

IAN SEDDON

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March 16, 2013

Mayor Fontana and Members of City Council,
City of London
300 Dufferin Avenue, P.O. 5035
London, Ontario, N6A 4L9

Dear Mayor Fontana and Members of City Council:

Subject Former Methodist Episcopal Church (1848) on Thames Street

I am writing to ask that Council take appropriate steps to ensure that the building on Thames Street, which Aboutown Transportation wishes to demolish and turn into a parking lot, is preserved as a significant historic landmark. This is a situation where the common good, the public interest, clearly outweighs the private, commercial interest of an individual London business.

Attached to this letter are pages that reproduce the article by Chip Martin which appeared in the Friday, March 14th edition of *The London Free Press*. I expect that most Londoners are like me: We were totally unaware of the significance of the old homes on Thames Street to our City's history until Mr. Martin's story was published in the paper.

I cannot agree to arguments over the building's safety. There are many examples world-wide where civic authorities have repaired and made safe structures of historic significance. In this instance, we are dealing with a building that is very significant to Black History in Southwestern Ontario, indeed to Black History generally. London's role in that history exemplifies a component of Canada's history and culture that contributes to Canada being unique and different from America. Preserving this former church building will retain for future citizens a feature that contributes to who we are as a community and a society.

Therefore, please think very hard when the topic of demolishing this historic building comes before Council. If a decision is made to approve demolition, then I must expect a very-well reasoned explanation. The better option would be to work with Aboutown Transportation to secure preservation and restoration of the building and its environs as a significant historic site for the edification and enjoyment of present and future Londoners.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Ian Seddon

Ian Seddon, MCIP, RPP