

# Heritage home destroyed despite city order to stop

Homeowner had been instructed to clear debris from property

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*Construction equipment stands where a century-old heritage home used to stand on Plymbridge Crescent in Hogg's Hollow on Thursday. The owner has yet to be charged by the city.*

A Hogg's Hollow homeowner has finished demolition of his heritage home, still without a permit and despite an order to stop all destruction — after the city told him to clear debris from the property.

Nearly three months after the demolition began and was then halted by the city, the century-old single-family home on a leafy lot on Plymbridge Crescent is no more — just two yellow construction machines were parked Thursday where it once stood.

The owner has yet to be charged by the city, which is responsible for enforcing strict building and heritage laws.

"The law enforcement sent me a letter," owner Mohammad Kassirian, a luxury custom homebuilder, told the *Star* Thursday. "They said you have to (flatten) the property because the neighbour complaining" about loose insulation blowing, mosquitoes and stagnant water. "They gave me permission." But the email dated Aug. 12 from James Slocum, municipal licensing and standards investigation services supervisor, and forwarded to the *Star* by Kassirian, does not appear to give permission for further demolition.

Instead, it cites a municipal infraction for littering and dumping of refuse and asks the owner to "remove all waste items as requested by August 22, 2021."

It references an original notice of violation dated July 21.

This week, a city spokesperson said the original investigation "remains ongoing."

"The city can also confirm that it is investigating further demolition activities having recently occurred at the property," the statement said.

Asked about the email, a city spokesperson said the notices about clearing debris "in no way authorized any further demolition of any remaining structure (s) on the property."

Demolition on the \$4.3-million former carriage house listed by the city as a heritage property first began on May 24. Kassirian previously told the *Star* he had "no other choice" but to go forward with tearing the house down after the city did not sign off on a permit.

He had previously applied for permission to redevelop the property into a significantly larger two-storey single-family home at nearly 8,600 square feet, not including a planned basement. A city staff report recommended denying that application, saying the new design was "not in keeping with the character of the neighbourhood," and far exceeded allowed property lengths.

The application was put on hold after heritage staff asked for time to assess the property and council voted to list it in the city's heritage register, despite protests from the owner and a report from architects he hired who questioned the home's continued heritage value. Since then, the application has been in limbo.