



April 9, 2026

The Norfolk Historical Society would like to reiterate our concern over the proposed idea of moving Lynnwood Arts into the former Eva Brook Donly Museum and current Norfolk County Archives. We do not see this move as a viable solution and we are concerned about how it would impact the operations and long-term storage capacity of the Archives, as well as the legacy of the collection of art and artifacts which were donated by community through the Norfolk Historical Society before being transferred to Norfolk County.

The storage space available at the Gilbertson Administration Building is limited, and the deaccession process is a sensitive process that should not be accelerated because of this suggested move. While condensed storage methods have, and will continue to be utilized, the storage needs of any municipal archive are ever-expanding, and we are concerned that this move would compound this problem. The Norfolk Historical Society was faced with the difficult decision to transfer the Eva Brook Donly Museum and collection in 2017-2018 and we transferred everything for only \$2 because our

predecessors believed it was in the best interest of public access to the collection. Norfolk County agreed to steward this collection on behalf of the citizens of Norfolk, ensuring proper care, public access and maintaining custodial authority. It is the most historically significant and valuable portion of the larger Norfolk County collection. It is irreplaceable. To move pieces of this collection off-site or accelerate the deaccessioning process in order to accommodate the storage needs of the privately-owned Lynnwood Arts collection would be a disservice to public interest. These pieces carry our shared history, and the intentions of these donations should be respected. The former Norfolk Historical Society collection needs a robust, thorough, and detailed inventory conducted before any pieces are relocated or removed from the Archives. The Norfolk Historical Society is willing to assist with this work. Deaccessioning requires stringent standards and documentation and, if done improperly, the loss of archival pieces can cause irreversible destruction of cultural and historical value and deteriorate public trust.

Another area of concern is the care and public access of the Lynnwood building and Eva Brook Donly's home: Two recognized heritage buildings. Improvements on the Eva Brook Donly home are welcomed, but they should not be conditional on this suggested move simply to accommodate the declare of surplus and sale of the Lynnwood building, which desperately needs attention. Declaring the Lynnwood as surplus and trying to sell the building is not a guaranteed cost-saving measure, and the integrity of the building is at risk. The move could very well take more time, money, and staff than anticipated in the previous report presented to Council-in-Committee. Allowing the Lynnwood building to sit

empty, awaiting an appropriate sale, would be detrimental to the building and would not serve the Norfolk community.

We respect the contributions of Lynnwood Arts as well as their autonomy over their own future. It is our hope that Lynnwood Arts and Norfolk County can work together towards an alternative solution that would see the repairs through on the Lynnwood, preserve its legacy as a National Historic Site, and protect public access.

If the move into the former Eva Brook Donly Museum proceeds as an option to Council, we ask to be consulted and involved in the process, and stress that expanding long-term storage capacity of the Norfolk County Archives should be prioritized. Though the collection held by the Norfolk Historical Society has been transferred to Norfolk County, we wish to be involved where it pertains to the legacy and care of the former Eva Brook Donly Museum and the collection that was previously stewarded by the Norfolk Historical Society for over seventy years.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K van der Meer', with a stylized, cursive script.

-Kate van der Meer (President) on behalf of the Norfolk Historical Society