

Word document sent by e-mail

Mr. Mitch Twolan, Warden, Bruce County
Mr. Luke Charbonneau, Mayor, Saugeen Shores

January 23, 2019

I'm writing to express **opposition to the sale, removal and possible demolition** of the former Anglican rectory at **254 High Street in Southampton**. I'm opposed to these actions because:

- the house is widely acknowledged to have historic significance to Southampton and Saugeen Shores despite not being formally designated and yet is slated to be removed from its setting or demolished;
- the use of the Krug Reserve fund to purchase the Anglican property was **irregular** since the bequest, from Mr. Bruce A. Krug, was intended "... for the ARCHIVES [sic] building for the storage and display of archives of the county ...". Instead, the fund was used to buy land on which a building could be constructed, a lenient interpretation of Mr. Krug's wishes. [And a warning to future benefactors to carefully word their bequests.] Ironically, however, since the land contains a historic house, the county and the museum acquired not only property but a building that the museum is now required to preserve (see below);
- the involvement of the museum with the county in purchasing the property which contains a historic house intended to be moved or demolished is contrary to provisions in the "Standards for Community Museums in Ontario" (produced by the museums division of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport) which charges museums with heritage preservation. Removing a historic building from its setting or agreeing to its demolition makes the museum **non compliant** with:
 - the **Physical Plant Standard**
 - provision 1.b (which refers to the functions, role and image of museums in the community), together with,
 - provision 7 (which charges museums with maintaining the integrity of the historic buildings and grounds they may occupy, a function and role that affects image) ;
 - the **Community Standard** (which refers to museum engagement in the community and their responsiveness to the community's needs). Those needs in

Southampton were clearly expressed in a poll conducted in October, 2018, (see 2, below) and should have been detected earlier during public engagement associated with the feasibility studies (see 3,a, below).

[Note: operating grants are awarded to member museums if they are in compliance with both the Ontario Provincial Regulations 877 (Grants for Museums) and “Standards for Community Museums in Ontario”. The Ontario Museum Association also requires museums to maintain community landmarks and historically significant sites.]

I also object to the manner in which county and municipal councils have behaved over the purchase and sale offer of the former rectory by:

(1) showing **disregard for the recommendations of a municipal heritage committee** which proposed listing the rectory on the Heritage Register (but which was subsequently removed from the list of recommendations by council on advice of the mayor, without explanation),

(2) showing **disrespect to the public** by ignoring a poll (on the Facebook site, *Out and About in Southampton*) which indicated that 86% of roughly 1,600 respondents wanted the rectory preserved, and

(3) **showing little regard for municipal and county accountability and transparency** (items 1 and 2, above) and – to mention just three other examples:

(a) ignoring, without explanation, the recommendations of two feasibility studies in 2017 for an expanded archives, conducted at significant cost;

(b) providing no advance warning to the public of council’s intent to sell and relocate or demolish the rectory (thus precluding any opportunity for the public to provide input before that decision was made) and

(c) providing, at the municipal level, **inaccurate information** (that the rectory **must** be removed before the archives can be expanded) and **ambiguity** as to whether other uses are also being considered for the property (Charbonneau, quoted in the *Owen Sound Sun Times* (January 18) and the *Shoreline Beacon* (January 22); and in an e-mail to me (January 18).

Alternative Course of Action.

The property on which the former rectory is located was initially purchased for the

purpose of expanding the archives; indeed, feasibility studies for the museum in 2016 and 2017 showed that the archives could be expanded without affecting the rectory and, further, that the rectory could be used, together with the Anglican church across the road, and the library as well, to create a cultural and community “hub” in this historic area of town. As Shelia and David Latham have pointed out in their letter to county and municipal councils, a re-purposed rectory, together with the Fairy Lake Nature Area would form a “landmark gateway” to historic downtown Southampton leading to the flag on the beach, promoting the historic streetscape and enhancing a district that attracts recreation, shopping and tourism.

I strongly urge the county to commission an architectural and landscape study as to how the rectory might be renovated to serve the needs of the archives and/or provide office, classroom and meeting spaces for activities that enhance public appreciation of the heritage and natural environment of this community.

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at a major urban museum)

cc
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David Smith, CAO, Saugeen Shores
Cathy McGirr, Director/Curator,
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Donna Van Wyke, Clerk, Bruce County
(and for distribution to councilors, please)
Linda White, Clerk, Saugeen Shores
(and for distribution to councilors, please)
Petal Furness, President, Ontario Museum Association
John Stephens, Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture
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