

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Mailbox, Clerks; O'Reilly, John](#)
Subject: 488 Locust Street and Heritage designated properties in Burlington
Date: Monday, February 27, 2023 5:47:47 PM

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To John O'Reilly, City of Burlington Councilors, and City Clerk,

I am writing to further express my strong objection to the recent vote by the City to designate 488 Locust Street as a heritage property.

We were offended by one of the City councilor's who stated at the last meeting that "the buyers should have known better, and should have known that due to the age of this house, it was possible that the house could be designated as heritage". We conducted a thorough due diligence and were assured by the city that the property was not subject to a heritage designation bylaw. As diligent homebuyer, my family and I purchased this property with the intention of demolishing and rebuilding it into a multi-generational home that would suit our needs. Therefore, the recent discovery of its potential designation (2 months after purchase) as a heritage property has raised serious concerns about its current state.

Over the years, the property has suffered from neglect and a lack of maintenance, leaving it in a run-down condition. This situation is not unique to our property (see 468 Locust that appears to be in disarray) and underscores the challenges faced by property owners tasked with restoring and maintaining fully designated heritage properties, especially when restoring these properties are very expensive to be carried by the owners on a steady basis as they may not be in a financial position or may be reluctant to further invest in these Heritage Properties when the future of these properties are unknown as it relates to re-sale and investment.

488 Locust street just because is located in Heritage district should not be designated heritage If the City of Burlington believes that the property in question is a unique and valuable part of the City, which is contrary to the expert finding provided by the Archaeological Research Associates that the house is not the strongest example of Gothic Revival architectural style; then it should assume responsibility for the associated costs of restoration and maintenance. Although I acknowledge that heritage property owners may receive some tax breaks and some minor fund allocations for the restoration of designated heritage properties, these amounts are insufficient to fully restore a property to a standard that accurately represents Burlington's cultural heritage.

In Light of this, I respectfully request that the City of Burlington takes responsibility for the maintenance and restoration of heritage designated properties. To this end, I urge the City to put aside a justified allowance agreeable to owners per property for all designated heritage

properties needs and to take immediate action to maintain and restore these properties for use or occupation; as vacant properties do not show well. This includes, but is not limited to, total renovation of the inside and maintenance of the outside structure, as well as land maintenance (including full property fence, snow removal, grass cutting and property insurance), and any other necessary repairs.

In some progressive societies, the Cities take pride and make huge capital investment in maintaining and preserving their heritage and their Heritage properties; and they never shift the responsibility to individual owners and hope for the best.

If the City is reluctant to consider financial support, We suggest that you arrange a meeting of all property owners with heritage designation so that their opinion can be obtained with regards to a fair compensation to keep their heritage properties in good standing within the community.

By doing so, the City can demonstrate its commitment to preserving our cultural heritage in good condition for future generations; rather than leaving the maintenance and upkeep to the property owners' discretion that may or may not be satisfactory as a cultural heritage site. (Example 468 Locust that we are aware of).

Heritage properties market value will increase rather than decrease if city decide to do full investment on these properties and I believe there will be no objection on behalf of property owners what so ever in the city plans to designate any property to heritage status.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael Sobhi

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[REDACTED]