To: The Executive Policy Committee, City of Winnipeg.

From: Chip H. Batten, resident of 29 Ruskin Row, in the city of Winnipeg, MB

IN THE MATTER OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE'S REVIEW OF THE CRESENTWOOD-ENDERTON PARK HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT PLAN

This document is being submitted in support the designation of Crescentwood as a Heritage Conservation District.

DEAR COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

I am writing you today as a citizen of Winnipeg and as the owner of a formally designated historic property located at ', known as Scott House, in the city of Winnipeg. I have chosen to do so as an advocate of proposal to create a

I purchased Scott House, specifically due to its pristine historic condition as well as the surrounding Crescentwood neighborhood that, like my home, still remains very much the same as when it was initially conceived & developed, over 100 years ago. Although the home's foundation required extensive structural work to secure its future, (this task totaling over $550,000 in cost), all other aspects of this home were very much untouched from the date of its construction in 1914. Having recently moved from Toronto, where the economic pressures of growth have all but made it impossible to find unaltered historic properties such as this, I feel extremely fortunate to have found such an architectural gem as Scott House.

However, it is the importance of the "context" of the surrounding homes and neighborhood that I am writing you here today to defend. Every single home adjacent to Scott House dates back to the turn of the century and the founding of the Crescentwood neighborhood community. Without having this historic neighborhood context, such a home as Scott House would almost certainly not possess as meaningful an impact to all of those who stop to take in the uniqueness of this home.
The expression: *"like a fish out of water',* is perhaps the easiest way to relate to this concept of context. To truly appreciate and understand a fish, one must see it living, breathing, and nourishing itself within its watery environment. To truly appreciate "turn of the century" architecture, one must see it in the context of which it was designed and built specifically to exist within. The specific placement and size of windows, doors, and roof peaks for example, along with the design style and material used on the homes within the planned community such as Crescentwood, are most often a product of the homes setting and neighboring structures. Remove, and or significant alter these, and you thus alter the context and relationship of a historic home and its original environmental influences.

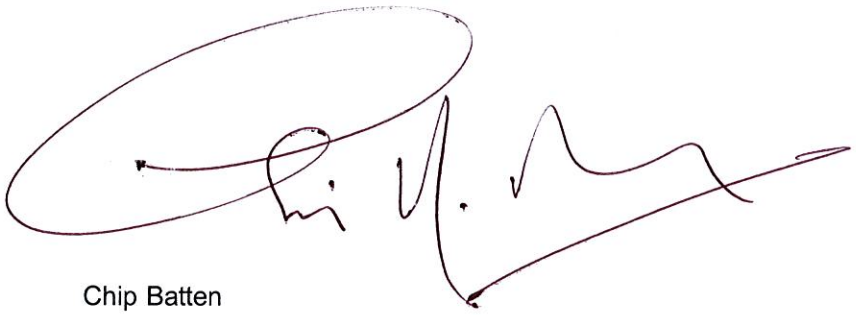
By using the distinctive neighborhoods of Rosedale & Cabbage Town, located in the city of Toronto as an examples, this aspect of context is perhaps best illustrated. In both of these historic neighborhoods, the introduction of multi-story apartment buildings in the late 1960's and early '70's, on lots once occupied by historic homes, rapidly began to orphan many of the remaining older historically unique homes from their otherwise appropriate settings.

This in turn caused these homes, and for that matter the entire neighborhood, to become far less desirable and with a consequence of declining property values as a direct result. The outcome of these declines led to the residents of these historic neighborhoods uniting to apply for, and then receiving, Historic District Designations from the city. Today, both Rosedale and Cabbage town are two of the inner city's most desirable neighborhoods to live in for both the wealthy and those of less means.

Left in their original state, the increasingly rare, 100+ year old, urban neighborhoods of North America, offer the cities they are found in, unique and internationally recognized tourist destinations. Examples such as The Painted Lady district of San Francisco, Greenwich Village in New York, or Chicago's Historic Pullman Community provide more than just housing for their current residence, but also provide living history lessons for the thousands of tourists that annually flock to these very neighborhoods. Coupled with the revenues derived from historic and cultural tourism, the movie industry is also most often driven to find, not just historic buildings in which to film within, but moreover, neighborhoods that remain much as they were when constructed. By preserving such unique communities, we are able to provide the historic backdrop movie producers require for the authenticity and scale of their period productions.

Lastly, in preserving these unique historic districts, we help Winnipeggers, Manitobans, and all Canadians to better understand Winnipeg's storied history, its historic roots and its many fascinating past community leaders. Since taking up residence at 29 Ruskin Row, some 9 years ago, I am always surprised and delighted with the arrival of each summer season given the large numbers of Winnipeg families along with out of town weekend strollers, who walk in by Scott House, stop and take photos or simply stand for a short while to comment amongst themselves.

Thank you for both your time and your consideration for the concerns I have expressed and tabled here today.



Chip Batten