



**Re: REGISTER BEASLEY HERITAGE PROJECT (2020)**  
**To: The Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee**  
**From: Carol Priamo, Project Director, Beasley Neighbourhood Association**  
**Date: October 21, 2020**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That HMHC advise Council to list the properties of cultural heritage value or interest on James Street North located in the James Street North cultural heritage landscape and the historic neighbourhoods of Beasley and Central, as identified in the attached list titled *Batch 1 – James Street North*, on the Municipal Heritage Register.

## **BACKGROUND**

This project was developed in response to the following events:

- the introduction of Bill 108 by the provincial government with changes to the Ontario Heritage Act to be implemented from January 2021 which would add conditions to the 'listing' of buildings of heritage interest.
- the demolition of the Brandon House in Ancaster, resulting in Council listing approximately 40 buildings on Wilson Street in the village core.

These factors made it increasingly apparent that as a community we could take this essential first step in obtaining a degree of protection for our unlisted heritage properties through the City's established process of survey, documentation, review and assessment, known as the Built Heritage Inventory Process ([www.hamilton.ca/heritageinventory](http://www.hamilton.ca/heritageinventory)).

With my professional experience in heritage conservation planning and inventory work with municipal and provincial governments and as Heritage Board member for the Beasley Neighbourhood Association, I saw an opportunity to assist the City by continuing the work of the Downtown Built Heritage Inventory that was completed in 2014.

The "**Register Hamilton Heritage Project**" was introduced at the ACO June 2020 meeting. Two separate projects evolved - The "Register Beasley Heritage" project

headed by me and the “Register Ancaster Heritage” project taken on by representatives of the Ancaster Village Heritage Community group.

I then presented the “**Register Beasley Heritage Project**” to the Beasley Neighbourhood Association at the June 10, 2020 meeting where it was unanimously approved. A descriptive summary of the project has been posted on their website at [www.ourbna.com](http://www.ourbna.com) and on their Facebook page.

- The project officially began on July 1<sup>st</sup> with volunteer training conducted by myself, Laurie Brady (Ancaster) and Alissa Golden (City); I developed a Volunteer Package containing project information on the ‘listing’ process, photography guidelines, a letter of authorization, sample Inventory Forms, the Beasley Historical Context Statement, and the University of Waterloo’s Manual of Architectural Styles.
- I then contacted Councillor Jason Farr (Ward 2) informing him of the community-led Register Heritage project for Beasley; he endorsed the project with enthusiasm and his full support.
- Councillor Farr, the ACO and the BNA receive detailed monthly updates of the project’s progress.

## **PURPOSE and SCOPE**

The area of Beasley Neighbourhood south of Cannon was included in the 2014 Downtown Built Heritage Inventory undertaken by the City of Hamilton, which resulted in ~75% of all properties in the study area being listed on the Register to give them interim 60-day protection from demolition. Properties in ‘Beasley North’ from Cannon to Murray and from James to Wellington had no heritage protection, and therefore no process to flag these properties when demolition or redevelopment is proposed.

**The purpose of this project is to inventory and recommend to the Register many of Beasley’s important heritage properties.**

To recommend buildings of heritage significance to the Register, we needed to work closely with the City using its Inventory process and tools in exactly the same manner as the previous City-led Inventory of Downtown and Durand. This would entail survey, documentation, architectural description, evaluation by volunteers before City staff review and presentation to the Inventory and Research Working Group, the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee before proceeding to the Planning Committee and Council for final approval.

## **SCHEDULE**

Initially, I planned a six-month time frame from July 1<sup>st</sup> – December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 in order to have the properties listed before the scheduled changes to the *Ontario Heritage Act* (Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020). I soon realized that this was not possible given the City's review process but retained the same schedule for the Inventory sending each batch to City staff as it was completed.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Each property is inventoried, documented and evaluated using the City's Inventory and Evaluation Forms and photographed by professional volunteer photographers. Properties that are recommended will go through the City's review process including Tourism and Culture staff, Alissa Golden, the Cultural Heritage Planners, the Inventory and Research Working Group and the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee. Recommendations will be presented to Council for approval to be added to the Register.

The initial intention was to use this community-led project as a pilot for future inventories in other parts of the City. To this end, the twenty Ancaster volunteers, three Beasley volunteers and the project coordinators received training and direction in the City's Inventory process by Alissa Golden, Heritage Projects Specialist, Tourism and Culture, responsible for previous and current Inventories undertaken by the City.

Beasley volunteers have been given specific roles in the inventory suited to their knowledge and experience. Only two volunteers (myself included) are able to name and describe the architectural styles and features as well as completing the Evaluations. Other volunteers fill in other survey details on the Inventory Form. Three experienced photographers have documented each property with the necessary views. The project area was divided into batches and each batch completed before sending recommendations to the City, the Committees and to Council.

The recommending of properties to be added to the Register generally followed the 2014 City Inventory and the Durand Neighbourhood Inventory of 2019 criteria including listing all buildings one hundred years and older that have survived compromising alterations or could be restored to a close to original appearance and that are integral to maintaining the character of the historical streetscape. These were the main criteria for most of the properties but others met the criteria of historical and design value as well.

## **JAMES STREET NORTH**

At the recommendation of City staff, I was eager to begin the project with James Street North from Cannon to Murray – both East and West sides although the West side was part of Central Neighbourhood. Both sides needed to be taken as a unit.

This section along with the area of James North from Main to Cannon had been studied for a proposal in the 1980's to designate it as a Heritage Conservation District by City Planning staff. This study as well as other relevant documents, maps and reports were sent by the City and utilized along with the Beasley Historical Context Report as research for the heritage properties in this area. The LACAC Inventory of the properties on James North from the 1980's was an invaluable resource.

Current photographs taken of every property and completed Inventory and Evaluation forms were forwarded to the City for review in Summer 2020. Documenting and evaluating properties on this historic street proved to be a valuable exercise for the community-led project to successfully undertake the remaining areas in the Beasley Neighbourhood.

I worked solo on all aspects of the James Street North Inventory and photo-documentation with guidance from City staff. I wanted to learn and establish optimum methods for every part of the project to facilitate working with the City and to direct project volunteers' with an efficient and clear process for completing and submitting their work in other areas of the neighbourhood. By the completion of James Street North, the project was running smoothly.

After review by City staff, the first batch of 72 properties on James Street North was presented to the Inventory and Research Working Group at the September 28th meeting. In preparation for the meeting, a package was sent including photos, a list of the properties and my summary description of the project to date. All of the recommended addresses on the list were approved by the Committee after a question and answer period. A motion to make a delegation at the next HMHC meeting was passed.

Letters to property owners were sent by City staff informing them that their property had been recommended for listing on the Municipal Heritage Register and providing information on when the recommendations would be considered at HMHC and how to delegate.

We were informed of the opportunity to bring a delegation to the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee to recommend these properties at the October 30<sup>th</sup> meeting. A package was prepared and sent. I understand that staff will be presenting on the City's

Built Heritage Inventory Strategy and process for another item on the October 30<sup>th</sup> HMHC agenda, and I will present a 5-minute PowerPoint as part of this Register Beasley project.

## **PROGRESS**

The process of recommending Beasley heritage properties for inclusion on the Register is being repeated for additional neighbourhood streets. Currently, Hughson and John Streets north of Cannon have been completed and reviewed by the City. Catharine, Mary, and Murray Streets will be to be reviewed in November. We are in the process of working on the remainder of Beasley - Cannon, Robert, Barton, Murray, Elgin, Cathcart and Wellington by the end of the year.

It is with great pride that we see the photographs of these Beasley properties posted on the City's Cultural Heritage Resources Map ([www.map.hamilton.ca/heritagemap](http://www.map.hamilton.ca/heritagemap)) as an important heritage tool for all to use.

Carol Priamo,  
BNA Board, ACO Board