

**MINUTES OF THE
AMHERSTBURG HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

Location: Amherstburg Town Hall – Boardroom

Date and Time: February 19, 2009

Members Present: John McDonald, Chairperson
Chad Barrette
Rev. Burkhart
John Sutton
Gord Zimmerman
Stephen Brown, Heritage Administrator
Jackie Hubbs, Manager of Development Services

Guest: George Beckett

Recording Secretary: Janine Mastronardi

1.0 Call to Order

J. McDonald called the meeting to order.

Guest George Beckett was in attendance at the meeting just for interest.

2.0 Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was reviewed by the Committee with the following changes noted: Add under New Business Item 6.2, Rev. Burkhart brought in *Edifice* magazine to be reviewed by the committee.

Rev. Burkhart/C. Barrette

That the agenda be approved. Carried

3.0 Review of Minutes:

i) Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 22, 2009

The minutes of the January 22, 2009 meeting were reviewed by the Committee.

J. Sutton/Rev. Burkhart

That the minutes of the January 22, 2009 meeting be adopted. Carried

4.0 Review of Correspondence:

i) Windsor's Community Museum News – Winter 2009

J. McDonald advised the committee to read the correspondence at their leisure.

ii) Heritage Committee Training Opportunities

J. McDonald advised the Committee of the Heritage Planning Workshop in Mississauga in mid April. He encouraged new members to consider attending. All requests are to go to J. Hubbs.

iii) Randy Wood – Professional Floor Finishing

The committee reviewed the correspondence from Mr. Wood regarding his professional floor finishing service "Enter Sandman". J. McDonald advised the committee that the information is to be used as a possible resource.

5.0 Other Business/Updates:

i) Selection of Vice Chair

J. McDonald advised the committee that selection of a Vice Chair was required under the bylaws governing operation of the committee. J. McDonald suggested a young member who is the future of the committee take the position and encouraged C. Barrette to stand as Vice Chair.

Rev. Burkhart/J. Sutton

That Chad Barrette be named the Vice Chair of the Town of Amherstburg Heritage Committee. Carried

ii) Update of County Heritage Co-Chairs meeting held February 9, 2009

J. McDonald advised that two Councilors from Tecumseh, representation from Essex, Kingsville were present at the meeting. One of the outcomes of the meeting was the suggestion that the heritage chairs meet with the appropriate municipal planners. This could occur as early as March at the planners IMPCC meeting.

The Co-Chairs discussed the visit from the Ontario Minister of Culture Aileen Carroll who visited John R. Park Homestead and the Black Museum. J. McDonald spoke of requesting another opportunity to meet with the Minister as there was no formal discussion of heritage issues.

The next meeting of County Heritage Co-Chair group is scheduled late April/ early May.

Rev. Burkhart was pleased that money was being dedicated to John R. Park Homestead with the hope that this would allow the park to be open more often.

iii) Consideration of City of Toronto “demolition by neglect” bylaw.

The committee discussed the potential issues with this bylaw. The case before the Ontario Municipal Board will show if this bylaw would be upheld.

S. Brown advised that the bylaw would only protect heritage attributes of a building. The problem is that early designations did not list the individual attributes of each property. S. Brown suggested amending existing designation bylaws to include heritage attributes.

G. Zimmerman referred the committee to page 6, the second paragraph in the “Enhanced Enforcement and Demolition by Neglect” section.

S. Brown advised the committee that the Town’s property standards committee and bylaw have the same authority and can also be appealed to the courts. There is a 2 week appeal period.

J. McDonald asked S. Brown to research and advise the committee at the next meeting if this type of bylaw is required or if existing bylaws are adequate.

Rev. Burkhardt asked how rigorously the property standards bylaw is pursued.

S. Brown noted that property standards are currently enforced on a complaint based system.

S. Brown advised that in landlord tenant disputes complaints are rigorously investigated. There were security issues reported regarding Bellevue. The locks were repaired but there was not a great effort to secure the building.

G. Zimmerman asked if the committee can get in to inspect the building.

S. Brown advised that if the bylaw is broken he can enter any building except an occupied dwelling unit. The last use of Bellevue was institutional. To make any change to the structure a building permit would be required. However a building permit would not be required to remove interior cosmetic details of the property such as fireplace mantles or flooring.

iv) Update on Proposed Bellevue Task Force

J. Sutton advised that Council has not had the chance to re-engage the subject.

G. Zimmerman questioned if the committee can direct S. Brown to go in to inspect the property.

S. Brown advised that the reason he was able to get into Bellevue in November was because there were safety concerns and security issues. In order to gain access again there would need to be evidence of these issues.

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Rev. Burkhart suggested advising Council to find a legal way for the Building Department to do an inspection. Rigorous and regular surveillance of the integrity of the building is needed.

S. Brown stated that at the time of the last inspection in early November, Bellevue was in better shape than expected. The chimney in the kitchen has been removed. The parquet floor, spiral staircase and woodwork are all still there.

G. Zimmerman expressed concern of the possible gutting of the property which the committee has no control over. The committee needs to have an inventory of internal heritage features.

J. McDonald noted that gaining access to the building is beyond the committee's mandate. The committee can discuss the strategy to take to Council. If the Town pushes too much then it is possible that we are speeding defeat of our recommendation of a task force. What is the formal next step?

G. Zimmerman asked if Bellevue is worth saving.

S. Brown advised that the structure is intact. There is only moisture damage.

J. Sutton advised to bring the issue back to Council.

J. McDonald asked who is currently making the rounds of the property, the police, and/or the property standards officer?

S. Brown advised that the property is under observation by both the police and property standards officer but not sure if regularly on drive-by patrol.

J. McDonald questioned what is to be said to Council? The new federal budget includes infrastructure monies. The Committee needs to show Council the opportunity to pursue the securing of resources to purchase the property. The Committee could also suggest having our legal representative write to legal representative of the Belle Vue Corporation to meet on an executive level.

Rev. Burkhart suggested bringing the story of Bellevue to Council. The presentation should be more than a "touch base." It should take time to tell the story and its importance to the whole of Amherstburg's history.

J. McDonald reminded the committee that this is part of Task Force's idea, to educate the public. Also it needs to be shown that there is provincial and federal support as well as municipal support.

Rev. Burkhart suggested the Federal government purchase Bellevue as an extension of Fort Malden. This would enlarge the vision of Fort Malden.

J. McDonald suggested going back to Council to give an update and to ask for support to approach Jeff Watson MP and Bruce Crozier MPP. Also, it is necessary to ask Council what the time line for task force would be.

S. Brown suggested contacting the members of the Belle Vue board. If a property standards or building code violation order is issued it would go to the individuals registered on title. If another presentation is to be made to Council notice should be given to the media such as Lynn Rayburn for CBC coverage.

J. McDonald concurred with the suggestion of a presentation to Council with reasons why Bellevue is so valuable, its attributes and history.

J. Hubbs asked J. Sutton when this information should be brought to Council. J. Sutton suggested being put on the March 23, 2009 agenda and to have a presentation and information finalized and sent to J. Hubbs by the March 13, 2009.

Rev. Burkhardt suggested creating a pictorial of the history of Bellevue along with the story along the way. The last family to live in Bellevue was the Quinn family.

C. Barrette suggested putting out a request of residents on the municipal page of the ECHO to send in letters explaining memories of Bellevue to the Heritage Committee.

J. McDonald suggested doing an augmented version of the task force presentation again.

G. Zimmerman asked if the committee could present to higher government. The idea was that a presentation be made, not as a delegation, at the March 23 meeting. It would be best to develop a compact history of Bellevue, families and events and look into possibilities for federal infrastructure support. Motion that i) a request be made of Council for a formal presentation to them at their earliest possible convenience on the history and potential way forward of Bellevue and ii) the Administration take under advisement the Committee's recommendation that a formal outreach be made to the corporate Board of Belle Vue to determine their plans for the future of this property.

Rev. Burkhardt/ C. Barrette

Request administration to reach out to the board. Carried

v) Heritage District – The Path Forward

J. Hubbs tabled her report to Council on this issue and reviewed it and the attached proposed timeline for the completion of the Heritage District Study with the Committee (see attachments). The Committee reviewed the material in detail and recommended a few alterations in the timeline particularly with regard to the timing of introduction of the interim by-law, as outlined below.

There will be four stages as outlined in the attached material; In the first stage, further documentation on the properties within the proposed district would be collected and reviewed in a meeting with the project manager and the consultant, Zelinka Priamo. Once

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draft documents on the proposed district are available, an open house for the interested public would be held.

In the second stage, following another meeting with the Project Manager to review the comments received at the open house, a report would be made to Council which would include a review of the introduction of an Interim Control By-law. Another public meeting would be held to seek comment on the proposed Interim Control By-law. Following the meeting, the Council would consider introduction of the Interim By-law.

Stage 3- Following another meeting with the Project Manager and the consultant, the design guidelines for the District would be completed and a formal presentation made to Council on the content of the final draft Bylaw.

Under Stage 4, a third public meeting would be held to review in detail the content of the proposed permanent By-law. The results of the meeting will be assessed by Council, who would then consider implementation of this By-law. If Council supports a permanent by-law, it would then be forwarded to the provincial government for their concurrence. Once the province expresses support, the Interim By-law would be lifted and the permanent By-law governing the District would be put in place.

The entire process could be completed by the end of the calendar year 2009 assuming a high level of public support. However, if necessary, the Interim By-law could remain in place for up to two years if further discussion and shaping are required to make the by-law more responsive to the public.

This approach is amenable to the committee, who suggested that the time line be brought to Council.

J. Hubbs advised that ZBA are onside with the outline and recognize they still have a commitment to fulfill. They will satisfy the requirement for public meetings. The town also must keep them involved to provide justification to the provincial Ministries and Ontario Municipal Board. This work should be completed at no additional fee.

It was suggested that a notice by Council to designate the area early in the process might discourage requests for demolition within the area. This or some other strategy should be developed to preclude demolition.

C. Barrette noted that if the public does not agree with the bylaw there will be public pressure on Council. He also asked what would be allowed under the interim and permanent by-laws. Is a backyard deck allowed?

J. Hubbs advised that the bylaw can be crafted, allowing non-heritage attributes to be altered.

G. Zimmerman suggested that the changed boundaries embrace the Bondy house and Christ's Church but not include the Boblo properties, as the Committee recommended previously.

J. McDonald advised the committee that the boundary issues are part of the open house process. J. Hubbs is to bring boundary maps and Zelinka's justification to the next meeting to discuss the committee's opinions on boundaries and justifications.

J. Hubbs advised the committee that the planning firm Zelinka Priamo needs to stay involved in the completion of the project so that if the district is appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board they could provide support during that process.

G. Zimmerman/C. Barrette

That the report prepared by J. Hubbs goes forward to Council with the changes discussed. Carried

vi) Website Improvements

Pictures were circulated to the committee for their review. G. Zimmerman noted they were a good variety and quality. J. McDonald suggested that S. Brown would be able to identify the buildings in the pictures.

J. McDonald advised that the website should be running in mid-March.

S. Brown noted that the heritage registrar files have good descriptors that would be helpful in the creation of the website pages. The building department clerk is to send copies of the registrar documents to C. Barrette via email and regular mail.

The website will feature one property a month to keep the website active.

G. Zimmerman suggested including properties in the Malden, Anderdon and River Canard areas as well. A few examples are the Smith House, an original school on Front Road South (two down from the Classics Tavern site) and the John Parks one room school. The Committee agreed to include heritage buildings outside of the core of town.

vii) Student Support to Committee

J. McDonald and J. Hubbs are working on getting student support for the Committee. They are looking into getting students through Canada Works and or grad students. It was suggested that high school students could spend their 40 hour community service time researching the old town. J. Hubbs advised that they were looking more for university level students; however C. Barrette is to look into the potential use of high school students.

6.0 New Business

i) Internal and External Maintenance St. Joseph's Church - River Canard

J. McDonald advised the committee of communications he had with the contractor working at the church.

S. Brown explained that currently repairs to the dry rot detected in the church and improved sealing were underway. These tasks were necessary to ensure the safety of the building.

J. Hubbs advised the Committee of the letter identifying the emergency nature of the repair had been received by the town. There will be no current alterations to the exterior of the steeple, just caulking and paint touch-ups. The contractor was advised that they will need to come to the Committee for approval of exterior modifications. The current repair work was expedited because of the health and safety issues identified in the submitted report.

ii) Edifice Magazine

Rev. Burkhart shared information about Edifice magazine. It is published in Canada and is available in local stores. It is one of the best magazines on architecture and restoration. It is suggested that the building department get a subscription to this magazine.

Rev. Burkhart/C. Barrette

*That the Town takes out a subscription to Edifice for the Amherstburg Heritage Files.
Carried*

7.0 Confirmation of next meeting – Thursday, March 12, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.

8.0 Adjournment

Moved by C. Barrette that the meeting be adjourned. Carried

John McDonald
Chairperson

Janine Mastronardi
Recording Secretary