

Woolwich Heritage Committee Minutes

Wednesday December 5, 2018

The Committee met on the above date commencing at 7:00 p.m. at the Township of Woolwich Administration Building, 24 Church St. W., in the Gosnay Boardroom.

Present: Bonnie Bryant (chair), Hans Pottkamper (vice chair) Laurie Breed, Marg Drexler, Terry Rohr, David Voogd

Present from Township Staff: Dan Kennaley, Director of Engineering and Planning Services and Nancy Thompson, Admin. Coordinator

Call to Order

Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by Laurie and seconded by Terry that the minutes of October 17, 2018 meeting be approved as printed. Motion was carried.

Council resolution providing continuance of the current Heritage Committee until a new Committee is appointed

Dan provided an update to the Committee advising that Council passed a resolution to provide for the continuance of the current Committee until a new Committee is appointed. It is anticipated that a new Committee will be appointed at the January 15th Council meeting.

Any members of the Committee that have not yet submitted an application were encouraged to reapply. Bonnie advised that due to family reasons she will not be reapplying. It was suggested that the current members reach out to other individuals in the community to see if there is interest in becoming a member.

Ghost Community Signage

Hans discussed the signage with Della and it was noted that the signs are simpler and do not need to include the Township logo. Hans and Della will meet in the coming weeks to redesign the sign and circulate it to the Committee with the intention of bringing it to Council in the new year.

Dan noted the version of the sign they are working with will say Township of Woolwich Heritage Committee along the bottom in larger letters and in place of the Township logo, which will then provide more room for historic information.

The signs will be 2 by 6 feet in size, similar to the Drive Like Your Children Live Here signs, which is the Township standard for community signs. The Committee will need to obtain Regional approval for those signs that are on Regional Roads.

Nine communities have been identified for signage, noting Rosendale was recently added.

CHL Presentation

Dan advised the presentation to Council went very well and the motion was approved.

1081 Hunsberger Road

Dan advised this property is not listed or designated at the moment. Dan did not have an opportunity to gather additional information and will report back at the next meeting.

2019 Work Plan

The 2019 Work Plan was presented to Council and is to be approved as part of the final budget approval.

New Business

John Milne History Request

Bonnie sent information to Dan on the Logie family. Marg advised she spoke with Albert Milne and he did not recognize this name back to the 1800's. Bonnie advised the individual looking for the information may need to visit the Region of Waterloo archives and search the assessment rolls. Laurie thinks the family name may have been in the Winterbourne area. Dan commented he would speak to someone at Brown's Men's Wear to ask if they have ever heard of a tailor with one leg.

Jigs Hollow Pit

Bonnie advised she received a call regarding the Jigs Hollow Pit proposal for extraction below the water table and inquired if the Committee would be providing any comment on the proposal. Dan commented that the Heritage Committee will have an opportunity to provide comments and noted the hydrogeology report is still under consideration.

More recently the Drescher report noted a cultural heritage landscape is in the area. Laurie noted the report was quite extensive.

Terry inquired if there is a push to move ahead on this application. Dan advised the applicants have submitted new information which is being peer reviewed. The Township's hydrogeological consultant, Ken Howard, would peer review the new information by mid January for Township staff to review and the Township would then forward the peer review to the proponent by the end of January.

Hans noted that with the decision to delay Highway 7 the proponent may not be as anxious to proceed anymore.

Bonnie inquired if a vibration study would be completed noting there are some older homes in the area. Dan noted this was a good question to ask of the noise consultant.

Peel Street Bridge

Laurie inquired on the status of the Peel Street bridge. Dan noted there is a public consultation meeting scheduled for December 11th. It was noted that letters were mailed, a notice was put in the Woolwich Observer and on the Township web page. Nancy will email the notice to the Committee members.

Dan believes the proposal is to close the bridge to vehicular traffic and leave it open only for pedestrian traffic. Costing to close the bridge and preserve it for heritage purposes is approximately \$700,000.

Bonnie inquired if this was the decision could the bridge continue to be used for filming events. It was noted that for visual purposes only it is likely the gates could be removed / opened as needed.

Dan advised costing to provide pedestrian access across the bridge brings it up to approximately \$1.2 million. It was noted that building a turn around at each end alone will cost approximately \$450,000. Part of the analysis and discussion that is still occurring is to get this price lowered. Laurie inquired if the turn arounds are a legal requirement to which Dan advised they are and noted land will need to be purchased to accommodate the turn arounds.

At this time the Township is looking to recommend a medium approach and keep the bridge open for pedestrian access. The rehabilitation of the bridge, development of each turn around and maintenance over a 30 year period brings the cost to \$1.2 million.

Hans inquired if it would be a lower cost to install a new pedestrian bridge beside the current bridge which would not need to be as wide. Dan noted this was not part of the current review, but there has been some conversation about building a bridge within a bridge. Hans can put Dan in touch with Doug Cerson if they are looking to consider this or gather additional information.

Dan advised that part of the challenge is the overall cost noting that across the Township there are three bridges under review at this time. Laurie commented that aesthetically the area is no longer attractive.

Terry noted there are only two working bridges that cross the Grand River, one in in Conestogo and the other in Winterbourne.

[News Article from the Cambridge Times](#)

Dan provided the article from the Cambridge times to the Committee. It was noted that the Jakobstettel proposal is currently on hold and that Polocorp is no longer working on this file. The property owner has not yet hired another consultant.

[39 Henry Street – Proposed Demolition](#)

Dan provided the Committee with air photos of the property at 39 Henry Street (owned by Home Hardware) along with the streetview photo of the house. Dan noted there are extensive gardens on the grounds and further south of the house there is an area where Home Hardware has community gardens.

Dan advised the house is not designated or registered however believes it is of historical significance. The house was built in 1917. Home Hardware has made application to the Township to demolish the house. The house has not been used since 2008. The house is being heated however the roof has leaked and caused damage to all 3 floors. Dan was unsure as to the extent of damages.

Home Hardware is concerned with rodents getting into the house and the continued maintenance costs. Their health and safety committee has advised extensive renovations and installation of fire escapes would be required to make the home usable again and as such they are looking to demolish it.

Laurie asked who built the home. Dan was unsure who the builder was, however did know that Mr. Sauder lived there for 40 years and more recently Earl Feick before it was sold to Home Hardware. It is the original farm house on the property. Dan noted that the basement is showing age and over time the entire home was refurbished on the inside so there are no heritage features inside. Bonnie noted that the porch appears to have been rebuilt.

Dan advised there are a couple courses of action the Committee could pursue. The only way to prevent the demolition is to go to Council with a proposal for a demolition control area. Establishing a demolition control area would stop the demolition permit process until such time as a heritage impact assessment could be completed. This assessment may conclude that the house has insufficient value to be designated or is too far gone due to water damage. This process is the only way to trigger the requirement for this assessment.

Bonnie asked if Home Hardware is planning to construct something in place of the dwelling. Dan advised they have no plans at this time other than to convert the area to green space.

Dan has spoken with Raj and David about a few things, including Township purchase of the property. The short answer is there are no funds and no obvious Township purpose for the building. Another option would be to sever the lands, which would mean dealing with access and would include a condition that the house be designated.

The Committee discussed what could be done with the house noting the entire property is about 5 acres with the house and some gardens on approximately 1 acre.

If severed the house could be sold to the highest bidder; considered for a high tech incubator business location; or some other adaptive reuse of the dwelling; or sold to a local Mennonite family to purchase for their extended family.

Hans noted this is not Home Hardware's business to pursue selling the dwelling and it may be worth a meeting with them at a senior level to consider some of these ideas. Dan advised this might help if the Committee wanted to make that overture and bring the historical value of the building to their attention.

Dan advised he was also seeking legal advice on site plan requirements and if the legal advice comes back indicating that an addendum is not required, then the Committee may have to look at the possibility of declaring it as a demolition control area which would delay the issuance of the demolition permit until such time as a heritage assessment is completed.

Bonnie asked if the Degear report noted anything in this area, however, the Committee did not believe so.

Laurie noted that before moving ahead the Committee needs to get more information and gain an understanding on the condition of the inside of the building including the foundation, is the home worth saving and is there any heritage value. Marg commented that if keeping the house is a consideration then the roof repairs need to be addressed noting that while the Committee considers any process to follow there may be additional damage to the house. Dan added that if designated maintenance dollars could be applied for.

Hans advised the Committee needs to look at it with Home Hardware from a business perspective and stress the importance of preserving cultural heritage resources such as this building and potential uses that may be able to be considered. Hans commented that the Committee needs to hear Home Hardware's side of the story and feels Dan should be part of the meeting so that misrepresentation is not made.

The immediate next steps were that Home Hardware was to check with supervisors on other considerations for the house and Dan was to meet with David and Raj and then they would follow up with each other. Marg commented as Dan is to be in contact in the next few days with Home Hardware he could suggest a meeting with the Committee. Dan advised that if there is value in Heritage representatives meeting with Home Hardware he can advise contact names and numbers.

Dan noted that Home Hardware is not compelled to complete a heritage assessment at this time. Dan feels the date of construction warrants establishing a demolition control area if necessary and requesting a heritage assessment and then move forward from there. Dan feels there is considerable heritage value with the building to continue investigating along with determining the damages to the house.

The Committees concern is that the historical farm houses are disappearing and where possible they want to see them preserved. For this particular proposal they need to determine Home Hardware's long term goals and consider options that may be available.

Dan will wait to hear back from Home Hardware and advise that it their demolition proposal brought to the attention of the Committee who have expressed an interest in pursuing an adaptive reuse. He will also advise Home Hardware that the Committee would be interested in meeting with them to discuss options and historical significance of the building.

Changing meeting time

Hans questioned the Committee 's preference for meeting in the evenings, noting concerns with winter driving later at night and providing a shorter day for staff who attend the meetings. The suggestion was to start earlier in the day such as 4:30 or 5 pm. Terry commented he is open to any time. David and Marg stated that 5 pm is do able. It was agreed by all that moving forward the meetings would begin at 5 pm

Hans advised he would miss the January meeting.

Adjournment

Moved by Laurie, seconded by Marg that the meeting be adjourned.