

re: 788 Aylmer Street North, Peterborough

The designation of the Copping Cottage and the Carriage house needs to be amended so there is a single historical designation and that they remain together on one property

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT PROPERTY

- The Copping family from Toronto built the cottage and carriage house as a summer retreat
- Mr. George Robert Copping was born in Toronto on June 18, 1861. Shortly after the turn of the century, he formed the Reliable Knitting Company, which later became the G.R. Copping & Sons Manufacturing Company.
- George and his wife, Emma Louise Black, lived in Rosedale, Toronto. They started to build 788 Aylmer Street as a country home about 1913/14. During WWI, in the spring of 1915 before the home was completed, George and Emma booked a trip to England on the Cunard liner RMS Lusitania. On May 7, 1915, the German submarine U-20 torpedoed and sank the Lusitania. George and Emma Copping were among the victims. George's body was recovered and buried in Toronto's Mount Pleasant Cemetery on June 2, 1915. Emma Copping, while her body was not recovered, is memorialized on the family stone there.
- The sinking of the Lusitania is of historical significance as is the death of these two former owners of 788 Aylmer Street. It is an important part of Peterborough history, Ontario history, Canadian history and in fact, history of the world.
- The Lech (Furrier) family of Peterborough bought it and lived there for 70 years till 2005
- With an appropriate emphasis on cultural values, association and historic cultural landscapes, it should also be noted that the Lech family was a very prominent family in Peterborough with long time ties to the community, to the business community and to the evolution of the downtown. Their stewardship of this property is important to emphasize.

Letter to PACAC

The connection between the Lech family and the property and the integrity of the property will be torn asunder with the proposed severance.

- Both the cottage and carriage house contain many unique, original features, both being built of the same materials and in the same style.
- restorations have been rigorously in keeping with the character of the Arts and Crafts workmanship and aesthetic intent for **both** Copping Cottage and the Carriage House as well as the natural landscape
- it is our understanding that the City is sensitive to and protective of the historical significance of the Carriage House

HISTORICAL DESIGNATION

- the previous owners (Patrick Fitzgerald and Kathy Boyd) when applying for historical designation, stipulated they wanted the Copping Cottage and all the land/property and existing structures designated.
- it wasn't until the present buyers' / developer's real estate agent offered the previous owners money (asking them to initiate severances on the property) that they realized not everything had been designated

IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

- most families in the neighbourhood have lived in their homes for decades and know their neighbours
- they value and want to preserve the green spaces (Dixon Park), the old growth trees (red oak on the blvd) and historic buildings (Copping Cottage, Teacher's College)
- all the houses are aligned at the same setback
- all houses have a driveway down each property leading to a garage or parking at the side of the house
- the developer, (2695867 Ontario Limited), has agreed, through the Committee of Adjustment conditions, to apply for historical designation

Letter to PACAC

of the Carriage House and provide a 3.1m (10 ft wide) driveway along the eastern edge of the property (lot #3) to access the Carriage House

- this proposed lot (#3) is to be 12.5 m (41 ft wide) less 3.1 m (10 ft) for the driveway leaving a width for a potential new build of 8.4 m (24 feet)
- in order to comply with the setback from the street of 6.5m (21 feet), the area left for a new house would be about 800 sq. ft - not large enough to accommodate a house of appropriate size and style to other homes on the street
- The proposed plan also leaves 7m from the back door of the Copping Cottage to the proposed lot line (lot # 2). A house this size needs a yard aesthetically in keeping with the size of the house to preserve its character in keeping with the neighbourhood.
- one cannot compare this lot to anything else in the neighbourhood The property is one of a kind and also extremely unique due to its orientation (main house faces Aylmer and yard fronts Aberdeen). A triple yard is justified and even required for a house that large.
- to accommodate the *International Society of Arborists* standards for the protection of tree roots from compaction from heavy equipment during any construction, the old growth Red Oak on the City boulevard would need an approximate radius of 40 feet of protection
- therefore, accessing the proposed middle lot (lot 2) would be next to impossible for anyone developing that lot without seriously damaging that tree
- we understand the intention of infill as per the Ontario Planning Act as this neighbourhood has already been developed over the years through infill but does not in any way appear crowded. Building on these two proposed lots will be crowded

Letter to PACAC

MONETARY CONSIDERATIONS

- Severely reducing the lot of the Copping Cottage may not be attractive to potential buyers because of size of lot vs size of house and proximity to the next lot
- the proposed two lots, are pricey for Peterborough real estate especially considering they still need to be developed after purchase
- buyers of the two lots should be cautious as both the severance and minor variance are pending and the conditions around building may be prohibitively expensive or impossible to fulfill
- two proposed lots severely crowd the Copping Cottage and the neighbour's property to the east; all three properties will be less attractive because of crowding, price and costs to develop
- The size and shape of a new build on the proposed lot #3, complying with the conditions and ordinances would not likely sell for enough to justify the cost of the lot and the house.
- Regarding the possibility of a conventional mortgage on the proposed severed property: 800 sq. ft homes do not fall into regular mortgage guidelines. A minimum square footage of 850 is usually required.

Most sincerely:

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Jen Bird

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