

Storey Drive 'eyesore' being repaired

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

No one is happier that repair work in finally underway at a fire ravaged house on Storey Drive than the immediate neighbours, who have lived with a burned-out shell of a house in their midst since a blaze, still listed as suspicious by police, gutted the property 18 months ago.

Work to partially demolish and rebuild the two-storey structure began two weeks ago, less than a week before the Town building permit for the reconstruction was to expire, and next-door neighbour Ron Wood said it's not a moment too soon.

"It's been an eyesore for such a long time that living beside it hasn't been very nice," Wood said on Saturday, adding the boarded up property has downgraded property values in the quiet neighbourhood and was a danger with broken glass and standing pools of smelly stag-

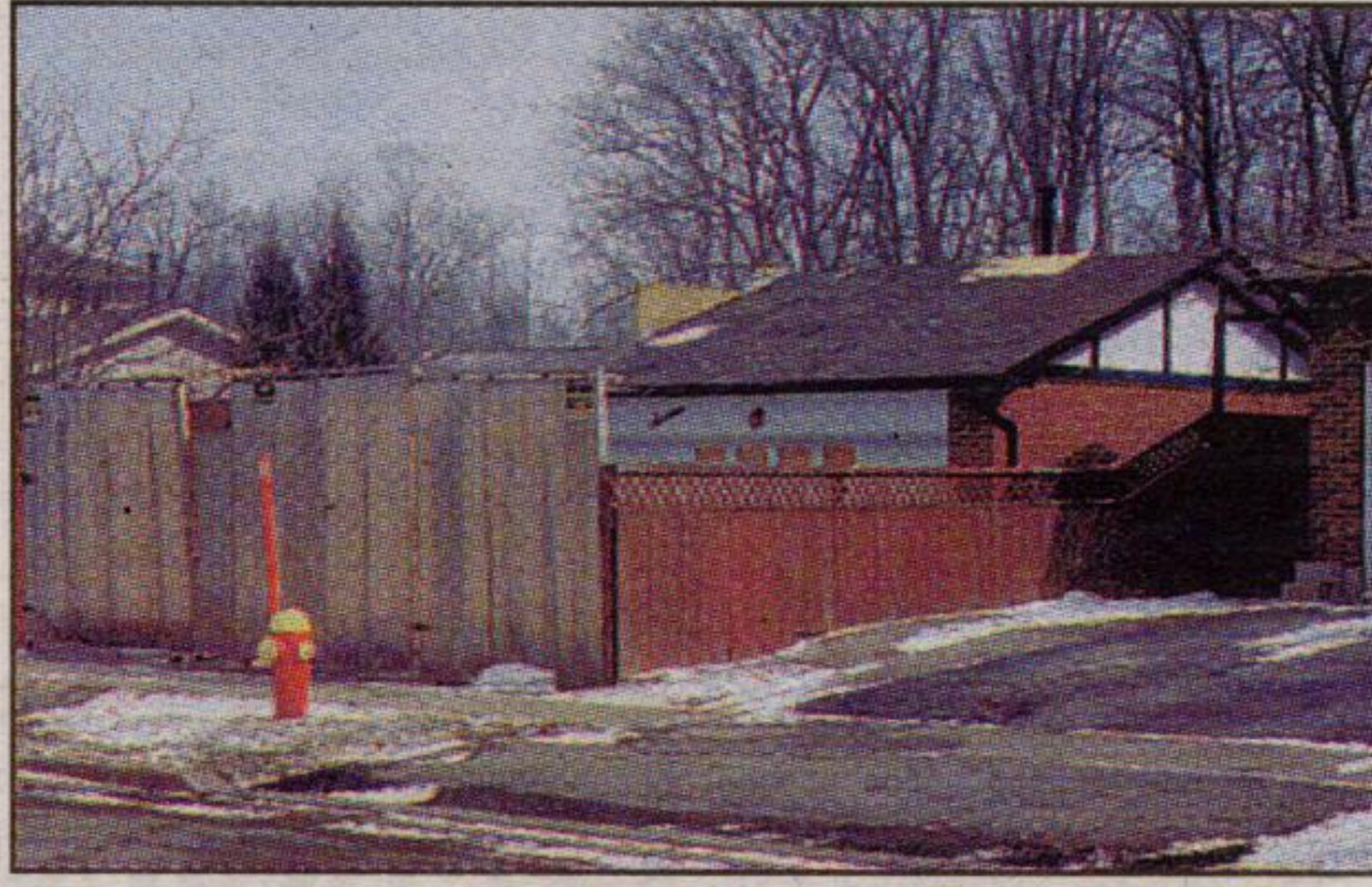
nant water in the warmer months.

Ten months after the fire when no work had been done on the property, the Town issued a Property Standards Order against the owner of record, Angela English, requiring her to fence the perimeter, make application for either a demolition or building permit and complete the work within 60 days.

In July, when no work had been started at the site, the neighbours filed a formal complaint with the Town, saying the issue wasn't being dealt with in a timely manner and asking the Town to step in.

The Town charged English with failing to comply with the order on August 15, 2001, just less than a year after the fire. She appears in court for trial on May 13 and if convicted, could face a maximum fine of \$25,000.

Wood said he never had a response to his hand-delivered petition, or a follow-up e-mail,



FINALLY: Storey Drive home being repaired after fire.

and only got action after inviting the three local councillors to the property last summer. The neighbours reported youths were drinking in the dangerous ruins at night and there were stagnant pools of water filled with broken glass in the backyard.

Bylaw enforcement spokesman Ron Stein said the Town didn't learn of the problem until April 24, eight months after the fire, and laid the charge after no work was undertaken during the prescribed amount of time.

At a Town Council meeting last Monday, Acton Councillor Clark Somerville, who pushed for a speedier cleanup, said after many months of "aggravation and frustration," work on the property is underway.

"So, I just want to let every member of Council know how happy I was - dancing on the street in front of the property last week," Somerville said.

Wood said neighbours felt like holding a street party when they saw the work begin, but will wait until it's complete to really celebrate.

POLICE BEAT

Drunk flees scene

A 31-year-old rural Acton man was charged with impaired driving, having over 80-milligrams of alcohol in 100-millilitres of blood and obstructing police after he was stopped in a routine traffic check in Georgetown at 1:05 a.m. on Monday.

Police said the man ignored an order to stay in his 1990 Ford pickup truck and left the scene. He returned - the police report didn't say how much later - and was arrested.

He failed a breathalyzer test and was charged. He appears in Milton court on April 4.

Good riddance

A 20-year-old vagrant has been returned to Burks Falls after being arrested in Acton while driving a stolen car last week.

A police computer check pegged a 1993 Chevrolet being driven on Crescent Street

as being stolen, and when the driver pulled into a driveway at 9:30 last Monday night, he was arrested.

He was charged with possession of stolen property and breach of probation and held without bail until last Thursday, when he was returned to Burks Falls, where the car had been stolen the day before his arrest in Acton.

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