

From: Clerks@vaughan.ca
To: John Britto
Subject: FW: [External] Reiteration of Support for the Designation of 30 Stegman's Mill Road – Emphasizing the Legacy of Pierre Berton
Date: Friday, May 3, 2024 8:44:25 AM

From: THS Treasurer <treasurer@thornhillhistoric.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2024 10:07 PM
To: Nick Borcescu <Nick.Borcescu@vaughan.ca>; Clerks@vaughan.ca; Stephanie Ferreira <Stephanie.Ferreira@vaughan.ca>
Cc: president@thornhillhistoric.org; Evelin Ellison <thornhillwardone@gmail.com>
Subject: [External] Reiteration of Support for the Designation of 30 Stegman's Mill Road – Emphasizing the Legacy of Pierre Berton

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To: Todd Coles, City Clerk^[1]_{SEP}

May 3rd, 2024

CC: Nick R. Borcescu, Senior Heritage Planner; Care of to:
Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management;
Katrina Guy, Heritage Coordinator^[1]_{SEP}

Subject: Reiteration of Support for the Designation of 30 Stegman's Mill Road – Emphasizing the Legacy of Pierre Berton

Dear Mr. Coles,

In recognition and support of the previously articulated and professionally crafted work provided by both staff reports, as well as the recommendations of Heritage Vaughan, for the designation of 30 Stegman's Mill Road under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, The Thornhill Historical Society wishes to underscore here, the profound significance of Pierre Berton's legacy as a pivotal factor in our advocacy. The inherent value of the Pierre Berton House transcends its architectural and historical merits, embodying the essence of Canadian identity and cultural introspection, as envisioned by Pierre Berton.

Pierre Berton's Vision for Canadian Literature and Heritage^[1]_{SEP}

Pierre Berton's distinguished career was not only a testament to his literary genius but also to his unwavering commitment to fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Canadian heritage and identity. His works have played a crucial role in broadening the horizons of Canadians, enabling us to view our history and culture through a lens of pride, curiosity, and respect. Berton's desire for future generations of writers to draw inspiration from his residence is emblematic of his dedication to the perpetuation of a uniquely Canadian narrative.

The Berton House as a Beacon of Canadian Cultural Identity

In the context of the current socio-political climate, where Canadian cultural needs and identities are often overshadowed by broader North American trends, the preservation of the Berton House takes on an added significance. It stands as a bastion of Canadian cultural sovereignty, reminding us of the need to cherish and sustain our distinct heritage. The house itself, much like Berton's literary works, invites Canadians to a deeper reflection on what it means to construct and articulate a Canadian identity, particularly in the realm of literature and the arts. Like the Canadian State currently, it requires our concern and investment in rehabilitative action.

Addressing Indifference with Cultural Empathy

The challenges posed by indifference and insensitivity towards our cultural distinctiveness underscore the importance of preserving symbols of our heritage. The Berton House, through its association with Pierre and Janet Berton, serves as a physical and metaphorical space for nurturing a sense of cultural empathy and awareness. By safeguarding and advocating for rehabilitation of this property, we not only honour the Bertons' legacy but also reinforce the value of Canadian stories, perspectives, and identities in shaping our collective consciousness.

Conclusion and Appeal for Support

Therefore, we emphatically reiterate our support for the designation of 30 Stegman's Mill Road, advocating for its conservation as a sanctuary for future writers and as a source of inspiration for all Canadians. The Thornhill Historical Society is keenly aware of the potential of the Berton House to foster a renewed engagement with Canadian heritage and identity, especially in times when such engagement is most needed.

We appeal to the City Council to recognize the intrinsic value of the Berton House in the broader narrative of Canadian culture and to proceed with its designation. In doing so, we commit ourselves to preserving a legacy that has, and will continue to, inspire countless Canadians to explore, understand, and articulate our rich and diverse heritage.

Thank you for considering our perspectives on this matter. We remain committed to contributing to the dialogue surrounding the preservation of our shared cultural heritage.

Yours sincerely,

Barry Nelson
Heritage Advocate
The Thornhill Historical Society

Reviewed and Authorized by the THS Board of Directors representing our members.

Duessa du Plooy

President

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Thornhill Historical Society

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