

December 30, 2021

**To: The Cobourg Town Council Meeting of January 3, 2022
Members of Cobourg Town Council and CAO Vaughan,
From: Keith Oliver, Cobourg, Ontario**

A matter that I believe is urgent and is scheduled to be dealt with at the Council Meeting of January 03, 2021, is the future of “ Sidbrook”. Built in 1857, and located at 411 King St East, it has been designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act since February 12, 2007.

Yet for matters legal, indifferent or both it has been allowed to languish since 2002 when it was closed under its last use as a functioning private hospital.

I walked the site before that last snow fall and the ground was littered with roof shingles a sure sign that the roof protection shingles had reached the end of their useful life and that rainwater was entering the building.

The importance of preserving our built heritage is that it acts as does our personal/family DNA. It contributes to our shared image of what it means to live in and be apart of a community called Cobourg. Like the achievements of a great grandmother or uncle it affirms a dedication to maintaining a place and to build on the story of its past.

As the Canadian Flag is more than just a piece of fabric, a symbol or reminder to be valued for what it stands for, to be respected, to be honoured, so too our remaining built-heritage structures more than just bricks and mortar. With so few having escaped the wrecking ball they must be preserved.

In conclusion I am urging Council to act in such a way that Sidbrook will be preserved.

Keith Oliver (anytime cell 905-375-8540)

The following Resources are offered in support of my request:

“Sidbrook - Former Hospital on Life Support”, March 06, 2019, www.2oldguyswalking.com.

Cobourg News Blog:

“Demolition by Neglect”, December 8, 2021, 4,957 hits and 98 comments as of today.

“Cultural Master Plan Buried”, December 18, 2021 hits: 1,426, comments 33 as of this date.

For a history of the response by Council on this subject see **Resources** at the end of this blog.

“Cobourg Cultural Master Plan”, October 2017

Definition of “Cultural Heritage” under “Culture and Cultural Resources”, page 2

“This resource represents significant cultural heritage sites or resources. Numerous designated heritage properties pay tribute to the Town’s past. Assets Include: downtown and area walking tours, designated heritage properties, national historic sites, railway sites, cemeteries, monuments, plaques, art installations, and murals.”

page 6 list of Cultural facilities, assets and spaces.

Cultural facilities and spaces – 49 locations across Cobourg were identified as being able to host or support cultural activities. Most of these spaces are located along Cobourg’s main corridors, particularly along King Street in the downtown. Given the broad appeal of the downtown, ensuring these facilities remain open to supporting cultural activities and programs will be important to the sustainability of the sector over the long term.

Cultural and natural heritage assets – 49 assets were identified. Most of these assets are within heritage districts and natural pathways/corridors. These assets make a significant contribution to the quality of place for the community and reflect the Town’s dynamic history.

One issue that I feel strongly about, and is scheduled to come before you at the January 3, Meeting of the Whole, is the future of Sidbrook.

What is underway at this moment and what is the result of the ineptitude of past Councils, is the “demolition by neglect.!” of the historic property called Sidbrook.

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Once again, as I have done over the last several years, I want to express my opinion that this Council is one of the best I’ve experienced over the 21 years I’ve been a Cobourg resident.

With one exception you work hard, put in an impressive number of hours carrying out your responsibilities, are exposed to and have the strength to tolerate the many abuses I believe you receive from the public you serve.

This is an objective not a personal evaluation, since as you very well know, few of

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