



Ancaster's Community Musical Theatre
Music Theatre At Its Finest
www.TheatreAncaster.com

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Gord Conroy, President
Theatre Ancaster
42 Elm Hill Blvd
Ancaster Ontario L9G 2V1

January 10, 2012

Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent of Leadership and Learning
Secondary Accommodation Review West
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
100 Main Street West
Hamilton Ontario L8N 3L1

Dear Ms Stephanian and Accommodation Review Members

Theatre Ancaster is a community based musical theatre organization that utilizes the Theatre Auditorium and attendant facilities at Ancaster High School to present quality performances to the people of Ancaster and the surrounding communities. We are writing to provide information to you about the possible impact that the demolition of the Theatre Auditorium facility would have on the arts and culture of Ancaster and the surrounding communities.

Last year, more than 9000 children, students, adults and seniors attended Theatre Ancaster productions. This year four productions will utilize the Theatre Auditorium facility at Ancaster High...one an intergenerational full Broadway show, one an original musical review, and two which are Broadway youth shows, one with a cast of pre-teens and one with a teen cast. More than 250 adults and youth participate creatively on stage, in the pit or on production teams every year.

Theatre Ancaster grew out of musical theatre productions created by the staff and students of Ancaster High School. Most of the personnel live and work in the community and have created more than 30 productions in the Theatre Auditorium facility. That means that more than 100,000 people have been involved as patrons or participants with artistic music and theatre ventures since Theatre Ancaster's inception in 1997. These performances have been supported by more than forty local businesses which sponsor the productions with thousands of dollars of partnership donations each year.

In preparation for the celebration of the fiftieth Anniversary of Ancaster High and the fortieth Anniversary of the building of the Theatre Auditorium, there was a refurbishment of the

Administration: Phone 905-648-6786 or 905-648-0453 Fax: 905-648-9962

E-mail: gordconroy@cogeco.ca or info@theatreancaster.com

Theatre Ancaster information phone **905-304-SHOW (7469)**
Old Firehall Arts Centre information phone **905-304-TUNE (8863)**
Mailing address: 42 Elm Hill Blvd., Ancaster, ON, Canada L9G 2V1

theatre auditorium. Community donations helped to defray the costs of the restoration of the seats under the leadership of Theatre Ancaster's Take a Seat Campaign. Close to 300 brass plaques honouring community individuals and organizations now grace the arms of almost half the auditorium seats.

Theatre Ancaster believes that the Theatre Auditorium is functioning with measurable importance as a significant educational and community resource, and believes that this resource can play a larger role for the community in the years to come. Theatre Ancaster will be pleased to act as a development partner in any future ventures.

Theatre Ancaster is presently a community partner with the HWDSB and Ancaster High School, and as such contributes significantly with in-kind donations, financial profit-sharing and volunteer maintenance to the upkeep and resources for the Theatre Auditorium, as well as providing significant opportunities for youth and adults in the community to participate in and train in musical theatre. Should Ancaster High develop a Specialist High Skills Major program in music and theatre, the Theatre Auditorium and its facilities would be even more important than they are now.

Theatre Ancaster suggests that the retention of the Theatre Auditorium and attendant spaces is important to the well being of the community. We agree that the community has done well to develop new sports facilities for our youth. Now, we need to protect what we have for the arts in the community. To lose the Theatre Auditorium facility through demolition or other means would be a significant loss.

There is no alternate major venue available for the performing arts in Ancaster, or in the adjacent communities.

Theatre Ancaster is sending additional information to you and the Accommodation Review members concerning the importance of retaining the Theatre Auditorium and the attendant spaces at Ancaster High. We will attend and would be pleased to address the public meeting on Tuesday January 17 at Highland Secondary School at 6:00 p.m.

Sincerely



Gord Conroy, President Theatre Ancaster

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