



2022 ANNUAL REPORT TO STRATFORD CITY COUNCIL

Committee Name: Heritage Stratford Advisory Committee

Date Submitted: December 9, 2022

1. Outline of accomplishments/projects completed in 2022:

- Heritage Stratford presented the Designation request for the Avon Crest building, to be designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. City staff and the Planning and Heritage Sub-committee supported the request and the Designation was then presented to Council. Heritage Stratford met with the property owner, Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance, on several occasions to discuss a workable go-forward plan, but the HPHA reiterated their position against designation and for demolition of the building. Subsequently, Council chose not to support the request and staff recommendations and voted against the Designation application.
- Awarded one 2021 James Anderson Award, under the Built Heritage Category (Commercial), to Bruce Whitaker for the restoration of 2-6 Ontario St. (The Perth County Inn). The event was in-person at the location and attended by Councillor Ritsma and community members. The event was covered by the Beacon-Herald newspaper.
- Awarded two 2021 Blue Plaque Awards, for the Hon. James Palmer Rankin at 198 Church St., and Richard Manuel at 38 Well St. The plaque presentations were in-person at both locations and were attended by members of the Rankin and Manuel families, Councillor Ritsma, as well as Mayor Matheson and MP John Nater (Rankin/198 Church St). Both events were also covered by the Beacon-Herald newspaper.
- As of December 9, the Permit Review sub-committee has reviewed and provided recommendations on fifteen Heritage Alteration Permit applications and three minor planning variance applications.

2. Summary of how the Advisory Committee's mandate in the Terms of Reference is reflected in the Committee's accomplishments/projects for 2022:

Heritage Stratford's mandate is to provide advice and assistance to owners and occupants of Stratford properties:

Buildings within the Heritage Conservation District of Stratford, and in Heritage Areas and Corridors identified in the City's Official Plan.

- Review of and advice on Heritage Alteration Permit Applications and Sign Variance applications
- Review and advice on other Planning applications

Designation of heritage buildings and other significant properties, the renovation of existing buildings, or the construction of new buildings, in order that their design is consistent with the general atmosphere and appearance of the surrounding area.

- Presentation of the request for Designation of the Avon Crest building to Council. The application was not successful and was filed.
- Completed the final stage of the non-Designated list project, in conjunction with the University of Waterloo Heritage Resources Centre, to add the remaining heritage properties on the Stratford A and B streets. The total new additions number 50 properties.
- Launched the new revised Heritage Alteration Permit Application and HS Evaluation form, updated to reflect the complete application requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act O. Reg 385/21 and improve the process for property owners.
- Meet with the Grand Trunk citizens committee to discuss the potential future of that property as part of a revised boundary to the existing Heritage Conservation District or a Designation application.

Long term planning.

- Continued review of properties previously identified as having significant heritage value or interest.
- Continued to update Heritage Stratford web page to provide more easily accessible information on heritage conservation generally and on Stratford's specific initiatives.
- Continued to promote heritage awareness within the Stratford community through the Blue Plaque Program (linking a property with a famous or important individual).
- Met with other community groups to promote heritage within their projects. These included the BIA Community Art Project, the Friends of the Shakespeare Gardens, and the GTR Citizens group.

Advocacy for heritage conservation.

- Presentation of James Anderson Award for meritorious heritage efforts in the community.

3. Summary of 2022 recommendations made to Sub-committee, Committee or Council:

- Presentation of designation application for Avon Crest (Sub-Committee and Council)
- Presentation of awardees for the James Anderson and Blue Plaque programs (Council)

4. Please summarize how your 2022 projects/plans have reflected the City's strategic priorities:

Heritage Stratford is a statutory committee under the Ontario Heritage Act, with the mandate to advise Council on cultural heritage matters, including development of the Downtown Heritage Conservation District, and to support the conservation of the City's heritage resources through public education, long term planning and promotion of heritage preservation.

The City's vision statement in the strategic priorities is a "vibrant city". Heritage resources make a significant contribution to the culture and livability of the City, and HS's projects and plans are intended to preserve and promote this aspect of the City.

The priority of "Strengthening our Plans, Strategies, and Partnerships" includes making plans for collective priorities in heritage. HS's projects related to promoting heritage conservation, including working with other groups and with City staff, is an example of a working partnership.

This priority includes a specific goal of "Further activating Market Square". HS will support reaching this goal through continuing to work with property owners on proposed developments and renovations, and in the review of heritage alteration permits where required.

5. Comments regarding impact of COVID-19 on your Committee's operations in 2022:

All scheduled meetings were conducted remotely over Zoom.

The selection timelines of the James Anderson and Blue Plaque programs, which were delayed by Covid in 2020 and 2021, were back on schedule for 2022. The award winners were presented to Council via Zoom and the presentations were conducted in-person but out of doors due to Covid density and distancing regulations.

The public meeting regarding proposed additions to the non-designated section of the City's register of Heritage properties continued to be delayed. Instead, letters were mailed to the property owners, with an outline and details of the listing program and the option to opt-out of the list.

The number of Heritage Permit Applications decreased to 15 in 2022 from 30 in 2021 but was on par with the 14 in 2020.

6. Outline of projects/plans for 2023 budget funds:

- Heritage Stratford anticipates that one or more Blue Plaques will be awarded in 2023.
- Heritage Stratford anticipates that one or more James Anderson Awards will be made in 2023.
- Continue to update the Heritage Stratford webpage with additional information and external links, and include information on non-designated properties included in the City's register of heritage properties.
- Continue to review Heritage Permit applications and HCD Sign Variance applications in accordance with its mandate, and Heritage Impact Assessments where required by the Official Plan.
- Continue to research potential property Designation applications brought forward by property owners, committee members and/or citizen groups.
- Support HS members to attend the 2023 Ontario Heritage Conference, as well as other heritage related public educational events.
- Preparation of a guide and map to the photographs of Designated properties in the City Hall Auditorium.
- Preparation of an audio guide and map for a proposed heritage properties walk of Hamlet ward
- Archival research and heritage analysis of properties which are proposed for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, as and when required.
- Archival research in support of Architectural Conservancy of Ontario initiative examining potential for a residential Heritage Conservation District.