

Town demolishes Glen Williams home

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She said the home could have been deemed unsafe.

The people Robson felt the most compassion for, she said, were the owners of the adjacent homes who "have been very patient" and were concerned about the dropping values of their homes because of the condition of the Veldhoen home.

"The community is very pleased to see it's gone. I personally feel that was the solution," said Robson.

Not everyone, however, shares that view.

Mary Lou and Doug Brock have sent a letter to Mayor Rick Bonnette upset the home was demolished, calling it "an act of extreme vandalism" by the Town.

They said the house was historic, built in 1843, and was worth preserving.

"It had the potential to be every bit as charming as its neighbours to the north and south," said the Brocks in the letter, a copy of which was forwarded to *The Independent & Free Press*.

Director of Building and Enforcement Services for the Town, Henry Tse, said Chris Veldhoen, an owner of the house at the time with his mother, was charged and convicted in 2001 of building without a permit for renovation work done at the house.

"We don't exactly know what he has done," said Tse, who added the owners had carried out "all sorts of construction without permits," and without regard to Credit Valley Conservation requirements.

He said the Town tried to obtain compliance, but to no avail.

The Town received a court order last June to demolish the home by October if it was not repaired said Tse, who described



This is how the house at 52 Confederation Street looked prior to the Town of Halton Hills demolishing it last week. The Town contends the owners were given numerous chances to repair the home, but failed to meet a number of deadlines.

Photo courtesy Town of Halton Hills

the house as "marginally unsafe."

Tse said, in an effort to work with the owners, the Town did not demolish the home even when that deadline wasn't met.

"We were trying to help the property owners," said Tse.

He said the Veldhoens were told if they wanted to repair the home they needed to apply for a building permit and provide supporting documentation.

"They were not forthcoming," said Tse, who added the Town provided the property owners with specific deadlines early this year, which they didn't meet.

Tse said the house was not a heritage home and the Town contacted Heritage Halton Hills, which he said didn't have a problem with the house being demolished.

Veldhoen said the Town was hassling him with the issue even while he was ill in the hospital recovering from a heart attack and surgery.

Robson said during that time the Town "did not proceed with it (demolition), because we wanted to give the family every chance to comply."

"They would never tell me if they had all the papers," said Veldhoen.

The Town has slapped a \$13,500 bill on him now for demolishing the home, something he could have done for \$5,000 he said.

Veldhoen said they plan to speak to a lawyer about the matter and are considering selling the property.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

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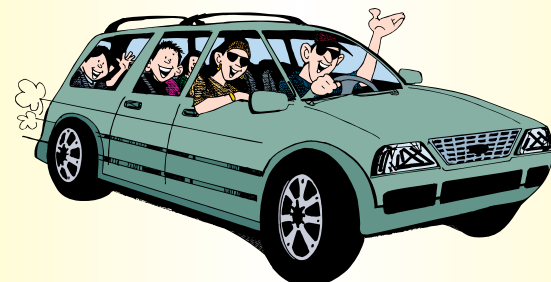
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