

# Resident wants to mark the spot of century-old mill explosion in Linwood

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A cider mill explosion more than a hundred years ago is a piece of Linwood's history that resident Leonard Horst wants to see remain in the public consciousness.

In September 1909, two men, Thomas Huber and William Attig, were killed instantly and brutally in a massive boiler explosion at Huber's family cider mill during the construction of an apple butter mill in Linwood.

According to Horst, who presented as a delegation at Tuesday evening's Wellesley council meeting, the Huber family also ran a tavern, blacksmith shop and a wagon shop on the same site.

It was a story that he had grown up hearing about. Now, Horst wants to turn the site into a historical marker, remembering the incident and the two men who lost their lives. He even found a piece of an old boiler at the spot where the mill once stood.

"I had heard about a cider mill being blown off the map, but that was about it and I don't leave well enough alone," he told council and staff. "There is a boiler in Heidelberg and the boiler is very similar to the boiler that exploded and I went to the owner and he said I could have it and move it to the site if I can get approval from the township and put it there as a monument."

Horst already has permission from the current landowner in Linwood to fix up a small spot near the road where the Huber family businesses stood. Now, he just needs council onboard.

"I don't just want to go ahead with it," he said, adding that he isn't asking for money. "If the township is in favour, I can get it there, get it on a bit of a stand and put a plaque on it. I'll look after that."

Coun. Peter van der Maas asked if Horst had contacted the Wellesley Historical Society to help him dig up some more information on the incident from 108 years ago. Horst assured him that he has been working closely with them.

Mayor Joe Nowak said he wanted to know more, mentioning that the township doesn't currently have a policy to provide direction in this case.

"What we should do is get staff to come back with a bit of a report on it with a recommendation on how to move forward," he said. "It is an interesting story, there is no question about it."

The site sits at a spot known as Huber's Corner just off Schummer Line, and council directed staff to visit the site, and put together a report on what the next steps should be to make Horst's idea happen.

The plan is have the report back to council for discussion at the next regular council meeting in September.

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