

October 30, 2024

Attn: Haiqing Xu, Ph.D., MCIP, RPP
Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management
2141 Major Mackenzie Dr.
Vaughan, ON, L6A 1T1

Dear Deputy City Manager Xu,

**Re: Request for Consideration to Lift Conservation Easement and Demolition
8811 Huntington Road, Vaughan, Ontario
Henry Burton House**

Anatolia Block 59 Developments Limited is the owner of the property located at 8811 Huntington Road in Vaughan, Ontario (“subject lands” or “lands”). The subject lands contain an old log cabin referred to as the Henry Burton House. The property is included on Vaughan’s Municipal Heritage Register (the “Register”) but it is not a designated property under Part IV or V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, nor is the property within a defined Cultural Heritage Landscape or along an identified heritage view corridor. There is however, a heritage conservation easement registered on title against the property which is administered by the City of Vaughan. This easement effectively provides protections to the subject lands as it relates to the conservation of the Henry Burton House. A map of the subject lands showing the location of the Henry Burton House is provided below:

Figure 1 - Subject Lands with Henry Burton House



Source: NearMap, 2024

REQUEST OF COUNCIL

We request that Council consider lifting and removing the heritage easement agreement (Instrument # YR3432717) from the title, and grant permission for the demolition of the Henry Burton House.

BACKGROUND AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The subject lands are planned and have been developed for industrial / employment type development in the City of Vaughan Official Plan, as amended, and as per the final Block Plan for the Block 59 Area. The subject lands are designated “Prestige Employment” (west of the valley), “General Employment” (east of the valley), and “Natural Areas” (valley and Rainbow Creek) under the West Vaughan Employment Area Secondary Plan (WVEASP).

- The “Prestige Employment” designation allows for industrial uses such as manufacturing, warehousing (not retail), processing, and distribution within enclosed buildings, without outside storage. Offices, limited retail, and gas stations are also permitted under certain conditions.
- The “General Employment” designation allows for a broader range of industrial uses, including outdoor storage, with accessory office.
- The “Natural Areas” designation covers the valley and Rainbow Creek, part of the Natural Heritage Network, which is to be protected and enhanced.

In addition, Vaughan Council approved the Block 59 Plan on June 29, 2020, and again with updates on January 19, 2021, and July 19, 2021, subject to conditions. The plan designates the Subject Lands for “Prestige Employment,” “General Employment,” “Natural Heritage Feature,” and includes buffer zones and road extensions.

In order to facilitate the industrial subdivision, a site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment was required, which was approved in January 2021 through By-law 006-2021.

Accordingly, the lands have been developed for industrial / employment type land uses. In this regard, an industrial Draft Plans of Subdivision, in conformity with the Official Plan and Block 59 Plan, was approved in April 2022 for the subject lands 19T-18V009.

As part of the planning applications for the subject lands several cultural heritage reports and structural assessments were prepared and filed which related to matters of built heritage significance for the Henry Burton House on the subject lands. The heritage reporting for the Henry Burton generally achieved four things, among others: 1) the work evaluated the properties for their cultural heritage value or interest under O.Reg 9/06 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and determined sufficient criteria had been met to warrant some degree of conservation; 2) assessed the potential heritage impacts to the house on the lands as a result of the industrial subdivisions and evaluated alternative development options; 3) determined if the houses were structurally sound in their current location and as is; and 4) provided recommendations for conservation.

With respect to the Henry Burton House, many of the conservation recommendations were captured in the Conditions of Draft Plan Approval, as follows:

- The Owner must submit a reference plan identifying the Henry Burton House and convey specific blocks to the City before plan registration, retaining the house parts until plan assumption.
- The Owner must provide \$1,120,000.00 in financial securities plus the appraised land value for the Henry Burton House before plan registration.
- A heritage professional must certify the Henry Burton House is secured according to the protection plan before registration.
- The Owner will enter a Heritage Easement Agreement for the relocation and restoration of the Henry Burton House.
- The Owner must submit updated heritage plans for the Henry Burton House before plan assumption.
- A heritage professional must certify all conservation work is complete before the release of financial securities.
- The Owner will transfer the Henry Burton House to the City after relocation, prior to the release of securities.

These Conditions of Draft Plan Approval and the recommendations of the heritage reporting described above, formed Phase 1 of the heritage and conservation considerations: "The Conservation Strategy".

Between 2022 and 2024, other considerations were discussed with respect to heritage matters, including the potential for the Henry Burton House to be donated to the City for their administration and conservation management.

In general, a great deal of consideration has been given to the conservation of the structure on the subject lands, with the most binding agreement, being the registration of the heritage easement agreement on title (Instruments # YR3432717). As we had agreed to these easements and conditions above, we are tied to them. Specifically, **\$1,472,739.00** in securities was posted to secure the Henry Burton House.

However, we are now running into issues as it relates to the next steps, or Phase 2 of the heritage and conservation considerations: "The Implementation of the Conservation Strategy". These problems come down to the following:

1. the current structural condition of the house in relation to the proposed conservation strategy, which involves relocation and rehabilitation of the Henry Burton House.
2. the extent of the interventions required to safely relocate the house without causing damage;
3. the appropriate land use for a former residential house in an area planned and approved for industrial type uses; and
4. the extent of the actions required to bring the houses up to safe operational standards, assuming a commercial land use and ensuring compliance with the Ontario Building Code and compatibility with developing land uses;

5. the financial commitment to carrying out these aforementioned works in keeping with structural recommendations and the balance of the commitments made through the Conditions of Draft Plan Approval and registered heritage easement agreements, which risk jeopardizing the build out of our employment lands.

RATIONALE FOR REQUEST

Structural Condition and Proposed Conservation Strategy for Relocation and Rehabilitation

Now that we have started coordinating the conservation plan for the Henry Burton house, we have had to start understanding the work required to carry out the relocation and rehabilitation in detail. In this regard, we retained GEI Consultants Canada Limited (GEI) – professional structural engineers) to complete a structural assessment of the Henry Burton House. GEI assessed the current structural condition of the house in relation to their proposed conservation strategy (i.e., relocation and rehabilitation), identified and documented the necessary interventions for safely relocating the structures without causing damage, and determined the required actions to bring the structures up to safe operational standards in compliance with the Ontario Building Code (OBC), assuming commercial occupancy.

A copy of the GEI assessment is enclosed with this letter as **Attachment 1**.

GEI found that the Henry Burton House has structural issues, mainly log or masonry defects, requiring even further investigation by a structural engineer and extensive repairs. For the Henry Burton House, the building will likely require repairs or replacements of some log components once finishes are removed. The roof structure needs review, and the pole rafters may need reinforcement due to potential over-spanning. GEI has also identified that working on a historic log structure is costly, as sourcing suitable replacement logs is challenging, and extensive shoring or dismantling will be required to replace deficient members.

We did not realize the extent of these interventions when we agreed to the conservation.

Required Interventions for Safe Relocation

With respect to the Henry Burton House, GEI concluded that moving the building will require significant reinforcement due to its age, sensitivity to movement, and potentially undersized roof rafters. Key tasks include constructing a new foundation coordinated with moving equipment, creating temporary access routes at both the new and existing sites, removing finishes, reinforcing the roof, replacing damaged logs, and installing temporary bracing and steel supports. The building will need to be jacked up and moved, with additional steps like, demolishing the old foundation, and restoring the original site. This work is extensive, and we believe will lend to additional heritage impacts.

Moving costs for the Henry Burton House will be high, especially when adding services like driveways, electricity, and water. Additionally, the original log structure features will be hidden by exterior siding and interior finishes.

Appropriate Land Use for Former Residential Houses in Industrial Areas

We believe relocating the Henry Burton House within the draft-approved industrial subdivision, in an area specifically planned and approved for industrial uses, renders its continued residential use inappropriate for several reasons.

First, residential use in a predominantly industrial zone creates potential conflicts in terms of land use compatibility which could negatively impact both the residential occupants and nearby industrial operations. The industrial nature of the surrounding environment is not conducive to residential living, as it may lack necessary amenities and expose residents to conditions not suited for habitation, such as proximity to heavy machinery and constant industrial activity.

Furthermore, maintaining the structure as a residential building would run counter to the approved planning framework, which has designated the area for industrial purposes. This means the only reasonable solution is converting the heritage house into an industrial, compatible commercial, or ancillary industrial/commercial use, so that the building can contribute more effectively to the surrounding industrial landscape, aligning with the broader economic and functional goals of the subdivision. This conversion would help avoid creating a disruptive, incongruous residential presence that could hinder industrial operations or create future land use conflicts.

However, this conversion will lend to further alterations and interventions to the building, further impacting their heritage integrity. The adaptive reuse of the building into an industrial, compatible commercial, or ancillary industrial/commercial use, will likely also require extensive alterations to meet the Ontario Building Code standards for industrial or commercial buildings. Residential structures are not designed to support the heavier loads or fire safety requirements typical of industrial or commercial operations. Therefore, we believe significant modifications, including structural reinforcements and updates to insulation, fire separation, and other building systems, will be essential to ensure the building can function safely and effectively within its new industrial context as those new uses. These changes will alter the original structures.

Actions Needed to Meet Operational and Building Code Standards

Based on the assumption that the building would need to be converted into industrial, compatible commercial, or ancillary industrial/commercial use to avoid land use compatibility issues, we also requested GEI to evaluate the requirements to bring the building into conformity with the Ontario Building Code (OBC).

With respect to the Henry Burton House, GEI found that if the building is moved and its use changes to commercial occupancy, it must meet current OBC standards for commercial buildings, including change-of-use requirements. Necessary work includes replacing interior finishes to meet insulation and vapor barrier standards, reinforcing the roof, and checking floor strength to handle heavier loads for commercial use, and ensuring that interior finishes meet fire separation requirements.

Financial Commitment and Impact on Employment Land Development

We have growing concerns regarding the scope and financial implications of the work required to implement the conservation strategy. While we initially anticipated costs primarily related to relocation, it has become clear that the full extent of the necessary work—including site and house preparation, the relocations themselves, construction of new foundations, and critical rehabilitation—will involve significant financial commitments far beyond what was originally projected. The earlier assessments did not account for the extent of structural upgrades, compliance with new building codes, and the extensive rehabilitation that will be required to adapt the houses for their new use. Given the magnitude of these challenges, we believe the costs will likely be unreasonable and exceptional compared to our initial expectations.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above, we believe the Phase 2 work required to implement the initial conservation strategy is excessive and unreasonable. It will result in more alterations to the original structure in order to accommodate the relocations and adaptive reuses. Furthermore, as noted in the GEI assessment, there is a real risk of damage or destruction during relocation, even with the recommended precautions. Since industrial development has already been completed in these areas, there is no option to retain the structure in the current location.

Moreover, the scale of the work and associated costs is considerable. Discussions with the ownership group have made it clear that these extensive costs pose a serious risk to the viability of the project, and even with the expense, there is no guarantee that the building can safely be relocated without further damage.

In GEI's opinion (our structural engineer), they believe that the proposed conservation strategy of relocating and rehabilitating the Henry Burton House is neither feasible nor reasonable. Therefore, they have recommended that the building be demolished.

In light of these concerns, we respectfully request that Council consider lifting the heritage easement agreement from title and grant permission for the demolition of the Henry Burton House.

That said, we are willing to pursue a degree of conservation for the house through documentation, salvaging and repurposing materials for landscaping elements or

donations to salvage companies, and/or through commemoration efforts. We are open to working with a professional heritage consultant to ensure this is done appropriately.

Yours truly

Anatolia Block 59 Developments Limited

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh Berry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Josh Berry, M.PI, MCIP, RPP

Senior Manager - Land Development

Attachment 1:

**GEI Building Relocation Review / Structural Assessment 8811 Huntington Road
(Henry Burton House)**

September 13, 2024
Project No. 2406581

VIA EMAIL: josh.berry@anatolia.com

Josh Berry
Anatolia Investments Corp.
8300 Huntington Road
Vaughan, Ontario L4H 4Z6

**Re: Building Relocation Review
Existing Heritage Building – Henry Burton House
8811 Huntington Road, Vaughan, Ontario**

Dear Mr. Berry:

As per your request, GEI Consultants Canada Limited (GEI) was retained by Anatolia Investments Corp. (Anatolia) to attend the above-noted site to meet with Behnaz Bahrefar of Anatolia on August 29, 2024. The purpose of the site visit was to review the Henry Burton House, with three goals in mind:

- 1) to assess the current structural condition of the house in relation to its proposed conservation strategy,
- 2) to identify and document the necessary interventions for safely relocating the structure without causing damage, and
- 3) to determine the required actions to bring the structure up to safe operational standards in compliance with the Ontario Building Code (OBC), assuming commercial occupancy.

The review was carried out by Brent Willis, P.Eng. and Drew Dietrich, P.Eng. This report provides conclusions and opinions on the proposed conservation strategy, which is relocation and rehabilitation, building on earlier structural and heritage reports (Phase 1). It also offers insight into the feasibility and reasonableness of relocation efforts as part of Phase 2 (implementing the suggested conservation strategy of relocating and rehabilitating the building). Finally, it gives an independent professional opinion while reflecting on the evolution of previous consultants' findings from earlier phases.

1.0 Description of Building

The building is known as the Henry Burton House and is located on the west half of Lot 13 Concession 9 in the former Township of Vaughan, Ontario. Photo 1 provides a typical exterior view. This building is a 1½ storey log house on a stone rubble foundation with an unfinished basement. The roof is framed with pole rafters supporting plank sheathing. It is apparent that there was a previously removed addition on the east end of the building, which is now covered with plywood. Most of the building's exterior openings were fully enclosed with plywood, but upon the time of the site visit there was an opening into the basement on the north side of the building, where the plywood covering over a window had been removed. Access to the building was available through the west side after removing one of the plywood pieces.

2.0 Background

This building has had various site reviews and associated reports completed by others prior to the current assignment. The main reports which are relevant to this letter are the two reports prepared by Tacoma Engineers, “Condition Assessment Report” dated January 11, 2023 and “Restoration Implication Report” dated April 11, 2024. As such, the purpose of this report is not to compare our findings against these past reports, or repeat findings, but rather to expand on the discussion directly relating to the feasibility of moving this building.

3.0 Observations

A visual, non-destructive review was completed, with the following observations noted:

3.1 Log Frame Deterioration

There were a few locations where the log construction was exposed and could be observed for deterioration. On the interior there were three areas where the logs were exposed on the first floor, the northwest corner, the southwest corner, and at the eastern door. On the second floor, the logs were exposed on the southwest corner. On the exterior, there were a few areas where the bottom-most log was exposed, with the largest area being on the southwest corner.

At all locations where the log frame was visible, a visual review was completed as well as a penetration test with an awl. As expected, the visible exterior portions of the logs were significantly more deteriorated than the interior portions, as they would have been more subject to water than the interior portions. Photo 2 provides a typical view of the exterior of the logs.

Overall, the interior portions of the logs appear to be in fair condition, where the exterior portions of the logs appear to be in fair to poor condition. A full investigation would need to be undertaken once the exterior and interior finishes are removed to determine the full extent of the condition of the logs. It would be expected that at a minimum some of the logs would need to be replaced or reinforced prior to moving the building.

3.2 Interior Finishes Deterioration

The interior finishes in this building would need to be completely replaced due to their poor condition throughout. Most of the interior finishes have already fallen or are in the process of falling off completely, or at a minimum are covered in graffiti. Refer to Photo 3 for a typical view of the interior. The finishes appear to be lath and plaster which does not match current building standards and would most likely be damaged even further in any moving operations due to its brittle nature. Due to their poor condition, it would be expected that all the interior finishes would be removed prior to moving the building and would need to be reinstated with materials that match current building practices once the building is in its final position.

It should also be noted that the application of interior finishes in this building would contravene the main purpose of preserving it, that purpose being to be able to see the log framing. Without replacing the interior finishes though, this building would not be able to meet current building code standards for insulation and vapour barrier requirements. Without meeting the current insulation requirements, the cost to keep this building habitable in the winter would be high compared to more modern buildings of a similar size. Additionally, without vapour barrier, condensation would be expected to accumulate in the walls, greatly increasing the rate of deterioration of the logs, and creating potential mould issues.

3.3 Exterior Finishes Deterioration

The exterior finishes consist of wood siding on the north, south and west sides, plywood on the east side and a metal roof. It does appear that the eavestrough system has been recently updated, but it is also falling into disrepair and is in fair condition. The wood siding is deteriorating but overall appears to be in fair condition and most of the boards would most likely be able to be refinished if desired. Some of the wood siding appears to have water damage and these pieces would need to be replaced. The plywood on the north side of the building is just a temporary finish to cover up the removal of the addition. This plywood would need to be replaced to match the rest of the exterior of the building. The metal roof is corroding throughout and is in poor condition and should be completely replaced.

Overall, the exterior building finishes should be completely replaced after moving operations are complete. When the exterior finishes are removed, the exterior condition of the logs can be reviewed. So, in the end, the exterior finishes would need to be completely replaced. Another item to note would be the desire to expose the log framing of this building if relocated. Exterior cladding on the logs will no doubt extend their useful life, but will conceal the logs so that they will not be exposed. Doing so would also enable an air barrier to be installed on the exterior, thus improving the thermal performance of the wall system.

4.0 Discussion

We are of the opinion that demolition is the recommended course of action. The log materials can be salvaged and reused in a manner that recognizes and carries forward the legacy of the Henry Burton House. Examples of potential material reuse applications would be the construction of a small structure to house an interpretive display, recognizing the history of the building, or milling of the logs for use as flooring or paneling in another building.

The following discussion is broken down in keeping with the three goals set out in the introduction.

4.1 Structural Condition

Structurally, we anticipate that the building will require repairs/replacements of a number of the log components once the finishes are removed. The roof structure must be reviewed to confirm that it is adequate for current roof snow loads; we expect that the pole rafters will require reinforcing as they may be over-spanned.

Due to the challenges of working on historic log structure, the costs associated with these repairs are expected to be quite high. Replacing logs will require suitable material to be sourced (large logs of similar wood species will be difficult to find). It will also require extensive shoring and/or dismantling the log components in order to access, remove, and replace the deficient members.

4.2 Interventions Required for Relocation

The extent of the reinforcement required to move this building will be significant due to its age, potential sensitivity to differential movements, and the potentially undersized roof rafters.

As a minimum, the following work would be required to move the building:

1. Construct the new foundation, which must be coordinated with the moving equipment and related shoring.
2. Construct a temporary access route at the new site to allow the moving equipment to reach the new foundation, anticipated to be a gravel pad constructed with engineered fill.
3. Construct a temporary access route at the existing site to allow the moving equipment to reach the new foundation, anticipated to be a granular pad constructed as engineered fill.
4. Remove existing interior and exterior finishes.
5. Install roof reinforcing as directed by structural engineer.
6. Replace damaged logs with new material, with species and grade to be specified by structural engineer.
7. Install temporary bracing and shoring in the existing building to prevent differential lateral displacement, and to resist lateral loads induced by dynamic forces related to the move, designed by a structural engineer.
8. Install temporary foundations to support the jacking and moving processes.
9. Install a system of steel girders and beams to support the structure, designed by a structural engineer.
10. to a sufficient height to facilitate moving the building to the adjacent parking lot.
11. Construct a temporary platform to facilitate moving the building to the adjacent parking lot.
12. Jack the structure and move the building to its new location.
13. Decommission the well and sewage system.
14. Demolish the existing foundation and restore the site with topsoil and seed.
15. Remove the temporary access described in Item 2.

Moving costs will be significant, especially when the costs of servicing the building with driveway access, electricity, sewers and water are included. These costs will vary considerably depending on the site that is chosen. Also, the features of the original log structure will be concealed by exterior siding and interior finishes.

4.3 OBC Compliance

It is understood that if this building is moved its use will change to a commercial occupancy, which means that current OBC standards for commercial buildings must be met, including change of use requirements, since the current use is residential. As a minimum, we anticipate the following work will be required:

1. The exterior walls do not meet current OBC standards for insulation and vapour barrier, so the interior finishes would need to be completely replaced with the appropriate components.
2. The structural adequacy of the roof is questionable, and may have to be reinforced to compensate. As well, the floors would have to be checked by a structural engineer, given that the proposed commercial use will require a heavier live load than the existing residential use (at least for the main floor).
3. Ensure that interior finishes address fire separation requirements of the OBC.

5.0 Conclusion

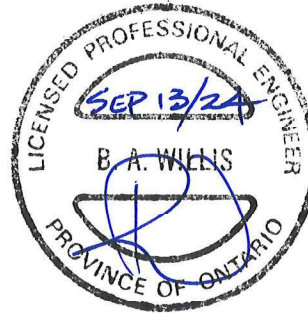
It is our opinion that the suggested conservation strategy (relocation and rehabilitation) is not feasible or reasonable for the Henry Burton House. Therefore, we recommend that the building be demolished.

Sincerely,

GEI Consultants Canada Ltd.



Brent Willis, P.Eng.
Senior Project Manager, Vice President



BW:clw

cc: Behnaz Bahrefar (Anatolia Investments Corp.): Behnaz.Bahrefar@anatolia.com
Scott Cole (GEI): scole@geiconsultants.com

Photo 1 - View of building from the East



Photo 2 - Typical view of exterior showing deterioration of exterior portions of logs



Photo 3 - Typical view of interior showing deteriorated finishes



Attachment 2:
Photos of Existing Building

Existing Structure:



Interior:









