



For Immediate Release
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Transport Canada “bulldozers by stealth” – Holland

Ajax-Pickering MP Mark Holland denounced last weekend’s eviction of tenants by Transport Canada from the storied Bentley – Carruthers home on the Pickering Lands which the federal government expropriated in 1972 to build an airport that is neither needed nor wanted.

“After a period of relative peace, Transport Canada has resumed its plan to slowly depopulate the community by evicting tenants as well as to destroy the vestiges of our connections to the area by boarding up heritage properties and allowing them to decay,” said Holland. “They are bulldozing by stealth our history and communities away.”

Holland noted that Transport Canada has a history of resorting to deceptive tactics when carrying out evictions and demolitions in order to avoid public backlash. As in this case, Transport Canada claimed that the historic house, built in the 1850s, was mould-infested. Yet when inquiries were made by Holland’s office for diagnostic proof, Transport Canada fell silent.

“They tried this before with Tullis Cottage,” said Holland.

In 2005, Transport Canada announced that they were going to demolish the historic home of the Barclay family, claiming that it had mould. But Holland was able to get the federal Liberal government of the day to agree to an independent third-party assessment. The tests proved that Transport Canada’s claims were false. The historic home was not only saved but also designated a heritage property.

Time is the single biggest factor in the way of mounting a similar defence to save the Barclay – Carruthers home. No one knew about the eviction until just a week before the tenants were removed.

“I think that Transport Canada is putting tenants in an unconscionable position by forcing their silence in exchange for housing elsewhere in north Pickering,” said Holland.

“The fight to save Bentley – Carruthers house isn’t over, nor is protecting north Pickering from a government whose clear bias is to clear the community to build an airport.”

Holland will continue to press Transport Canada to reveal the basis for the eviction, both diagnostic reports of mould as well as the cost to repair.

Holland appreciates the support that the City of Pickering has given both community and heritage interests in the north. He will ask Pickering Council to advance resolutions that obliges the federal government to save the historic house.

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