

Inventory & Research Working Group

Meeting Notes

Monday, October 28, 2019 (6:00 pm)

Hamilton City Hall, Room 222

Present: Janice Brown (Chair), Ann Gillespie (Secretary), Alissa Denham-Robinson;
Graham Carroll, Lyn Lusted

Regrets: Brian Kowalesicz, Chuck Dimitry, Jim Charlton

Also present: David Addington (City of Hamilton Cultural Heritage Planner)

Miranda Brunton (City of Hamilton Cultural Heritage Planner)

Greg McPherson (student)

1. Chair's Remarks

Janice welcomed all present and the meeting got underway at 6:10.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations.

3. Review of and Approval of Previous Meeting Notes

i) August 26, 2019

Approved by general consensus.

ii) September 23, 2019

Approved by general consensus with minor amendments.

4. Staff Presentation: David Addington – Cultural Heritage Assessment for the Former Centenary United Church (now New Vision United Church), 24 Main Street West (prepared by MHBC, September 2019)

At the September 23rd meeting, David had presented a CHA prepared by McCallum Sather Architects (August 30, 2019), which was found to be deficient in a number of areas, as listed in the Meeting Notes, Item 4.

David presented a second CHA prepared by MHBC, explaining that the owner of the property had requested McCallum Sather to prepare the first report.

Members agreed that the second report was much more thorough and addressed the shortcomings of the first report, including the architect, A.H. Hills and other buildings that he designed in Hamilton (MHBC report, pp. 19-20). It also included better documentation of the interior fittings, notably the impressive Casavant Freres Organ, considered in 1904 to be one of the largest and best equipped pipe organs in Canada (MHBC report, p. 16) and a unique early 20th century elevator (MHBC report, p. 17). David informed us that he planned to

make a site visit with the minister to gain a better understanding of how the organ is integrated into interior structure of the church and to review what alterations would need to be made to adaptively re-use the building as a performance venue.

5. Staff Presentation: Greg McPherson – Cultural Heritage Assessment for the Jimmy Thomson Memorial Pool, 1099 King Street East (prepared by Golder Associates Ltd., October 2018)

Greg had thoroughly read the report and made written comments on a number of sections, which he presented to the group for discussion. The major deficiencies, which will need further research to properly address, are identified below:

- Section 6.1: Since the completion of McCallum Sather's report, an adjoining recreation centre has been built on the property (between Balsam Avenue and Cannon Street). As the pool building is no longer an isolated structure, its current setting needs to be described and photographed to update the report.
- Section 6.2: More in-depth research needed to try to locate one or more photos of the original front façade prior to the 1974 washroom addition with a new front entrance vestibule. NOTE: The Feasibility Study prepared by SBA Architects in 2014 to determine the future of the Jimmy Thompson Pool included an historical group photograph showing a portion of the front façade, overlaid onto a current photo of the full facade.
- Section 6.3.2: More in-depth research needed to determine the name of the architect (e.g. City Council Meeting Minutes, the catalogue of the holdings of the Local History & Archives department of Hamilton Public Library.) Ann offered to contact a colleague, Rob Hamilton, who has done extensive research on architects working in the Hamilton area.
- Section 7.2: More in-depth research to identify other pre-1945 indoor swimming pools built in Ontario and to determine how rare is the Jimmy Thompson Pool in this broader context.
- Section 7.2.2: Substantiation needed for the following conclusion: "[The pool's] recirculation system ensuring a continuous supply of chlorination, led to it being considered an 'engineering marvel' with water 'purer' than the city's drinking water'."
- Section 7.4.1: A better case needs to be made for conclusions about the landmark status of the building.

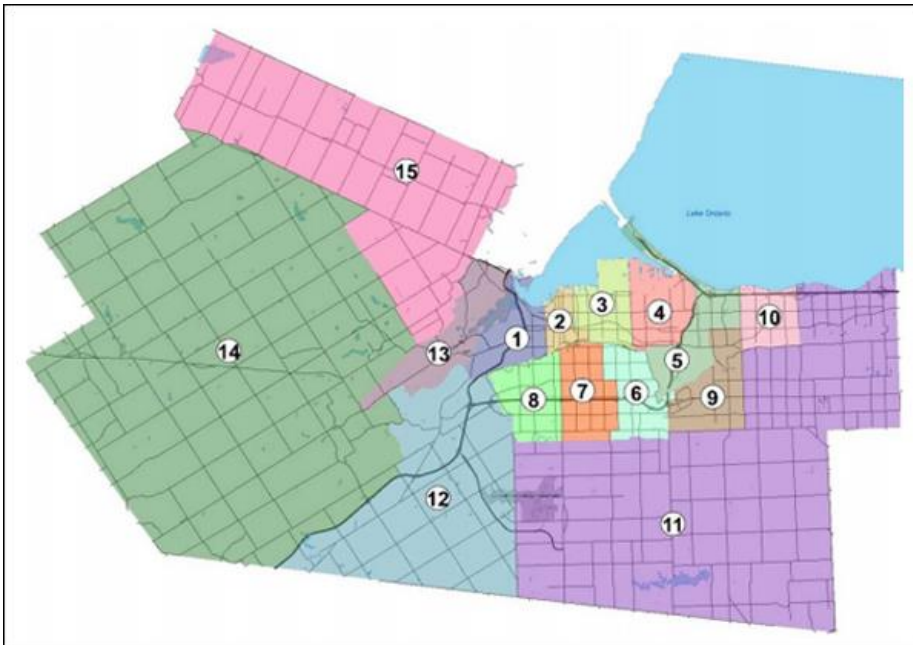
Other comments and questions:

- What historical records might have been saved by the family of Jimmy Thompson to assist with the research to answer the questions raised above?
- The pool building was constructed with the same rug brick as was used for many buildings in the area erected during the same time period. It would be interesting to know if they were manufactured by a local brickworks and if so, which one.
- Was the construction of the Jimmy Thompson Pool a *make-work* construction project during the Great Depression?

The discussion was then wrapped up and it was agreed that the report should be sent back to the consultant, with the request to address the points made by heritage staff and working group members. A more final version is expected to be re-submitted for review and approval in the first quarter of 2020.

6. Places of Education: Ward 8 and Stoney Creek (Wards 9 and 10)

Volunteers have been found for all wards except Ward 8 (west Mountain) and Wards 9 and 10 (Stoney Creek), as shown on the pre-2018 election map of ward boundaries.



SOURCE: www.hamilton.ca/municipal-election/election-information/ward-boundary-changes

Other suggestions for finding more volunteers both for the School Inventory Project and to serve as members of the I & R Working Group:

- Reaching out to applicants of the HMHC who were not appointed to the committee.
- Locating a 3rd or 4th year university student interested in joining the I & R Working Group.

- Finding keen and reliable high school students with an interest in history/architecture to undertake manageable and well-defined projects, such as a component of the School Inventory Project. Janice offered to contact history teachers in the City for assistance in this regard.

7. New Business: Graham Carroll – Elizabeth Bagshaw’s Clinic and Residence, 608 King Street East, Hamilton

Graham wanted to bring this property to the attention of the I & R Working Group due to its historical importance and the potential threat posed to the building, which is located on the proposed LRT route. He provided a brief history, a section of the 1911 Fire Insurance Plan, showing the footprint of the brick dwelling with a rear frame addition, as it exists today, current photographs taken by Jim Charlton, and a completed Built Heritage Inventory Form and Preliminary Evaluation.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The building at 608 King Street East first appeared in the 1911 street directory and is shown on the 1911 Fire Insurance Plan. At that time, it served as the clinic and home of Dr. Paterson. Dr. Elizabeth Bagshaw moved to this location from 520 King Street East circa 1920. She continued living and practising here until her retirement at the age of 95 in 1976, when she held the honour of serving as Canada’s oldest practising physician. Dr. Bagshaw was instrumental in the early fight for the recognition of women’s maternity rights and was a pioneer in advocating for birth control. Founder of the Canadian Federation of Medical Women, she has received numerous national awards and honours, listed on the website entry for Dr. Bagshaw MD as an inductee (2007) into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame: www.cdnmedhall.org/inductees/elizabethbagshaw.

Members examined the photographs provided of her former clinic and home and looked at some streetscapes on Google Street View, to compare the architectural style and details of #608 with other 2 to 2½ storey houses built around the turn-of-the 20th century. All agreed with Graham’s evaluation of the house as a representative example of its type and also that it had been somewhat compromised by minor alterations, such as the replacement of the original front doorway and the addition of a shed dormer to the original rear dormer. At some point after Dr. Bagshaw left the building, it was subdivided into two apartments. To determine the date of this conversion, Greg offered to search Building Department records to locate the building permit. It was agreed that more documentation is needed to prepare a Preliminary Cultural Heritage Assessment, for the purpose of adding the property at 608 King Street East to the Heritage

Register. All acknowledged that Dr. Elizabeth Bagshaw was an extraordinary woman and exceptional doctor, who deserves commemoration in Hamilton, perhaps most appropriately by means of a plaque marking the location of the first birth control clinic in Hamilton, where she worked for many years.

FOLLOW-UP NOTE: There is a Hamilton Historical Board plaque dedicated to *Canada's First Birth Control Clinic* on the site of its first location at the Walnut Street surgery of a local doctor. It states that "Dr. Elizabeth Bagshaw was the clinic's first regular physician, who served Hamilton's women for 31 years free of charge". Website link to a photo and of the plaque and its text: www.flickr.com/photos/-jm/albums/72157625216244689.

8. Next Meeting Date

Monday November 25, same location. As the December meeting falls so close to Christmas, it was agreed to cancel this meeting, scheduled for the 23rd, and suspend meetings until January 2020.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.