

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Subject: Heritage Designation for 84 York Blvd – Philpott Church

From: Heidi Wilton

Sent: Sunday, June 16, 2024 10:11 PM

To: Office of the Mayor <Officeofthe.Mayor@hamilton.ca>

Cc: Qureshi, Uzma <Uzma.Qureshi@hamilton.ca>; Lowe, Sarah <Sarah.Lowe@hamilton.ca>

Subject: Subject: Heritage Designation for 84 York Blvd – Philpott Church

Dear Mayor Howarth,

I am reaching out regarding Tuesday's meeting to discuss the proposed Heritage designation of the property at 84 York Blvd, currently in use by Philpott Church. I am a longstanding member of Philpott Church and contrary to what one might expect, **I do not support the current motion to designate the building.**

I have deep ties to the Philpott community. My grandfather was on staff at the church. My parents met and married there. As a young adult I spent much time participating in and running numerous Philpott activities. This church community surrounded my family with love and care while my father battled numerous medical challenges. I met my husband at the church, and we too married there. His family also has 4 generations who have attended Philpott. His grandparents were married by P. W Philpott in the current building. His parents were financially supported by Philpott Church for over 30 years while doing work as educators in Africa. My husband and I continue to attend Philpott, and now have 3 children who were all baptized at Philpott's Easter morning service this year. I remain actively involved with the church programs and I am excited to be a part of the heritage of the Philpott community, but I do not believe that this building has sufficient merit to warrant designation.

I know this building intimately. In my years at the church and while participating in various committees, I've used every nook and cranny to try to facilitate programming. Our church has been challenged trying to use a facility no longer fit for purpose to endeavor to run dynamic programs. We have experienced financial burdens and struggles when trying to maintain a safe and secure environment with a facility built under different standards. Extensive study from Engineering experts has documented significant issues with the facility. Despite my personal history and sense of "home" that comes from a lifetime of weekly participation in the ministry and activities at 84 York Blvd, **I know the limitations of this aging facility.**

It concerns me greatly that opinions offered from people who have never interacted with the facility, are being given such prominence in these significant Heritage discussions. **The insights from those most familiar with the facility deserve to be considered.** Difficult though it was, our church membership decided that the facility is a limitation, and it can no longer function to deliver the kind of programs that are needed to service the Hamilton core. At this time the city has urgent priorities to increase development and expand housing. This is a far more pressing need than saving the empty shell of an aging facility which is too costly to maintain, and which if Heritage designated, will become a blight on the core as it falls into further disrepair.

As I close this letter **I'd respectfully ask you to consider if the reasons for proposing the Heritage designation status are in the best interests of the people of Hamilton.** I would argue that our city's infrastructure needs to be planned with a vision to deliver services to current and future Hamiltonians using the best models and with fiscal responsibility. We need to look for ways to build and sustain a vibrant core in Hamilton. Despite my personal ties to 84 York Blvd, and perhaps **because of the insights gleaned from many years lived in this building, I strongly advocate that designating this facility at 84 York Blvd does not serve to benefit the people of Hamilton.**

I thank you for taking the time to reflect on this letter as you prepare for further discussion on this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Heidi Wilton