

St. Catharines Heritage Advisory Committee

Minutes

Thursday, August 13, 2020

Electronic Participation at 2:30pm

Members:

Gail Benjafield
Lorraine Giroux
Mark Hoerd
Brian Narhi
Justin Nicholls
Andrew Humeniuk
Robert Speck

Regrets:

Marty Mako
Peter Wing

Staff Liaison:

Chloe Richer, Heritage Planner, Planning and Building Services
Elaine Munro, Committee Secretary and Planning Technician, Planning and Building Services

1. Call meeting to order (Chair)

Brian Narhi called the meeting to order at 2:30pm.

2. Recognition of Traditional Territories

3. Additions/Deletions to the agenda

None.

4. Motion to approve the agenda

Moved by: Robert Speck
Seconded: Lorraine Giroux

“That the SCHAC ratify and adopt the agenda for this SCHAC meeting held on Thursday, August 13, 2020, copies having been previously distributed.”

CARRIED

5. Motion to approve the Minutes of the previous meeting

Moved by: Gail Benjafield
Seconded: Andrew Humeniuk

“That the SCHAC approve the minutes of the SCHAC meeting held on Thursday, July 23, 2020, copies having been previously distributed, as amended.”

CARRIED

6. Presentations (Invited Guests)

- John Sleath, Archaeological Services Inc. (ASI), and Christian Concolino, Associated Engineering (Ont.) Ltd. (AE), Regarding Item 8.1.

7. Business arising from the Minutes

7.1 Neil Peart Commemoration Update

Chloe Richer, Heritage Planner and Staff Liaison

- Council approved the Terms of Reference for the new Neil Peart Commemorative Task Force on April 22, 2020; a representative of the St. Catharines Heritage Advisory Committee is to be appointed.

Chloe Richer advised that Committee member Peter Wing is no longer able to fulfill this role and Mark Hoerdts expressed interest in joining the Task Force instead.

Moved by: Andrew Humeniuk
Second: Justin Nicholls

“That the St. Catharines Heritage Advisory Committee recommend member Mark Hoerdts be appointed to the Neil Peart Commemorative Task Force.”

CARRIED

8. Business

8.1 St. Paul West CNR Bridge Update

John Sleath, Archaeological Services Inc. (ASI), and Christian Concolino, Associated Engineering (Ont.) Ltd. (AE)

- ASI to consult with the Committee and present the findings and recommendations of the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) prepared for the St. Paul West CNR Bridge.

Brian Narhi, Chair, declared a conflict of interest with regards to Item 8.1 as he works for ASI. Mr. Narhi recused himself from the discussion. Chloe Richer facilitated the agenda item instead. Ms. Richer directed Mr. Narhi to mute his voice and to turn off his video.

Before John Sleath (ASI) began his presentation, Christian Concolino (AE) asked to first give an introduction to the project itself. Mr. Concolino stated that this structure is an old CN rail bridge that is owned by the Region of Niagara (who also owns the roadway) and are replacing the bridge as it has reached its end of service life. The purpose of the project is to bring the road profile up to the current standard while also replacing the bridge in the same project. The preferred alternative involves the complete removal and replacement of the subject bridge with low profile concrete girders, which will allow the Region to smooth out the road curve and build up some retaining walls.

John Sleath provided a brief overview, including the bridge location, the description of the bridge, an historical summary including the 1922 construction and the 1977 rehabilitations, the Cultural Heritage Evaluation completed using O. Reg 9/06, a summary of heritage attributes, the adjacent built heritage resource (train station), a high level preliminary Heritage Impact Assessment and the next steps.

Councillor Garcia asked Mr. Sleath if that structure can be moved and put somewhere else. He commented that he was unsure of how difficult something like that would be. Mr. Sleath asked Christian Concolino to answer. Mr. Concolino stated that cutting it into pieces and maintaining stability over the tracks is very difficult unless done on a strip by strip fashion. The Region could in theory then construct it back together, but there would be a significant cost and they would need to ensure the contractor does it delicately. He stated that he does not know where the bridge would go or what the cost would be.

Counsellor Garcia asked if the existing bridge could be slid over and used as a pedestrian bridge. Mr. Concolino stated that with the property and change in grades and physical room for that site, that would be very difficult unless the size of the new bridge was reduced. The Region would have to take the sidewalks off the new bridge and would really have to consider the utilities. It would be difficult and costly. Ms. Richer stated that there are some additional details in the CHER on the different conservation options and it may be helpful to speak to some of those.

A Committee member requested an interpretative display include one piece of the bridge at minimum (more than simply photographs), acknowledging they can see the difficulties in retaining the entire bridge. Mr. Sleath highlighted several significant built features of the bridge and why they are significant. A suggestion for interpretation was a bridge feature kept in a glass display at the train station or the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre.

Mr. Concolino stated that in terms of demolition you could easily take a piece of the railing lattice or ornate columns, which are unique in Niagara, and restore the feature. The Region has considered displaying an item at the train station as there would be more visibility there. As opposed to a plaque or photographs, Mr. Concolino advised a piece of the bridge has more historical value. The Committee agreed that linking the commemoration of the bridge with the train station is good idea and would draw attention to the train station that is often overlooked.

Mr. Sleath stated that the HIA does look at sympathetic design options and the commemorative options in more detail. Once everyone reviews the HIA, some of their questions or concerns may be addressed in the report.

A Committee member noted that that it is important to consider the future of GO Transit and any updates. Ms. Richer stated that if there are future alterations to the train station, the Region would consult with the SCHAC as the station is protected federally through the *Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act*. Any alterations made to the building would need to be approved by the federal government.

Moved by: Lorraine Giroux
Seconded: Andrew Humeniuk

“That the SCHAC supports the recommendations of the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report prepared for the St. Paul West CNR Bridge. Should removal/replacement of the bridge proceed (Conservation Alternative 8 or 9) as per the submitted Heritage Impact Assessment, the SCHAC is in agreement that the new bridge should incorporate historically sympathetic design qualities, and request that the following cultural heritage study be submitted for the SCHAC’s review:

- Commemoration Plan, including information on a draft plaque and salvage and reuse of traditional building materials, and that identifies a connection with the adjacent Heritage Railway Station.”

CARRIED

Brian Narhi returned to the meeting as Chair.

8.2 Removal of Private Alexander Watson Statue Update

Chloe Richer, Heritage Planner and Staff Liaison

- Update to be provided regarding proposal to remove the statue of Private Alexander Watson from the City Hall property, pending decision of Council from its meeting of July 27, 2020.

In reviewing the minutes of the July 27, 2020 Council Meeting, Chloe Richer noted that there will be direct consultation with a number of stakeholders on this potential relocation. The SCHAC will be consulted, however, the details of what that will look like are still being worked out. Community, Recreation and Cultural Services (CRCS) will lead the file and Kathleen Powell from the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre will be managing the project. As the Council meeting occurred at the end of July, Ms. Powell is not ready yet to start official consultation. The earliest to start consultation would be September.

Councillor Garcia provided an overview of the discussion had at City Council regarding the motion to remove the Private Watson statue, including comments made by delegations to Council regarding the history of the statue in St. Catharines.

A Committee member who is also a member of the Historical Society of St. Catharines stated that the Historical Society has made their comments known. The SCHAC requested an overview of the Historical Society's position. Ms. Richer noted that in the minutes of the last SCHAC meeting a request was made that any information from the Historical Society be shared. Ms. Richer stated that it was her understanding that when a statement was ready, it would be shared as part of the SCHAC meeting information package. A Committee member clarified that the Historical Society provided an official position to Council around June 22, 2020. Ms. Richer stated that the Historical Society's position is then part of the public record and she will follow up with the Clerk's Department to obtain a copy.

9. Updates from Sub-Committees

9.1 Designations, Plaquing and Ceremonies

None.

9.2 Public Outreach and Education (POE)

None.

9.3 Research and Inventory (R & I)

None.

10. Information/Correspondence

- Neil Peart Commemorative Task Force [Terms of Reference](#) and [Council Report](#) (Item 7.1) - see *July 23, 2020, meeting information package*.
- St. Paul West CNR Bridge Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (Item 8.1).
- [Council Minutes](#) from its Meeting of July 27, 2020.
- Andrew Brown Correspondence Regarding Removal of Private Alexander Watson Statue (Item 8.2) - see *July 23, 2020, meeting information package*.
- Dan McKnight Correspondence Regarding Removal of Private Alexander Watson Statue (Item 8.2) - see *July 23, 2020, meeting information package*.
- [Canadians and Heritage Places: New Study Confirms Canadian's Commitment to Preserving Heritage Places, Historic Sites and Traditional Neighbourhoods](#) (National Trust for Canada).
- [Arch of former St. Catharines hospital coming down](#) (St. Catharines Standard article).
- The SCHAC wishes to thank Chair Brian Narhi for taking members on a tour of the Land Registry Office on August 6, 2020, which was very informative. At the last meeting, the Committee heard that the counter service was closing. Mr. Narhi will advise when he will be at the Registry again if other Committee members wish to join him to conduct research.
- The Committee requested an update from Ms. Richer regarding the General Hospital arch. Ms. Richer will provide an update at the next meeting.
- A Committee member provided an update regarding the Hostetter-Cooke Cemetery. Over the course of 3 to 4 months, he has been able to find tombstone remnants, valuable in confirming the location of half the individuals buried in the cemetery (likely 14 total). The location of seven are now known, and a scaled map is being used to identify who and where the individuals were buried.

10. Date of next meeting

Thursday, September 10, 2020

11. Adjournment

Moved by: Andrew Humeniuk

Seconded: Robert Speck

"That the SCHAC meeting be adjourned at 3:40pm."