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Warehouse owner seeks to demolish Exchange building

By: Bartley Kives

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THE owner of a 124-year-old warehouse in the Exchange District wants the city to remove the five-storey structure from its heritage inventory as a prelude to demolition.

Prosperity Knitwear chairman Henry Tang has asked the city for permission to demolish the company's factory outlet store at 145 Pacific Ave., according to a city report published Wednesday.

The company wants to knock down the structure, officially known as the Smart Bag Company Building, in order to sell the lot for redevelopment, the report states.

But city heritage experts want to place the structure on the city's buildings conservation list and protect it as a historic property.

"This property, originally built in 1884 with a small addition in 1906, is an outstandingly early, rare and handsome example of the Romanesque Revival style," the report states. "The very prominent addition of 1913, while not rare, is an extremely good example of a more modern interpretation of the Romanesque Revival style."

The historical buildings committee has asked council's property and development committee to formalize the building's heritage status.

A decision will be made on Tuesday.

Heritage Winnipeg is registered in favour of the heritage status, while Prosperity Knitwear plans to argue against it.

The building is "virtually empty," the report states.

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