

O'Connor House Delegation
Toronto Catholic District School Board
Corporate Service Committee
Thursday March 21, 2019 7 pm

1. Opening:

- a. Thank you for accepting this delegation request
- b. My name is Tony Wagner
- c. Presenting as a stakeholder of the O'Connor House Organization for 9 years – 7 years as a Board member and the last 2 years as a board advisor
- d. I am here tonight with the approval of the O'Connor House organization

2. Some historical context:

- a. O'Connor House incorporated as a not-for-profit in 2007, buildings saved from demolition in 2008, heritage designation in 2009, 21 year Lease signed in 2010, we secured 3 levels of government grants for the restoration totally almost \$3 million with \$2.5 million in matching funds from the School Board, restoration took 5 years including recovery from the devastating fire to the Estate building in 2012, restoration finished by mid-2016
- b. Letter Agreement under the Lease executed in 2015 which dealt with the repayment of the matching funds, provided routine access to 2 dedicated rooms on the 2nd floor of the Estate building plus our payment of proportional utility costs
- c. Our organization's Mission: a) preserve, restore and maintain buildings to Heritage standards (b) promote and manage the property as a hub for cultural, educational, heritage and community activities (c) celebrate the story, legacy and values of Senator Frank O'Connor with a new generations of Canadians

3. Highlight for this Delegation update:

- a. As of March 31, 2019, our organization will end as an incorporated not-for-profit in Ontario and in our standing with the CRA – there is no turning back

4. Over the past 3+ years, there were 3 main drivers for why this happened which are interrelated:

- a. Firstly - factors relating to our organization:
 - i. Recruiting stalled for new Board members and volunteers
 - ii. Lack of an operational, tactical or strategic plan
 - iii. Absence of stakeholder engagement, event programming and fundraising

- b. Secondly, the key contributing factor was lack of access to the Estate building – which had 3 key causes:
 - i. Significant evasive churn from the decision to use the Estate building for classrooms
 - ii. Remediation of mold from water leaks into the 2nd floor attic – which I understand the leaks could have been prevented
 - iii. Most recently the basement and foundation water proofing project which the Board was advised from the architect should have been done at the time of the restoration
 - c. Thirdly, there were contributing factors the responsibility of your Board administration:
 - i. Ineffective oversight of our tenant-landlord relationship which resulted in:
 - 1. Significant delays in closure of actions or issues or requests
 - 2. Inconsistent setting of meeting schedules which were to be monthly
 - 3. Deficient communications despite repeated prompts by our organization
 - ii. Deterioration of the Estate Building and Coach House from classroom and staff use which did not have adequate budget or resources to address
 - iii. Lastly, a painful Permit process & tool either for affiliated groups of our organization or when we wanted to run an event
5. In closing, it is our hope:
- a. Buildings will continue to serve the four pillars of our mission but under different leadership
 - b. Legacy of Frank O'Connor will live on with help of the school and administration and community
 - c. Obligations will be met being a Heritage designated property
6. Thank you for your time and attention. I will open up for any questions

Signed: Tony Wagner  Date: March 21, 2019