

To All Whom it May Concern

Re: Proposed Renovations to the Faethorne House, Brights Grove Library and Gallery in the Grove.

April 16, 2021

I speak on my own behalf, as a lifetime resident of Sarnia and a resident of Brights Grove since 1985.

In my time I have had the pleasure of raising our twin daughters and son in this marvelous lakeside community. Our children were educated at Brights Grove Elementary School, even through the reconstruction of the same. I have been on the school council, a leader in the cub pack and available as needs arose in the community as has my wife since our arrival here.

One outstanding opportunity we and all Brights Grove residence have enjoyed during all of these years has been our local library. Our children attended for story-time. My wife and I being voracious readers often take the loan of books and periodicals. The park and its library and so many community events have often been the focus of our lives.

Even today though 2 of our children have perused careers which have taken them across Canada our daughter who lives in town still brings her children to the library here in Brights Grove for events which we enjoy as a family. This has been such an important part of our life.

Gallery in the Grove is also such an important part of this community as well. As our children grew and went to select their books downstairs, as the opportunity presented itself, we would take them to see the many exhibits on display in the Gallery upstairs.

As to my children's interests in art, I am unsure of what may have prodded or inspired them. Was it the Gallery in the Grove? One was very good at cartooning but she went on to teach and develop resources for youth through the school board. One was very accomplished in high school, even considering a career in medical illustration. Instead she became an adolescent specialist again working with youth. Our youngest I really don't remember ever even doodling when he was younger. He attained degrees in graphic design, multimedia and computer programming.

So all our children did become artists in their own ways. Was this from the exposure to the arts given by the Gallery in the Grove? Who is to say. There was certainly not a lot of art happening at our house while they grew. Mother and I were busy raising an active brood.

My own artistic endeavors really did not come until retirement. Prior they were limited to banners and posters to help with our children's school events and the odd card to my wife etc.

Since retirement I have taken up watercolour painting and have been honoured to be asked to hang some of my paintings in Gallery in the Grove a few times.

So, from a very personal view you might see that the Brights Grove Library and Gallery in the Grove has had a profound impact on myself and our family over the years.

Moving forward through the 2020's and beyond we, the community of Brights Grove and the surrounding areas such as Camlachie, Northern Sarnia, Mandamin, Vynner and all the local area are dependent on our Library and Gallery for so much. We are thankful for that which it has offered us over the years.

The population of our area has grown by leaps and bounds since I moved from between the hospitals in Sarnia out here to “The Grove”. There has been a huge amount of development in housing and years ago in schools yet for the general community, nothing. This service, Brights Grove Library and the Gallery in the Grove, has not been allowed to date to grow with the local community which is so dependent upon it. Renovations and additions are sorely needed to make this welcoming place accessible and available for all as well as proportional to the size and needs of the community.

I ask that the City of Sarnia and the County of Lambton join as full partners with the Friends of Bright’s Grove Community Hub and all community members in developing a new and refurbished Brights Grove Library and Gallery in the Grove.

Paul Kearney