

Dear Members,

On Monday, October 26, 2009, the Board sent you an email advising that a public hearing would be held to consider the demolition of a building at 164 Cumberland St. and informing you that copies of all documents filed in the matter were available at the Town offices or by phoning 634-4410. We are unable to transmit electronically as many of our members have dial-up connection that creates an inconvenience. At the same time, the Board communicated to you that, pursuant to the Conservation District By-Law requirement for Board input, we had met and recommended against demolition.

On November 3, 2009, the Board's position was communicated at the Public Hearing by our President on behalf of the Board.

Following the Public Hearing, we were contacted by provincial and national heritage organizations, one of whom sent a letter to the Mayor (see attachment) copied to UNESCO and others. We were not contacted by any members although we had been contacted prior to the public hearing by two individuals seeking clarification of our position.

After careful and deliberate consideration, the Board passed a motion to appeal. This is not an unusual or surprising move for a Heritage Society with a mandate such as ours, although it is unusual in our case because there has not been a demolition application approved since we became a UNESCO site. The UARB will base its decision on whether or not the by-law has been contravened in this particular instance. A decision will result that provides clarification for both the Society and the Town with respect to the By-Law as future demolition applications arise.

The Board met earlier this week to consider e-mails we received from four members who to that point had expressed their disagreement with our decision to appeal. Since our meeting we have received two more emails disagreeing with our decision. Thus far, of our membership of 180 individuals, we have received six emails from individuals disagreeing with the decision to appeal, two in support, and one advocating prudence and caution. We also considered what had happened at the preliminary UARB meeting held Monday, December 7, and after much discussion, unanimously reaffirmed our decision to proceed.

Our members and volunteers, including ourselves, are very valuable. We are unable to consider your thoughts or views if you don't bring them to our attention. We regret that this process has attracted unnecessarily argumentative, personally hostile and confrontational comments being made, and circulated, about individual members of this Board by one of our members. However, we certainly remain open to and welcome your thoughts or views that specifically address the By-Law and the issues involved in the appeal. The By-Law is available upon request from Sandy for this purpose. Again, sending out documents all at once has presented problems for members in the past.

Respectfully,
Your Board