

18 Huron St. N
Southampton, Ontario
N0H 2L0

September 30, 2025

Dawn Mittelholtz
Town Clerk
Town of Saugeen Shores
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Port Elgin, ON N0H 2C0
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By E-Mail

Dear Ms. Mittelholz,

Re: Garage/Shed at 18 Huron St. N. – Request respecting Demolition

I am the sole owner of 18 Huron St N my wife, Joy Parr, having passed away in 2024. This property has two buildings on it – a house (locally known as Spence House) and a garage/work shed. The latter needs to be replaced as it cannot be renovated as it is.

Designation of 18 Huron St. N.

By-law 98-20 (attached) designates 18 Huron St N as a property of “historic or architectural interest” pursuant to s. 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The designation included all lands and structures. At the time of designation both buildings were on the land.

The notice of designation (attached) indicated the designation was to be of the house and lands. However, the reason for designation in the notice is the historical significance of the house which was the house of Captain John Spence, “Southampton’s first permanent resident”. The notice indicates that the house “very much resembles the home as it was in the 1850’s”. It should be noted that the house was altered in the 1990’s prior to designation (structural renovations and a change in the doors at the back for example) and prior to the ownership of my wife Joy Parr and me. There was a dormer at the back added on with Council’s permission a few years after Joy and I acquired the property.

The notice says nothing about what is now a garage and work shed. My understanding is that it was built in the 1940s and has had many uses. Indeed at one point prior to our occupancy, it had plumbing in it. This building is larger than the typical garage as there is space for a front room, a small workshop and then the car space. To my knowledge though, while interesting and of sentimental value more to me than anyone else, no one has indicated it is of architectural or historical significance. Having said that it, it does suit the property and my intent is to reproduce the structure as much as possible.

The Need to Demolish

I have had five builders/contractors look at the property. Not one has said the building can be repaired or the frame of it reused. Indeed, just the opposite has been indicated. They have all said it needs to be replaced, The cement floor is cracked, wood is rotting, squirrels have done considerable damage, the whole building is sinking etc (see attached pictures).

Building a Similar Structure

While I have narrowed the field, I have not selected a contractor. I have delayed that because I want to know whether or not there will be opposition to the demolition of the existing structure and what heritage related requirements may have to be met if demolition is approved.

I envisage a building of the same length and width (16 feet by 40 feet, 640 square feet) and in the same location as the current building (see survey attached). The height may be somewhat higher as the current roof is almost flat and I have been told that in order to meet building code requirements it has to be more sloped or it has to be built out of specialized material. The look will be similar although windows more modern (these are not seen from the street). The garage doors are an issue – most contractors recommend automatic doors and as I grow older this may make some sense. Whether manual or automatic I hope to make the look of the doors appropriate. The paint and any shingles will match the house. The cement pad will have to be replaced but this will not be seen or seen minimally from the street.

Time Line

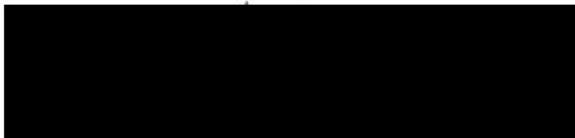
Should the Council approve the demolition, I hope to demolish and build in the Spring of 2026 once having obtained all necessary permits.

Further Question

It would also be helpful to know the extent to which the Committee will recommend and Council will control what is on the land (gardens, trees) and what is and might become affixed to it. Because of misuse of the land by others, fences are necessary at the front and necessarily extended at the south side. Also, by way of example, I intend to install a home generator at the side of the house at the back, off the kitchen this fall if possible.

In closing, I believe the designation of Spence house to be an important part of the preservation of the heritage of Southampton but I also believe that the designation of all of the lands can be seen as overboard. It is not my intent to challenge the work of the Council or the Heritage Committee in saying this but rather to protect the lands and my use of them in ways that respect both the house and my life in this place.

Sincerely,



Gregory J Levine