

Suggestions include buying building and making it a museum

Fight continues over Norval store

CYNTHIA GAMBLE
Staff Writer

Norval residents continued their battle to save The Carpet Palace from possible demolition by its owners, at a Halton Hills council meeting Monday night.

The residents urged preservation of the existing building, at the corner of Guelph and Adamson Sts., that once housed the Norval post office, and was frequented regularly by famed Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery when she lived in the village between 1926-1935.

The residents were protesting a decision made last week by the Town's advisory committee, Heritage Halton Hills (HHH), which agreed to sign off on The Carpet Palace's owners' permit for demolition. Confirmation of that decision will occur at the committee's June 18 meeting.

In response to the residents' delegations, council directed its staff to prepare a report with a recommendation after consulting the building's owners, Norval residents and other interested parties, to be presented at a future council meeting.

The Carpet Palace owners George Kanichis and Steve Klintsaris, who have been trying to get approval for a new

building for the past four years, have already appealed a previous Committee of Adjustment decision to the Ontario Municipal Board. They have also hired interior designer Helen Stailos who, at Monday's meeting, unveiled a new design for the building, which reflected Norval architecture and includes numerous historical elements.

Kanichis said "as a gesture of good faith," they are willing to retain the east-west foundation wall to be used for a historical plaque.

He said the building is no longer safe structurally.

"I have been through the building on all the floors," and I know I was pretty frightened," said Ward 2 Councillor Joan Robson.

The building has also been hit by trucks turning at the intersection at least four times in the last five years, said Kanichis.

"I think above anything else safety is the most important thing that we have to think of," said Kanichis, describing one incident when a truck crashed into the building on a Saturday when the store was filled with customers.

Leading the Norval residents' cause was former Halton Hills Mayor Kathy Gastle, president of the Norval



Interior designer Helen Stailos unveiled a new design (above) for The Carpet Palace building in Norval which the building's owners say reflect Norval architecture and includes historical elements. Some Norval residents are fighting the proposed demolition of the current building citing its historic value.

Community Association (NCA), who suggested the HHH "was negligent" in following its own terms of reference by ignoring the historic association of the building (Montgomery and Canadian Group of Seven artist A.J. Casson) and its method of construction ("original timber frame construction... with hand-cut logs from the Norval forest"). HHH also did not review the heritage policy in the Town's Secondary Plan for Norval, said Gastle.

Robson wondered why Norval residents did not petition HHH to include the building on its new heritage inventory, which was widely publicized last year.

The residents made that request at the committee meeting last week, said Gastle, challenging council as to why the request for demolition was sent to HHH for review, if it was not a significant heritage building.

Councillor Moya Johnson, a former HHH member, replied all buildings, new or old, must receive a HHH sign-off before a demolition permit is granted.

Norma Tripp, president of Norval Women's Institute and Norval residents, Connie Karlsson, Mary Churchill, Stephanie Crammond and Marie Carney also urged protection of the building.

"Fix it, you can't tear it down... it's time for a bypass, and it's time for a lot of things to go but it's not time for our history to go," said Tripp, a longtime resident, noting "even horse and buggies cut that corner too and nearly ran over some of us."

Churchill said the shifting of the building to the back of the lot was not in harmony with the existing architecture of Norval, and she opposed the widening of the road for a turning lane at the intersection— Norval residents are not interested in seeing Guelph St. Norval become an extension of "soulless and ugly Guelph St. Georgetown", she said.

Karlsson said the decision was made behind closed doors at the whimsy of a committee lacking vision in value of cultural heritage.

Carney lives in an older building across the street, which she says requires constant maintenance due to the impact of the heavy truck traffic on the street. She is opposed to the inclusion of a turning lane, saying it will increase traffic "and eventually all the buildings in Norval will fall apart if there isn't a change."

Crammond suggested council give a 60-day reprieve to allow Norval residents to fundraise to buy the building, which "had been allowed to go to wrack and ruin", from The Carpet Palace owners at an appraised value, so they can turn it into a museum.

Mayor Rick Bonnette questioned where that money would come from?

Crammond said, "We have the community association... the women's institute... we have a lot of wealthy people and we have a lot of people who are interested. Most Norval residents would throw a few bucks into the pot."

Councillor Dave Kentner, a HHH member, said, this community is "chock-o-block" full of potential heritage buildings and "you've got to pick your spots". While the committee would like to list every deserving property, without the property owners' consent that can't happen, he said.

Johnson said this is a significant place in the village of Norval and "we need to have all the information and make sure that we do this right".

(Cynthia Gamble can be reached at cgamble@independentfreepress.com)

HELD OVER! **FINAL 3 DAYS!** **Take til May 2010 to pay!! ALL NO INTEREST o.a.c**

FLOOR MODEL CLEARANCE

Take til May 2010 to pay!! ALL NO INTEREST o.a.c

Fri. May 30th 9am-8pm, Sat. May 31st, 9am-6pm, Sun. June 1st 11am-5pm

10 PIECE SET

10 piece Pub Style Dining Set
Compare at \$1299
THIS WEEKEND ONLY
\$899

BEST DEAL IN THE COUNTRY

Highback Leather Sofa, Chair & Loveseat
Chocolate on Black
Compare at \$2699
THIS WEEKEND ONLY
\$1599
all 3 pieces

8PC. MASTER BDRM SUITE

English Cherry Finish Queen Size 8pc Master Bedroom Suite
Compare at \$2799
THIS WEEKEND ONLY
\$1699

UNHEARD OF VALUE

Leather Sofa, Chair & Loveseat
Compare at \$2799
THIS WEEKEND ONLY
\$1699
all 3 pieces

GORGEOUS

Highback Micro Fibre Sofa, Chair & Loveseat with 5 Recliners
Compare at \$2799
THIS WEEKEND ONLY
\$1699
all 3 pieces

STUNNING SUPER COMFORTABLE

Leather Sofa, Chair & Loveseat with 5 Recliners
Compare at \$2999
THIS WEEKEND ONLY
\$1999
all 3 pieces

MENTION THIS AD! **FREE DELIVERY TO GEORGETOWN & ACTON** **MENTION THIS AD!**

HOLLYWOOD Furniture Store
41 LEWIS ROAD, GUELPH 821-0146 LOCATION
One street west of the Hanlon Expressway off Speedvale Ave.

OR

UNCLE JOE'S Furniture Superstore
53 VICTORIA RD. S. GUELPH 821-9331

HOURS: Friday 9am - 8pm, Saturday 9am - 6pm, Sunday 11am - 5pm

All Items Similar to Illustration * Don't pay 'til 2010. Applies to purchases over \$1500 (Does not apply to Cash 'n Carry items) See store for details, O.A.C.