

City Council Submission – November 29, 2022.

66-68 Charlton Avenue - Angie Nesci

Madame Chair and Members of the Council,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this letter in today's session. I consider it a privilege to be in a city where the constituents can have a voice that is both included and considered by council.

Today we spoke to a parcel of land known to the city as 66-68 Charlton Avenue but to me, it was my home and my very first real estate investment in my native city, Hamilton.

In 2004 at the age of 23 and the completion of my MBA studies here at McMaster University I convinced a few people and the bank to loan me money to buy 66-68 Charlton Ave. Fresh out of school I did extensive research to support my pitch.

Part of the reason I was able get the loans was because I was buying an undesignated, commercial residential/building with an existing commercial addition, in front of and surrounded by midrise builds, co-op builds and importantly according to the City of Hamilton's Master Plan this parcel had vertical availability, indicating to me, the city's interest in future development of the site. All of this made 66-68 Charlton Avenue a safe and prudent investment.

Today The Municipal Heritage Community is asking to dramatically alter the status of 66-68 Charlton Ave and I ask that Council take into consideration what I saw at 23, and what Heritage saw in the 70's and the Durand Streetscape Character project has recently reported on this pocket of our beloved Durand District.

Yes, in 1904, 66 Charlton was constructed for Adam Henry Hope, an accountant of no historical significance.

Yes, 1903, 68 Charlton owned by Annie Bryson Osbourne had her home was commissioned by FJ Rastick and sons for the unfamed Barrister William Osbourne.

We learned from the Heritage report that the property has qualities of the Queen Anne revival style, we learned about the architect associated. But the report does not tell you that we already have an excellent inventory of Queen Anne revival style homes that are well preserved. We have at least one accountant's home, we have at least one barrister's home designated with more intact representative architecture. We also have other projects of FJ Rastick and sons preserved where the principal architect of interest is associated with the build and not just a member of his firm.

In 1966 the city voted to merge the properties.

And in the 70's the property was surveyed for Heritage designation, and it did not qualify.

In 2004, I purchased an assessed unqualified property.

Between 2010 and 2018 I began to lose commercial tenants as the property could not afford to retrofit to meet our cities new bylaws for commercial tenants. I went to our municipal heritage committee in hopes that they might have a way to help find money this former home. I was told on two occasions that

the property was not interesting enough and the style was already overrepresented by better examples of the Queen Anne Revival Style.

And today that same committee is asking to designate 66-68 because it is so obviously important.

At our last session together one of our municipal heritage speakers mentioned she lives 3 blocks from the site. For anyone who has lived in Durand you know that three blocks can change a lot. So much so that the Durand Association commissioned Streetscape Character Analysis (by Civicplan) deliberately altered their analysis due to a variety of structure not being applicable in this quadrant. Meaning this part of Durand already has a proportionally larger number of commercial/professional and midrise apartment buildings.

It is also of note that in this same study found on the Durand Association website, 66-68 Charlton Ave was intentionally removed from the Streetscape Study as it did not add value.

There is no question that it is a challenge to balance new development with the existing character of the Durand Neighborhood.

While it is very nice to have many wealthy looking homes in our own personal neighbourhood it does not support this city's need and obligation to accommodate our increasing density needs.

I ask that 66-68 Charlton Ave does not get designated to Heritage and condemned to remain an under-utilized low-density parcel and I ask that council trust in the City's Mater Plan, The Durand Association's Character Scape project and our cities development process as well as previous Heritage assessments.

Enlist the support and participation of an active citizen such as myself. Help give more Hamiltonians the opportunity to live in our unique Durand neighbourhood.

Do not move to restrict that opportunity and do not move to designate. We do not need Heritage to protect more affluent housing in their own personal neighbourhoods.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Angie Nesci