

St. Catharines Heritage Permit Advisory Committee

Minutes

Friday, July 17, 2020

Electronic Participation at 11:30am

Attendance:

Dr. John Bacher
Robert De Wolfe
Andrew Humeniuk
Brian Narhi
Holly Washuta

Regrets:

David Bergen

Absent:

John Crawley

Staff Liaison:

Chloe Richer, Heritage Planner, Planning and Building Services
Wilrik Banda, Planning Technician, Planning and Building Services
Judy Pihach, Manager of Planning Services
Tami Kitay, Director of Planning and Building Services

1. Call meeting to order (Chair)

Robert De Wolfe called the meeting to order at 11:45 am

2. Recognition of Traditional Territories

3. Additions / Deletions to the Agenda

None.

4. Motion to approve the agenda

Moved by: Holly Washuta
Seconded by: Brian Narhi

“That the SChPAC ratify and adopt the Agenda for this SChPAC meeting held on July 17, 2020, copies having been previously distributed.”

CARRIED

5. Motion to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting

Moved by: Andrew Humeniuk
Seconded by: Brian Narhi

“That the Minutes from the SChPAC meeting of June 25, 2020, be approved.”

CARRIED

6. Presentations (invited guests)

- Jocelyn St. Denis, Design & Construction Engineer, City of St. Catharines, Regarding Item 8.1

7. Business arising from the minutes

None.

8. Business

8.1 Masefield Avenue Stairway Removal (Port Dalhousie HCD)

Owner(s): City of St. Catharines

Agent(s): Jocelyn St. Denis, Design & Construction Engineer, City of St. Catharines

File No.: N/A

- Emergency shoreline protection (armour revetment) in the Abbey Mews area of Port Dalhousie (Considine Avenue to Christie Street). There is an existing c. 1950s stairway at the end of Masefield Avenue, to be removed with the installation of the shoreline protection.

The City has identified Abbey Mews as a priority site for shoreline protection, as there is slope failure, and is undertaking the project as a result of this emergency. The City has obtained numerous approvals from various agencies to start this project on time. The project has been split into two phases and residents have been notified of the project. Access to the site will be near the Christie Street end as there is generally limited access in the area.

The shoreline protection material consists of armour stone and would extend above the safe watermark. This would not make it possible to maintain safe access to the area for the public and it is proposed that any stairs leading to the area be removed. The stairs are located near Masefield Avenue in the Port Dalhousie Heritage Conservation District. Consultation with the St. Catharines Heritage Permit Advisory

Committee is hereby sought. The existing break wall will be removed to install the shoreline protection, but Staff cannot guarantee to reinstate the access after the emergency work has been completed.

A Committee member asked if the work will cause an unsafe area. Ms. St Denis explained that the type of shoreline protection would have a finished surface that is an uneven jagged area of stone, and would not be readily accessible to the public. The Committee member asked if a flat, hard surface could be placed on top. Ms. St. Denis suggested that this may be possible, but it would require additional funding which is not available at this time. The Committee member noted that people cannot really walk there now.

Ms. St. Denis explained that the City has to ensure that the proposal and installation is safe for all residents. The surface after construction would not be safe and would not allow for safe access into the water. The water access point for residents would be eliminated as the armour stone would be about two metres above the high water level. A Committee member commented that the stairs themselves are not safe. Ms. St. Denis noted that the stairs would provide access to an unsafe area.

A Committee member expressed concern about local residents being upset that the stairs would be removed, especially since they have been in place since the mid-1950's. Would it be possible to place screenings on top to provide a hard surface and has been costed at all? Ms. St. Denis noted that the City has not looked into this, but it may be considered at a later date through a study. A fair amount of screenings would be required to cover an area of 200 metres long at approximately 2-3 metres wide.

Judy Pihach, Manager, commented that the Committee should recognize the directive from Council to assess where new access could be provided along the entire lakeshore for public access. The current stairs would not be up to current standards. The stairs would essentially go nowhere and have not been budgeted for in this project. It does not suggest that there would be no more access to the area, but this may be considered at a later date. The Port Dalhousie Heritage Conservation District Guidelines for Conservation and Change ("the Guidelines") do not explicitly recognize the stairs as a built heritage resource.

Chloe Richer, Heritage Planner, mentioned that the Guidelines were reviewed and outlined the relevant guidelines and policies for the Committee's knowledge. The Landscape Conservation Guidelines were identified as a section may provide some direction regarding stairs. The subsection Guidelines for Public Realm Initiatives describes landscaping and trees, however, built heritage resources to provide access are not included. The Character Area Landscape Guidelines were also reviewed and there are no specific guidelines regarding the stairs to assist the Committee in this scenario. After some research it has been estimated that the stairs date to middle of the 1950's. In the Guidelines, a heritage building is considered to date prior to 1950.

A Committee member noted that he spoke to several long-term residents, who advised the stairs were constructed in or around 1954 by Charlie Ansell. Mr. Ansell

owned the Port Dalhousie Drydock and was the former Reeve of Port Dalhousie as well as a prominent philanthropist in the community.

A Committee member suggested that the stairs should be assessed in terms of their cultural heritage value or interest to determine whether they contribute to the character of the Heritage Conservation District. The Committee member asked Ms. St. Denis to clarify if the stairs were deemed to be unsafe at this time or would become unsafe after the work has been completed. Ms. St. Denis noted that they would not be safe after the construction is completed. The member further asked Ms. St. Denis to clarify if there is an erosion problem now or if the work is considered preventative maintenance. Ms. St. Denis commented that after a study in 2018, it was determined that this area was of concern and that protection needed to be installed. Due to erosion and high water levels this has become an emergency project as there was evidence that the shoreline was failing near Considine Avenue. The Committee member noted that the door remains open to provide possible future access. Reuse of the stairs, which may have some heritage value, would be prudent but safety precautions need to be taken into consideration. Ms. St. Denis suggested that the current location of the stairs would be most cost effective to install new stairs at a later date.

Ms. Richer advised a Committee member lost their connection to the Zoom meeting and shared an e-mail from the member suggesting that the Committee could support the removal subject to safe access to the area achieved following public consultation. However, the member does not recall access to the shore being part of the Guidelines.

A Committee member suggested that, if the stairs need to be removed, part of the motion recommend that efforts should be made to conserve the existing stairs.

Moved by: Robert de Wolfe

Seconded by: Andrew Humeniuk

“That the St. Catharines Heritage Permit Advisory Committee support the removal of the existing c. 1950s stairway at the end of Masfield Avenue as part of the 2020 emergency shoreline protection project in Abbey Mews, Port Dalhousie, and recommend salvage and reuse and/or commemorative reuse of the stairway be explored.”

CARRIED

9. Information/Correspondence

- Supporting information for Masfield Avenue Stairway Removal (Port Dalhousie HCD).

- Correspondence from Pat and Sue McCurrie Regarding Item 8.1, Masfield Avenue Stairway Removal (Port Dalhousie HCD).
- A Committee member requested more information on the updated commemorative plaque for 57 Lakeport Road. Ms. Richer confirmed that the updated plaque was circulated by e-mail for any final feedback. As the content of the plaque has not largely changed, though an image was found to be of too low a resolution to include, there is no need for the plaque to be discussed again at a Committee meeting.

10. Date of next meeting

Thursday, August 27, 2020

11. Motion to Adjourn

Moved by: Dr. John Bacher

Seconded by: Robert De Wolfe

“That the SChPAC meeting be adjourned at 12:29 pm.”

Committee Members should advise Chloe Richer (905-688-5601 ext. 1710) or criche@stcatharines.ca if they are unable to attend the meeting or did not receive the item(s) noted in the agenda.