

Ryan & Michelle Panet  
60 Fleury Street  
Aurora, ON L4G 1T9  
January 18, 2023

Adam Robb  
Sr. Planner, Development Planning Division  
Town of Aurora  
100 John West Way, Box 1000  
Aurora, ON L4G 6J1

Dear Adam:

We're writing this letter to provide insight and context into our decision to demolish our house located at 60 Fleury Street in Aurora. As you know, the house was severely damaged in a large house fire in the early morning hours of January 16, 2022. We are lucky that we were able to get out of the house to safety with our 3 young children, however the house and all of our possessions suffered a different fate. Unfortunately, there was nothing that was salvageable, other than a few pieces of treasured jewelry and small items.

Over the last several months, we have commissioned reports to determine the environmental and physical damage caused to the remaining structure. Based on those reports, we feel that it would be unsafe to attempt salvaging and repairing the structure.

On April 21, 2022 we received a "Combustion Byproduct Particulate Screening Test" Report. The testing was conducted by a company called Prime Analytical Inc. This test measures the levels of combustible byproduct particulate in the remaining perimeter walls of the property.

The reports (also submitted herein) indicate reading levels as high as 6. Values for lift samples for soot and char quantification are reported on a scale of 1-10; 0 representing no detection, 1 representing trace levels and 10 representing high levels of impact.

The following are excerpts from our Engineering Report, dated May 2, 2022, wherein the environmental engineer, T Smith Engineering Inc., summarized the results and provided their professional opinion:

"More specifically, three samples returned higher than expected background levels. Upon review of laboratory results, it can be determined that the dwelling was impacted by combustion by-product particulate."

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“The fire caused structural damage to the building’s framing, particularly a portion of the foundation wall in the basement”

“demolition and replacement of a portion of the addition foundation wall and full demolition and replacement of the one storey addition superstructure will be required”

“Heavy smoke penetration was observed into the brick rainscreen cavity of the rear (west) wall of the original dwelling”

“Given the observed and measured smoke penetration we recommend that the brick veneer at the west exterior wall and a section of the north exterior wall of the original dwelling (both floor 1 & 2) to be removed and replaced. The smoke observed in the west wall was significant, and replacement of the brick veneer is strongly recommended”

It’s become abundantly clear to us that there is no option to repair the existing structure for several reasons that we’ll get into below.

First off, we’ve loved this neighborhood ever since we first drove through it many years ago. As soon as a house became available, we bought it. It was always our plan to raise our family in this house and neighborhood. We have a great deal of respect for the history and heritage in the area. It is a difficult decision to demolish this house, however it is one that we feel is best for our family and future.

Any time you have to commission environmental engineering reports to determine the safety of your family home you immediately begin to think about the long term safety of your family. Our plan was to raise our kids in this house and live there well into the future. That is our plan with the next house that we build on the property. However, we as parents will not accept any type of proposed solution that merely “covers up” the harmful particulates that are encapsulated in our walls. There is no way to fully, 100% remove all of the dangerous particulates without removing all the existing building material and replacing it. Furthermore, we have discussed with many restoration professionals and contractors that no amount of remediation will ever fully remove the substances. There will be instances on humid days, where the covered up soot will create smells that will permeate throughout the house

This presents problems on many levels. Firstly, as I mentioned, we have a great appreciation for preserving the heritage of the neighborhood. By replacing and patching walls, the exterior of the house would never have the same uniformity given the fact it would be nearly impossible to source brick to match. Even if it were possible, it would be extremely expensive. Not to mention, we would be back in the same situation as highlighted above; we would have to live with the idea that unsafe contaminants surround us in our environment that is our family home. We would be reminded of this any time we experienced a foreign odor. We can’t live with that on our conscience.

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Secondly, and quite frankly, this is not a near term issue, but it will one day become an issue. If we're ever looking to sell this house, we will be obligated to disclose that there has been a major fire that caused significant damage. We will have to produce all of the environmental reports and it's highly likely that any informed buyer would perform their own due diligence, which would likely come at our cost. Any irregularities in the reports at that time will surely have a negative impact on the price that we can sell for. This is our largest investment of our lives and I'm not willing to take that risk.

In closing, we would like council to know that our young family has a great appreciation for the town of Aurora and all the great historical elements. We plan to be residents here for a long time, we plan to be positive contributors to our community. It is our sincerest objective to build a home that closely incorporates all the heritage elements as required by your guidelines. I do believe we've evidenced this in our exterior rendering package, also enclosed herein.

Thank you for your time and please do not hesitate to reach out with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,

Ryan & Michelle Panet  
Title

Cc: Marco Ramunno