

Aurora needs to review what makes a heritage property a heritage property: Councillor

By Brock Weir

While Town Staff go back to the drawing board to draft out a list of options available to Council to protect the character of existing neighbourhoods, one Councillor believes it is time for Aurora to do a clean sweep.

According to Councillor Evelyn Buck, it is time for Aurora to take a good look at the hundreds of properties around town deemed significant, historically or culturally, find out how they got on the list and whether they still fit the bill.

We learned a great deal from the [Heritage Conservation District] process and I think we learned most of it from the property owners themselves, but we also learned we have over 900 homes listed of being of interest and [the Director of Planning] will tell you he has no idea why some of the houses are on that list, said Councillor Buck. I think staff need to review that list and take off properties that have no business being there. If I own a property and want to do something that is going to make it better, I don't want some person on some esoteric notion or hers or his telling me I can't do it because they don't want me to do it.

I think this Town needs to start afresh with this whole business of protecting the heritage neighbourhoods in this Town. I think the property owners [in] these neighbourhoods have done an amazing job. If you lived here 50 years ago, you would hardly believe the improvements that have been made in the old areas, with no need for a Heritage Act, and no restrictions, and nobody telling you [that] you can't do it because they don't like it.