

Architectural Conservancy Ontario – London Region Branch
Grosvenor Lodge
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January 15, 2020

Members of the Planning & Environment Committee:
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Dear Councillors:

Re: 247 Halls Mill Road Demolition Request and Heritage Designation Recommendation

On behalf of the London Region branch of Architectural Conservancy Ontario (ACO London), I am writing to you regarding the accessory building at 247 Halls Mill Road.

The purpose of this letter is to express support for the recommendation of the city’s planning department and LACH that the property at 247 Halls Mill Road be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, and that the demolition request of the property owner be denied. The report of the Heritage Planner sets out, in a comprehensive manner, a description of the property’s cultural heritage value.

We have the following additional suggestions and observations:

- We suggest that the city require the property owner to repair the barn to its pre-September 2019 condition as soon as possible, establish a firm deadline for completion of the repair work, and take whatever action is permitted by law for the city to implement the required repairs (at the property owner’s expense) if the property owner fails to meet the established deadline.
- As a general rule, orders to “make safe” a heritage-designated or heritage-listed structure should not include the option to demolish it. This gives any property owner who is “demolishing by neglect” the exact outcome that they are seeking.
- Consideration should be given to creating a “rapid response” protocol within the by-law enforcement department to deal with threats to designated or listed properties. According to published reports, neighbours made the city aware of pre-demolition activities in September of 2019. It is unclear what actions were taken by the city as a result of those neighbours’ concerns.
- Consideration should be given to providing LACH with an additional budget to retain outside (paid) consultants to prepare Cultural Heritage Evaluation Reports (CHERs) when such reports are required on an urgent basis and cannot be prepared by the volunteer members of the LACH Stewardship Subcommittee within the required time frame.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Yours truly,

Jennifer Grainger

President

Architectural Conservancy Ontario – London Region

Copies: Cathy Saunders, City Clerk (csaunder@london.ca)

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