

**From:** [rachel brooks](#)  
**To:** [Toronto East York Community Council](#)  
**Subject:** Item TE5.18  
**Date:** Monday, April 13, 2015 11:44:42 AM

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From: Rachel Brooks (Rev.)  
Subject: Item TE5.18 - Intention to Designate Danforth Church (60 Bowden St) as a Heritage building

To whom it may concern:

I am writing as a pastor at Danforth Church to express my concern about the possibility of including the church on the Heritage Register.

We are a small (30 people) but very active community of Christians who have been meeting in this building for over 100 years. We offer a number of significant services to the community, including a weekly neighbourhood supper and food bank for economically disadvantaged people. Our building is old, in significant disrepair, and completely inaccessible. We have spent the last 10 years exploring different ways of trying to address these issues. In the course of these investigations it has become clear that the only feasible long term options are to either completely gut and renovate the building, or to work with a developer to redevelop it. The former alternative would cost millions of dollars. As a church with a yearly income of less than \$100,000 this is impossible. Hence we have been working with a developer to develop plans to build a mid-rise building on the site. Due to the small footprint of the site, even this option has been difficult to pursue, as there is a small profit margin for any developer. We have been told by the developer we are now working with that any requirement to incorporate parts of the present exterior of the building into the design will prevent the project from being cost effective, thereby putting an immediate end to our agreement.

The intention of those building Danforth Church over 100 years ago was to have a Christian presence in this location - a place where God could be worshipped, and His Kingdom built. That Kingdom has nothing to do with physical buildings. It's all about bringing love, healing, purpose and meaning into people's lives, caring for the poor, fighting for justice on behalf of those who are marginalized, and bringing peace where there is conflict. If this building is designated as a heritage building, the building will be preserved in the short term, but the mission and intention which gave rise to the building will be lost, as within a couple of years we will no longer be able to afford to continue to meet there. The building itself will also continue to deteriorate as we will not have the funds to properly maintain it, and even selling it would be unlikely as any potential purchaser would face the same difficulties.

I therefore urge you to look beyond the externals of this decision, to see not just the attributes of a building, but the work that is being done inside, the community that continues to be built, and the service that is offered to the neighbourhood at large.

Sincerely,  
Rachel Brooks (Rev)

PS. My address is  
I am requesting that my postal address and phone number NOT be made available to the public. Thank you.