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Please reply attention: PAUL G. SCAMBLER, Q.C.

Our File No.: 35593-001

March 30, 2015

Rina Ricci
Heritage Planner
City of Winnipeg
Urban Design Division
15-30 Fort Street
Winnipeg, MB. R3C 4X5

Dear Ms. Ricci:

Re: 294 Burrows Avenue, Winnipeg

The registered owner of the above captioned property is shown on the records in the Land Title Office as the Baptist Union of Western Canada, now the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada. The property is occupied by the Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship.

On behalf of the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada and the Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship we are writing to you pursuant to Division 3 of Bylaw 55/2014 to have the above property removed from the List of Historical Resources for the City of Winnipeg.

The church building and surrounding property was acquired by the Baptist Union of Western Canada in May 1997 for the purposes of providing a church home for the Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship and an adjoining house property was acquired in December 1999. We understand that these two parcels have now been amalgamated.

In September 1999 the Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship wrote to the Mayor and Council requesting assistance in the provision of a handicap lift for the building. As a consequence of such application the City initiated an assessment of the property for the purposes of determining its historical and/or architectural significance. That process resulted in the main church building being referenced as a grade 3 building on the Buildings Conservation List in February 2000.

The Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship has occupied this building for its extensive church and community work since 1997. Regrettably the upkeep and maintenance demands on the building which is now 107 years old has outstripped the resources of the Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship to maintain it.

For example:

1. The sanctuary structure is in such poor shape that it has not been able to be used for the last four years and poses a safety hazard. Because of the deteriorating condition of the building, the cost of insuring the building including liability insurance has increased dramatically to $2,100 per month.
2. Church attendance is now approximately 35 persons per week and the church is struggling financially to meet its obligation just to pay insurance.
3. The membership now shows only 8 persons as members of the Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship.
4. Revenues for 2013 for the church were approximately $80,000.00 but expenses were $126,000.00.

With the assistance of the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada a report was obtained from gw architecture inc. of Winnipeg, which company was asked to provide a budget for initial critical repairs, being repairs to the roof, window stabilization, ceiling repairs and masonry repairs. That report, a copy of which is enclosed, shows that for those four items alone the estimated cost to repair exceeds $1.8 million. The report does not include an estimate for sub-repairs or upgrading required for mechanical, electrical, structural or architectural repairs, nor does it include consulting fees for such purpose.

We are advised by our client that the present value of the property is approximately $200,000.00.

Having regard to the provisions of sections 18, 24 and 27 of Bylaw 55/2014 it is our respectful submission to you that this property should be removed from the Buildings Conservation List in order that the Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship and the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada may pursue an alternate use for this property. A housing complex is one use presently being considered.

You have indicated that representatives from the City will wish to tour the property. For that purpose could you contact our client's representative, Mark Doerksen at 204-791-8075 who will arrange a mutually convenient time for such visit.

Our cheque in favour of the City of Winnipeg for $2,500 being the applicable fees for this application is enclosed.

We thank you for your consideration of these matters and look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours truly,

CLAY & COMPANY

per:

Paul G. Scambler, Q.C.
PGS/ig
Encl.
c.c. Canadian Baptists of Western Canada, Attention: Mr. Victor Ku