

Mixed reaction to proposed list of local properties on Town Heritage Registry

The co-owner of the Hide House was "irate" following a recent public meeting on the latest Halton Hills properties proposed for inclusion on a mandatory Heritage Registry, an inventory of architecturally and culturally significant buildings. Inclusion on the Registry is not designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Pat Farley, a former member of Heritage Halton Hills, and now President of the new local Architectural Conservancy of Ontario group, was astounded by Hide House co-owner Wagzken Asaatorian when they spoke after the first of two public meetings on the latest proposed Registry. Farley had assessed the Hide House building.

"I don't understand why this man is bent out of shape about the Hide House being listed," Farley said last Sunday. "He was particularly upset that the building was called a landmark, and he was upset that it was characterized as a tourist attraction," Farley said, adding those exact words are used on the company's website and Facebook page. "I don't understand this. Listing is just like an inventory - it's not

registered on a deed or anything," she said.

At press time, the Hide House owners Walter and Wagzken Asaatorian had not responded to a request for comment on the inclusion on the registry, which still must be ratified by Council. The Hide House building is for sale for \$2.45-million, and several real estate agents argued at the first public meeting that buyers are scared off designated and listed properties.

Farley said the Registry has been an emotional and contentious issue with disparate points of view. She said two Bower Avenue women said they were "delighted" with the Registry and designation. The two-unit townhouses, known as the Syndicate Housing on Bower, are the Town's first designated Heritage District. Twenty-three additional Bower properties are included in the 357 proposed for inclusion on the latest version of the Registry.

Farley said one "really, really angry" Park Avenue resident would not give her name, but was upset with the Registry, and another Acton couple complained the Registry and designation would limit

Property Description	A large red brick warehouse on an irregular-shaped lot, built adjacent to the Acton GTR station in 1899 to act as a shipping and receiving facility for the Beardmore Tannery. The original main pedestrian entrance faces Eastern Avenue. The impressive façade faces the railway tracks.
Cultural Heritage Value	As the last remaining building associated with the Beardmore Tannery, the Hide House is an Acton landmark and an important part of the townscape. Its motto "It's worth the drive to Acton" has become synonymous with the town itself. Acton's nickname, Leathertown is closely associated with Beardmore and other leather-related industries. The building was sold in 1933 when Beardmore had no further use for the warehouse, and subsequently housed various non-leather industries, including a factory which made uniforms and underwear for the military during the second WWII. The Olde Hide House officially opened in 1980 and has become a tourist attraction, well known for its leather goods both at home and abroad. <i>Acton BIA 2012 Leathertown Festival website: "The Olde Hide House, still is a living legacy of the history that Acton, Ontario today represents."</i> <i>Acton Urban Inventory, Phase III, 2010: "...the Olde Hide House, Acton's tourist attraction in one of Beardmore's warehouses erected in 1899."</i>
Character Defining Elements	This building is a rare example of Late-Victorian Industrial Architecture with its impressive brick façade and vast cathedral-like interiors. The original wooden beams and roof are still visible on the interior. The brickwork was completed by Norval bricklayer, Thomas Maxted who was also responsible for Acton's Knox Presbyterian and Baptist Churches both of which are listed on the Heritage Register.

Assessment report for the Hide House

what they could do with their property.

"No one is telling them what to - they can paint it purple if they want to - when you're listed, it just means that there is a 60-day delay if you want to demolish it," Farley said, adding a lot of the confusion is due to poor communication on the differences

between listing and designation.

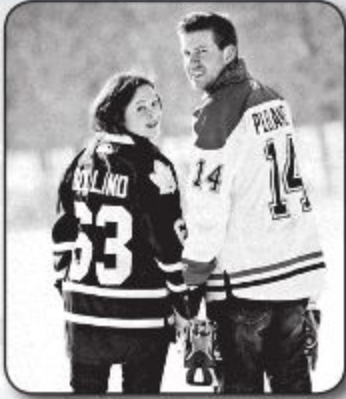
Farley said the Architectural Conservancy Group is "disturbed" there are some significant landmark properties in Halton Hills, like the Hide House, which need protection.

Property owners have until tomorrow (Friday) to object to inclusion on

the Heritage Register by contacting Steve Burke at steveb@haltonhills.ca

Objectors may also write to the Town, and

Council will be informed of the objection before approving the latest list of proposed properties.



Darcy and Tracey Brake are thrilled to announce the engagement of their daughter Amanda to Brandon Wells, son of Sean and Roxanne Wells of Fort McMurray, Alberta. Wedding to take place on August 23, 2014 in Acton

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