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Bishop Hellmuth Community Association

September 26, 2011

Presentation to Built and Natural Environment Committee – 764 Waterloo Street

Good Evening. I'm Mari Parks and I live at 798 Hellmuth Avenue. I act as the Chair for the Bishop Hellmuth Community Association and speak to you in that capacity.

At a community meeting on Tuesday, September 20th the attending residents of the community voted, after much discussion, to oppose the demolition of the building at 764 Waterloo Street until a definite site plan, that supports the historic guidelines of the Heritage District, is submitted to the Planning Department.

There were many concerns raised at the meeting. These concerns could be broken into three broad areas.

1. Harm to the Neighbourhood

764 Waterloo Street is in the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District. Demolition of this property will establish a dangerous precedent for our Heritage Conservation District.

It is important to the community as there is a great possibility of a 'domino' effect along Waterloo Street. A certain amount of property amassing has occurred on this block. Demolition of this property could lead to others following suit.

In the past other buildings in the area requesting demolition have been denied the right as it was considered unsuitable in our Heritage District.

Since 764 Waterloo Street is zoned as residential, there is fear that demolishing it would lead to commercial expansion into the residential area with a zoning change. This encroachment would diminish the residential nature of the area. We recognize that

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some development will occur on the corner of Oxford and Waterloo, but it must be kept in check by limiting the destruction of this building.

2. Problems with Future Development

At this time there has been no concrete overture to the Planning Department about the development of the land. As mentioned, there are Zoning issues to address if the land mass is to be developed as a whole. Obviously we want 764 to stay as a residential zone.

The intersection of Oxford and Waterloo Streets is already a busy corner with cars entering and exiting the Shell Gas Bar, students going to and from St. George's Public School, Central Secondary School and general traffic in the area. As far as we know no traffic study has been done to understand the impact of any development on the area.

The drawing presented at the LACH meeting on Sept 14 showed a building that unsympathetic to architecture of the neighbourhood and problematic in terms of traffic. We were told that there could be underground parking for 80 vehicles in the rendering that was presented. I askwhat will that do to the traffic in the area. Our community is adamant that a Site plan be presented to the Planning Dept. and the community before any permits are issued for 764 Waterloo Street.

3. The Condition of the House Itself

The Engineering report presented to LACH on Sept 14th contained not a Structural Analysis of the building....but an assumption that the structural components were compromised. What was provided was a Visual report with emphasis on the lack of architectural features remaining in the building. The Engineer's Report was inconclusive about the structural viability of the house. (pg. 5)

Any of us living in this area of older homes have had to replace the plumbing, wiring and heating/air cooling systems. We have also had to repoint the brickwork, rebuild chimneys and since this wet spring, some owners have had attend to their foundations. All this is a given of owning an older home!

Demolishing 764 Waterloo Street would be a significant loss of a Queen Anne Style building. Under the boarded windows are leaded and stain glass windows...these were specifically mentioned as exceptional features in this area at the time of designation as a heritage area. We also know that not all the moldings, door trim and other wood work



have been removed or destroyed. In any major renovation some of these may be changed to accommodate modern day living, but there is sufficient material left in this house that is useable. One only has to look at the Fraternity house at Wellington and St. James Streets or 338 St. James Street, to see what is possible for once abandoned buildings.

Neighbours are concerned with the security and external maintenance of this building. Over the summer the grass was not cut. The chain across the driveway is not in place. Until this issue is resolved we would like to see more vigilance to this property.

It is easy to agree with the demolition on a quick glance at the property, and the unsightliness of the corner of Waterloo and Oxford. However, we must be aware of the longer term implications of development on the community. We need to control the spread of commercial property into the residential area.

The Bishop Hellmuth Community Association would like to ask for time to try to arrange for Structural Engineer's Report on this property. Until this issue is resolved we are asking that the owner more vigilant with security and external maintenance of the property. It does pose a danger to the neighbourhood in it is present state. We are also requesting that a Demolition Permit not be issued until a site plan has been presented to all concerned parties.