that it is wonderful to preserve our history, even if we do not like it at times because it is the knowledge that we gain from the mistakes as well as the positive things that can help us in forming policies and actions today; admiring Canada for that; thinking that it is good that we are not tearing down statues; stating that, because of these arguments she thoroughly supports the staff recommendation.