



Minutes
St. Marys Heritage Committee
Regular Meeting
March 11, 2017
9:00 am
St. Marys Museum
177 Church Street South

Members Present: Larry Pfaff
Sherri Gropp
Paul King
Janis Fread
Michelle Stemmler
Mary Smith

Council Present: Councillor Pope

Member Regrets: Stephen Habermehl
Al Strathdee

Staff Present: Trisha McKibbin

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Larry Pfaff called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None declared

3. AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved By Sherri Gropp

Seconded By Michelle Stemmler

THAT the March 11, 2017 Heritage Committee meeting agenda be accepted as presented

Carried

4. DELEGATIONS

4.1 Jason Silcox, Building Inspector re: replacement of Public Library Steps

Jason Silcox, Building Inspector, was welcomed to the meeting. The purpose of his visit was to explain the plans to rebuild the front steps of the St. Marys Public Library as outlined in a previously circulated Heritage Permit application package. Referring to photographs showing the current condition of the steps, Jason explained why making them safe for use required structural rather than cosmetic action. He stressed that the rebuilt steps would, to the general public, look the same. However, there would be one or two modifications to keep water and safety salt from leaching into the two stone banisters at the sides and the central copper hand rail would be slightly extended for building code reasons. Once the Heritage Permit is approved, tenders will be called with the intent of completing this project by July 1, 2017.

Moved By Janis Fread

Seconded By Paul King

THAT the St. Marys Heritage Committee recommends the approval of a Heritage Permit to the Town of St. Marys for the proposed work on the front steps of the Public Library.

Carried

5. CORRESPONDENCE

5.1 Invitation from the Stratford Heritage Committee to a meeting

Invitation from the Stratford Heritage Committee: The Stratford Heritage Committee has issued an invitation to attend one of their upcoming meetings – a reciprocal offer following the joint meeting held with the St. Marys committee in January 2016. There was value in exchanging ideas and learning about similar or different projects and challenges. The joint meeting is proposed for April or May. As the Stratford meetings are held on Wednesday evenings, attendance is not very easy or even possible for some St. Marys Heritage Committee members. However, once a firm date is known, some may be able to attend. Larry should be able to provide those dates at the April 8 meeting.

6. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

6.1 February 11, 2017 Minutes

Moved By Mary Smith
Seconded By Carey Pope

THAT the February 11, 2017 Minutes of the Heritage Committee be approved.

Carried

7. REGULAR BUSINESS

7.1 Heritage Conservation District update

Heritage Conservation District update: Trisha reported that at the council meeting of March 28, the 2017 budget is expected to pass. At the April council meeting, the bylaw for the Heritage Property Tax Relief Program will be presented. Once this bylaw passes, the application forms for this tax relief program will be available at the MOC. Carey said that she has had a number of inquiries about the program.

Larry repeated his thanks to Trisha whose hard work, with input from Paul, has established the program. He also thanked Carey and other members of council for supporting it, a benefit to the property owners in the HCD and an incentive for them to maintain and improve their properties.

7.2 Municipal Register, Part 1 - Designations/designated property matters

7.2.1 Via Station - designation update approved by Council; next steps

The designation update has been approved by Council. Next steps include the preparation of a new designation bylaw and the publication of a notice of intent to amend and expand the original 1987 bylaw.

7.2.2 Junction Station

Nothing to report

7.2.3 Town Hall - Grounds concept

Trisha asked for input on landscape design for the area beside the west facade of the Town Hall. Because scaffolding was in place for work on the bell tower, this area did not receive the benefit of the downtown street and sidewalk reconstruction in the summer. Still in place are two flowerbeds although the plantings in them have been removed. The pedestrian area used to pass or to approach the

west entrances, has a variety of surfaces some very uneven – trip hazards. Staff currently are considering a more open space with street furniture and large patio pots that could be moved away if more space is needed in that location – performance space for the Heritage Festival and the information tent for Doors Open, as examples. This street furniture can also be removed in winter for easier snow removal. After discussion, Heritage Committee members had a number of suggestions: the simpler the better for both pedestrian surfaces and furnishings. The Town Hall is a wonderful building and does not need embellishment. However, some members did feel that a tree or an area of grass would soften the appearance. Most agreed that one or two benches would be useful. This is another project with July 1 as the completion date.

7.2.4 McDonald House

Trisha will verify that the legal work has been completed and ask about next steps.

7.2.5 Andrews Jeweller - proposed concerned residents' committee

Some months ago, two concerned residents approached Larry to ask about the feasibility of establishing a fund to support the Andrews building. At that time, the town had received some expressions of interest in purchasing the building. However, these inquiries did not materialized into any definite proposals that would lead to a change of ownership. Therefore, interest in establishing such a fund has revived. Larry has asked Paul to meet with these residents concerning their proposals. Paul has set up a meeting and will report at the Heritage Committee meeting in April.

7.2.6 96 Robinson Street - ordering of designation plaque

The designation bylaw is scheduled to be passed at the council meeting, March 28. The designation plaque will be ordered. Once it has been delivered, it will be formally unveiled at the Stevens' house on a date of their choosing.

7.2.7 Public Library - Heritage Permit application

The application for a Heritage Permit for rebuilding the front steps passed in Agenda Item 4.

7.2.8 Old Water Tower

Nothing to report

7.3 Municipal Register, Part 2 - List of significant properties

List of significant properties. Once the budget and the Heritage Property Tax Relief program are passed, Trisha and Mary will find a time to present the list to council. If possible, a review of Heritage Committee activities will be given to council at the same time.

7.4 Properties of interest or at risk (not necessarily designated)

7.4.1 West Ward School

A number of proposals were received and are currently being reviewed. While the review process is underway, no details can be released. Paul suggested that the Heritage Committee's only real concern was the future of the school building itself. Carey could only say that the process was moving forward briskly and therefore more information would soon be forthcoming.

7.4.2 North Ward School site

No word from the developer.

7.4.3 Wellington Street Bridge

Trisha said that construction should start in mid-July according to the proposed schedule and finish in October.

7.5 CHO Report

Paul told the committee that Peter Van Loan, (Conservative York-Simcoe) has introduced a private member's in the House of Commons. This proposed bill, C-323, amends the Income Tax Act to establish a tax credit for expenses related to the rehabilitation of a historic property. Although the bill has passed first reading and has support from the NDP and even from some Liberals, Paul noted that private members bills rarely become law. However, at the very least it brings to the government's attention the woeful lack of federal support for heritage buildings throughout the entire country. Constituents have been urged to write to their MPs urging support for the bill. Paul has written to John Nater and received a positive response. Paul will have an article about this bill in the upcoming issue of CHOnews.

NOTE: Nater spoke in the house in support of Bill C-323 on March 9. The debate continues March 21. Various parliamentary-related websites are following this bill.

7.6 Homeowner letters

Paul has prepared and sent four letters to homeowners who have made significant improvements to their properties. He would also like to send a letter to the new owners of 75 Water Street North, a designated property. Trisha will provide him with the contact information.

7.7 Sign Bylaw: sign permit applications

Before consideration of the sign permit applications, Paul circulated a letter he had volunteered at the February meeting to write to Council. It arose from discussion concerning the unfairness of some business owners conscientiously going through the sign permit process while others just stick signs up, apparently with no consequences. Also discussed were businesses that have closed, abandoning their signs. Apparently, this must be addressed through the property standards bylaw. Paul's letter will come to council March 28. This committee's discussion will resume after that.

7.7.1 178 Queen Street East

The committee requests more information from the applicant including the material of the signage and the extent of the encroachment of the projecting barber pole. The committee would also bring to the applicant's attention that illuminated signs are not permitted in the core according to the terms of the sign bylaw.

Moved By Sherri Gropp

Seconded By Michelle Stemmler

THAT the St. Marys Heritage Committee defer a decision on new signage for 178 Queen Street East until more information is provided by the applicant.

Carried

7.7.2 151 Queen Street East

The applicant, Dr. Carol Venn, proposes new signage for her optometry business to reflect potential expansion of her practice.

The sign on the signboard over the wide entrance conforms to the terms of the bylaw. There was discussion about the smaller signs that will cover the transom windows directly above the door in the recessed entry. Since this entrance is not original to the store which was remodelled sometime in the 1970s and since these small signs are necessary to the identification of the building from the sidewalk, the committee agreed to approve this application.

Moved By Janis Fread

Seconded By Sherri Gropp

THAT the St. Marys Heritage Committee recommends the approval of the sign application for 151 Queen Street East.

Carried

7.7.3 CBHFM Induction Banner

The annual application for the installation high across Queen Street of the banner that announces the induction ceremony was considered. The application requests an installation date of May 1. The bylaw clearly states that temporary signs and banners are permitted if placed no more than 30 days before the event and removed no more than two days following. Some committee members also felt that the CBHFM banner is old and faded with its induction dates obviously altered by paste-overs each year. They felt it detracted from the appearance of the rebuilt downtown.

Moved By Paul King

Seconded By Michelle Stemmler

THAT the St. Marys Heritage Committee recommends the approval of the CBHFM's sign application on the condition that it is installed and removed within the time period permitted in the terms of the sign bylaw.

Carried

7.7.4 147 Queen Street E

The Flower Shop and More requests a permit to replace the current hanging sign over the entrance door with a newer one the same size.

Moved By Janis Fread

Seconded By Sherri Gropp

THAT the St. Marys Heritage Committee recommends the approval of the sign application for The Flower Shop and More.

Carried

7.8 Cultural Planning: Strategic Plan update on implementation

Trisha reported that staff are currently continuing work on the implementation plan.

7.9 Council Report: Budget progress

Carey had nothing to report that had not been covered in earlier agenda items.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Heritage Fair, Friday, February 24 - report on Heritage Awards

A number of members of the Heritage Committee had attended the Heritage Fair, some responsible for displays or helping as volunteers. Six property owners had been invited to the award presentation. Two were out of town, two sent regrets, one failed to RSVP. However, Dwayne Hubbard from Hubbard Pharmacy along with Erin Dunbar, one of the pharmacists, did attend, got a great photograph in the newspaper and were very appreciative of the award. Dwayne loves his building and has many stories that he has learned about its history. The award presentation itself was low-key and informal with opportunity for photographs. This seemed to work well. Because of the low response from award recipients, the committee should re-evaluate before the 2018 Heritage Fair. In general, however, the Heritage Fair was a good evening, well organized and well attended.

8.2 Sesquicentennial planning

Trisha outlined the celebration plans. Many of the events involve Cadzow Park, particularly on July 1, for the annual Canada Day party, extended

and enhanced for this special year. The new children's playground will be dedicated as another step in the revitalization of this community park. Brett O'Reilly, Corporate Communications and Events Manager, is also working with a volunteer committee to gather more sesquicentennial ideas. Check www.townofstmarys.com/Canada150 for information and updates.

8.3 Doors Open St. Marys, September 30, 2017

A first meeting of the Doors Open Organizing Committee has been held. It involved a brain-storming session for ideas for participating sites. Some municipally owned sites have agreed and are now on the Doors open website. Others will be added as they are confirmed.

8.4 Picture St. Marys - progress report

This project, thanks to the Heritage Conference surplus, has been very successful with many images added to Picture St. Marys, the on-line catalogue of photographs from the St. Marys Museum's collection. Mary described some of Megan Lockhart's work with the Reesor collection, photos of places and events in St. Marys at the beginning of the 20th century. When the Reesor collection is finished, Megan will move on to other collections that feature our built heritage.

9. UPCOMING MEETINGS

9 a.m., Saturday, April 8, 2017, at the St. Marys Museum

10. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:25 a.m. on a motion by Michelle Stemmler.

Larry Pfaff, Chair