

St. Catharines Heritage Advisory Committee

Minutes

Thursday November 10, 2022

Electronic Participation at 2:30 pm

Members:

Brian Narhi
Gail Benjafield
John Crawley
Robert Speck
Andrew Humeniuk
Holly Washuta
Mark Hoerd
Justin Nichollson

Regrets:

Lorraine Giroux

Staff Liaison:

James Neilson, Heritage Planner, Planning and Building Services
Tami Kitay, Director of Planning and Building Services

1. Call meeting to order (Chair)

Chair Brian Narhi Called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

2. Recognition of Traditional Territories

Chair Brian Narhi acknowledged that the land on which we gather is the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this land is home to many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Peoples – who share the land with us. Acknowledging this reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people over many generations.

3. Additions / Deletions to the Agenda

- New Business, Item 9.7

Gail Benjafield

4. Motion to approve the agenda

Moved by: Gail Benjafield

“That the SCHAC adopt the agenda for this SCHAC meeting held on Thursday, November 10, 2022, copies having been previously distributed.”

CARRIED

5. Motion to adopt the minutes of the previous meetings

Moved by: Robert Speck

“That the SCHAC approve the minutes of the SCHAC held on Thursday October 13, 2022.”

CARRIED

6. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest.

7. Presentations (Invited Guests)

No presentation.

8. Business arising from the minutes

No business arising from the minutes.

9. Business

9.1 Museum Update

Adrian Petry

Adrian Petry spoke about recent events at the Museum. The programming team recently presented a session at the Ontario Museum Association Conference regarding the downtown walking tours.

The museum is opening a new exhibit called “Last Stop” which includes primary source material and narratives from the refugee freedom seekers as they experienced St. Catharines in the 1850s. This is intended to run until 2025 until a new permanent exhibit can be installed in the gallery.

A new introduction gallery called “A Town Growing into Note” opened recently. This has been very well received. This is located near the entrance to the exhibition galleries and shows a variety of themes that are represented by different artifacts. In addition a new gallery is going to be introduced soon, focused on the historic Welland Canals.

The Remembrance Day program was very well received. Approximately 100 people included two school groups have participated in the program.

The Museum’s lecture series continues with a lecture by the curator Kathleen on Public Works in the interwar period. Another lecture by Brian Narhi follows Kathleen’s lecture on November 29 and is about the early history of St. Catharines before the Canals. The final lecture will be by Dr. Kimberly Monk on December 13 about the recent dig at the shipyard this past summer. Information about these events is located on the Museums website.

The annual Mitten Tree campaign gets underway on December 3rd and runs until December 8th. All donations go towards Community Care and Out of the Cold.

The museum will soon be announcing programming for Black History Month Programming, Family Day, March Break and walking tours of the Merritt Trail.

Gail Benjafield asked about the Brock University Historical Society. Adrian responded that the Brock University Historical Society is a student club which organizes events for students. They also have a publication called The General where students submit papers for publication. The group is not always active depending on the membership from year to year.

Moved by: Robert Speck

“That the SCHAC received the update from the St. Catharines Museum”

CARRIED

9.2 Bill 23 – Heritage Implications

James Neilson, Heritage Planner

James Neilson spoke about the province’s Bill 23 legislation. Staff recently brought forward a report to Council which was endorsed unanimously. The proposed changes will impact the Ontario Heritage Act including Heritage Registers, Designations, Heritage Districts, adherence to provincial standards and guidelines and regulations. Overall, in the opinions of heritage professionals, these changes will have a negative impact on heritage preservation across the province.

As part of Bill 23, listed properties will only remain on the register for up to two years. If a property is not designated within two years, then it will be removed and not able to be re-added for five years. The existing Register will need to be reviewed and properties re-prioritized to determine which properties should be the focus of designation efforts. Almost two-thirds of the listed properties in St Catharines are within the City's downtown, which is where a lot of the forecasted growth will occur within the next 10 years. James outlined the reasons why a register is good urban planning and what the loss of these buildings from the Register might mean for the future of these buildings. Staff will now need to list and designate properties within 90-days of planning application submissions, which will put a strain on resources and create issues for collaborating with applicants on heritage-related applications.

James noted that a number of the changes were dependent on new regulations which have not been released at this time. These largely pertain to the determining heritage value for Heritage Conservation Districts and amending and repealing HCD Plans. The changes related to heritage districts may actually be positive for the City as the HCDs in St Catharines are quite old and could benefit from updated plans and guidelines.

The Provincial Governments, Ministries, and public bodies will be able to override heritage standards and guidelines if the exemption would advance transit, housing, health, long-term care, or other infrastructure projects. It is not clear at this time how this may affect the City. Additionally, changes are proposed for how archaeology is handled. Previously, it was the responsibility of the Region however, the Region will no longer be part of the planning process. It will now be the responsibility of the City to monitor archaeology though it is not clear how this transition will take place, especially after the Region recently adopted a new Archaeological Management Plan.

As part of the potential next steps, the idea of proposing a Heritage District in the downtown was suggested rather than having to designate the large number of properties individually. This would need the approval of Council. Regarding the proposed Bill 23, there are still many uncertainties and implications that are unknown, though generally this will have a serious negative impact on heritage in the city.

Brian Narhi asked about the potential timeline of the legislature. James Neilson mentioned that the Bill has already went through its first reading and is on its second reading and will be sent to committee within the next couple weeks. Tami Kitay, Director of Planning and Building Services mentioned that it is currently in its second reading and is going through its committee processes right now. The committee meetings to determine if this will move forward are on November 16th and 17th. Bill 23 has been posted to the ERO for public comments which closes on November 24th. However, this bill can be passed prior to the end of the

commenting period. One thing that was not provided is when this would become in effect. Staff anticipate either January or June 2023.

Brian Narhi asked if we can fast track the listing of very important buildings. James Neilson said that if these buildings are listed by the end of the year and are not designated within 2 years, then we would have to wait for 5 years to re-list them. It may be advantageous to not list any buildings at this point.

Holly Washuta asked if it was possible to impose some form of By-law that would say that after a certain year, the property must be designated? James Neilson mentioned that under the Heritage Act, we would either need to designate an entire area, or a singular property. The new legislation states that if you do not designate it under Part IV of the Heritage Act, then you will lose it. Outside of the 2-year window, if a property is not designated then it can be added to a heritage district, which makes a heritage district perhaps more appealing.

Andrew Humeniuk asked if there was any consideration if there is a downtown heritage district to also include the Queen Street and Yates District into the new downtown heritage district. James Neilson mentioned that it was not considered and that when setting a potential study area, the number of properties included is often used by the private sector to determine an appropriate bid/pricing, and we would need to ensure that the number of properties included is realistic with the funds available.

Gail Benjafield asked that the ERO refers to as mentioned previously. Tami Kitay answered that the ERO is the Environmental Registry of Ontario where bills are placed for public commenting. James Neilson summarized how widespread this is. The City of Toronto is trying to compile a total from all the municipalities about how many properties are on municipal registries. The most recent update from the City was 22,000 properties across the province, though 30 major municipalities had not yet provided their numbers.

Mark Hoerdt asked what happens to the properties that do not get designated within the 90-day window. James Neilson said that to their understanding, it would have to wait for the 5-year period before relisting.

Moved by: Andrew Humeniuk

“That the SCHAC receive the information from James Neilson about Bill 23,

And that the SCHAC is concerned about the proposed Bill 23 and the negative impact on the legislation will have on the City's ability to conserve its built heritage,

And that the SCHAC recommends that the City pursue a Heritage Conservation District Study for the downtown in order to protect existing and potential heritage buildings in the downtown core,

And that the SCHAC recommends re-examining the existing Heritage Register to prioritize properties for potential designation under Part IV of the Heritage Act once a direction has been given by Council about the pursuit of a downtown heritage district.”

CARRIED

9.3 TD Bank Columns
Andrew Humeniuk

Andrew Humeniuk spoke about the reuse of the columns from the old TD Bank and how they will be incorporated into the Brown Homestead. Andrew showed the Committee photographs from the process of collecting and moving the pieces of columns. Andrew noted that there are additional pieces in Pierpoint Park that he is concerned about as well. The first step they are taking is to inventory what they have and to try to determine what pieces come from which parts of the building. They will then figure out where on the site they will be placed.

Moved by: Robert Speck

“That the SCHAC received the report from the Andrew Humeniuk about the columns.”

CARRIED

9.4 Hostetter-Cooke Cemetery Plaques
Brian Narhi

Brian Narhi spoke about the Hostetter-Cooke Cemetery Plaques. The Plaques Sub-committee reviewed two proposals and recommended that the group proceed with Stone Centre. Brian provided an overview of the two proposals and discussed why he preferred the design that Stone Centre put forward.

Andrew Humeniuk asked about the material of the stones. Brian Narhi mentioned that the material used for the new stones is going to be granite and that there are a variety of colours can be used to mimic historical colourations. A question was also asked about what will happen to the original stones. Brian Narhi suggested that the original stones be buried under the surface and under the new stone, so it is protected.

A question was raised regarding if there needs to be some form of indication that these stones were funded by the City. Gail Benjafeld suggested that a simple

stand/sign be made rather than including City logo. James Neilson will be looking into this issue but noted that it might be easy to put a small script across the bottom of each stone that says "City of St Catharines 2022" in order to indicate that the City was involved and the year of installation, so that no one will be confused about whether they are original stones.

Moved by: Justin Nicholls

"That the SCHAC receive the information about the Hostetter-Cooke Cemetery markers from Brian Narhi,

And that the SCHAC recommends using Stone Centre to provide the markers for the cemetery"

CARRIED

9.5 Oille Fountain
Brian Narhi

Brian Narhi updated the Committee about the Oille Fountain. The urn at the top of the fountain is missing. James Neilson responded that he has spoken with Phil Christi, the Director of Community Recreation and Culture Services, and let him know that the urn is missing. It is now on their radar and next steps are being determined.

Moved by: Robert Speck

"That the SCHAC receive the update regarding the Oille Fountain."

CARRIED

9.6 CHO Newsletter Contribution
Gail Benjafield

Gail Benjafield spoke about the issues involving heritage planning and how other municipalities are responding to the challenges. This information is found in a variety of heritage related newsletters and journals. This item originally was intended to address a contribution to the CHO newsletter, but Gail opted to retract this given other pressing issues.

Moved by: Holly Washuta

"That the SHCAC receive the information from Gail Benjafield."

CARRIED

10. Updates from Sub-Committees

10.1 Designations, Plaquing and Ceremonies

No updates.

10.2 Public Outreach and Education (POE)

No updates.

10.3 Research and Inventory (R & I)

No updates.

9.7 New Business

Brian Narhi asked about the status of the Welland House site. Tami Kitay responded that there are some changes to the terms of the owner's financing partners which has led to a delay in the cleanup. Brian Narhi also spoke about communications with a member of the heritage committee at the City of Hamilton. The member was asking about our plaquing efforts and noted that the City of Hamilton does not fund plaquing of designated properties.

Gail Benjafield spoke about Edward Burtynsky. Gail also spoke about the historical cemeteries map that was situated at the library and was discussed at the previous meeting.

Andrew Humeniuk asked about the status and sale of Rodmen Hall. James Neilson mentioned that the owner had put the property up for sale just in case there is a company that is interested in operating the site long-term.

Mark Hoerdts asked about the fencing around the pavilion around Montebello Park. Tami Kitay responded that there has been an increase in vandalism and damages to the structure. The decision was made to close it off in advance of the winter season.

11. Date of the next meeting

- Thursday December 8, 2022

12. Motion to Adjourn

Moved by: Gail Benjafield

"That the SCHAC meeting be adjourned at 4:08 p.m."