

Letter to the Planning and Environment Committee of London City Council

Meeting on September 24, 2012

Dear Committee Members,

I learned with deep regret of the request for a permit to demolish the substantial old building at 199 Queens Avenue and of the decision by the London Advisory Committee on Heritage to accept demolition.

Any other artifact dating from 1880 might be regarded as a treasure, to be admired and appreciated for its craftsmanship and historic resonance and in the case of an old building, restored and put to a useful purpose. This stately old house of Italianate design, just doors away from Richmond Street and nodding to its neighbor the London Club, built 12 years later, is one of the few 19th century buildings that remain along what was once a magnificent corridor of homes and public buildings.

It is listed on the city's 2006 Inventory of Heritage Resources, and was presumably purchased with that knowledge. To purchase and trash a building that is apparently in good condition is environmentally wasteful and disrespectful of our heritage.

Barring a natural disaster such as the 2011 devastating tornado in Goderich or the equally devastating earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand, a community's built heritage is lost one building at a time and always, in the eyes of a developer, for an excellent reason. The reason here would seem to be a parking building.

I believe I speak for most members of ACO London in encouraging this committee to deny the request for demolition.

Genet Hodder
President, ACO London Region