

Heritage committee, owners at odds over Victorian home

An 1870s late Victorian farmhouse in Malton, described as "a magnificent structure" by the chairman of the City's heritage committee, is threatened with demolition from two potential sources.

Both the owners of the house, known as the Hepston-Sheard House, and the Region of Peel have

an interest in seeing the house removed. The owners, the family of the late Harold Sheard who lived there for many years, say the house isn't worthy of preservation and may be a detriment to potential development of the property.

The Region wants to widen Airport Rd. from Ripon St. to north of

Morningstar Dr. to six lanes, and the house is in the right-of-way.

At the City's planning meeting Monday, councillors heard a variety of opinions expressed about what they should do with the property.

The City's planning commissioner recommended the City rescind two 1983 motions recommending heritage designation of the home and allow a demolition permit requested by the Sheard family to be executed.

Ron Farquhar, an Erindale College professor who heads the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee, said his committee stands by its belief that the house is architecturally and historically significant. Although the brick house on the east side of Airport Rd. north of Victory Cr. has been altered, Farquhar called it "one of the very last of its kind near the old village of Malton. We'd like to see it preserved for the benefit of the community in which it sits."

William Sheard, the brother of the late owner, said the family remains opposed to the designation. While the house could potentially

be moved to another area of the 2½-acre site the family owns, Sheard said experts have suggested the house would have to be moved in three parts. It is on an insecure stone foundation and is very hard to heat because it has no insulation, he said. When the house is moved "you lose the original picture of it" he said.

Malton Councillor Frank McKechnie asked Sheard if the family would wait for a year while the possibility of incorporating the house in a redevelopment to be served from a nearby internal street is studied. "I believe we would," Sheard replied.

After a contentious public meeting on the widening proposal last week, McKechnie said he wasn't sure the Airport Rd. widening would be approved in any event. Peel has considered rerouting the road but that would cost \$600,000 to \$1 million. Moving the home would cost \$200,000.

McKechnie commented that "I don't know of another village in the City with a six-lane highway going through it."

Ward 6 Councillor David Culham said he didn't think the Sheard family should have to bear the

burden of moving the heritage home but he felt there was potential to incorporate the home into a future development. At his sugges-

tion, the issue was deferred for further consultation about that possibility between McKechnie and the family.



The owners of the Hepston-Sheard House and the Region of Peel would like to see the Malton home demolished. The City's Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee want it preserved.