



**Township of Woolwich
Heritage Committee
Agenda**

March 12, 2025

5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

24 Church Street West, Elmira ON, N3B 2Z6

Chair: Councillor Bonnie Bryant

Access Details

Meeting Link

Meeting ID: 894 4250 8289

Passcode: 068142

Toll-Free: 855-703-8985

Pages

1. Call to Order

2. Land Acknowledgement

The land on which we meet has been here from time immemorial. People have inhabited southern Ontario for about 10,000 years and we acknowledge the Neutral people also called Attawandaron, Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee Peoples who lived here when settlers arrived and who share this land with us. May we together learn to care for and respect each other, our flora and fauna, and the land we inhabit together.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

4. Adoption of Minutes

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5. Staff Briefing

6. General Discussion & Open Work Session

6.1 Follow Up on February 12, 2025 Action Items

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6.2 Work Plan Review

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7. New Business

8. Items for the Next Agenda

8.1 Draft Township of Woolwich Mixed Use Urban Design Guidelines - Stakeholders Review

9. Adjournment

Township of Woolwich Heritage Committee Minutes

February 12, 2024
4:59 p.m. – 6:01 p.m.
Virtual (Zoom) Meeting

Meeting Chair: *Councillor Bonnie Bryant, Chair*

Attended: *Colleen Willard-Holt, Co-Chair*
Katy Boose
Dianna Weltz
Jacob Drung
Ellen Siebel-Achenbach
Marg Drexler
Kim Hodgson

Staff Present: *Stacey Bruce, Committee Support Specialist*
Sherwin Meloney, Planner

Special Guest: *Emily Schuurmans, Realtor*
Brodie Barth, Realtor

Regrets: *Natalia Smiarowski, Acting Co-Chair*

Italics indicates a virtual participant.

Call to Order at 4:59 P.M.

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

Land Acknowledgement

Chair Councillor Bonnie Bryant read a land acknowledgment.

Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Dianna Weltz
Seconded by Marg Drexler

That the minutes of January 15, 2025, be adopted as presented.

...Carried.

Special Guests: Emily Schuurmans and Brodie Barth, Realtors

Realtors Emily Schuurmans and Brodie Barth owners of a designated heritage home shared their experiences and challenges related to owning, maintaining and renovating heritage properties, highlighting;

- Their review of buying, selling, and maintaining heritage properties.
- The perception of a decreased buyer pool due to heritage designation stigma.
- Common heritage property neglect, prohibitive renovation costs, and financial burdens.
- The impact of heritage designation on home value, insurance, and lending.
- Renovation challenges around required extensive approvals, leading to time-consuming delays.
- Restrictions on window replacements, roofing materials, and use of modern materials despite local precedents.
- Difficulties meeting restoration standards due to material shortages.
- The long lifespan of traditional wooden windows with proper treatment but limited availability of replica options.
- Climate-related impacts on historical materials.
- Regulatory and administrative barriers experienced when engaging with local heritage committees and Council for support.
- The interpretation of heritage conservation standards varies across committees.
- Struggles with "demolition by neglect" and unauthorized renovations.
- Balancing heritage preservation with financial feasibility for owners.
- The need for clear guidelines and more efficient approvals.

At this point in the meeting, committee member Kim Hodgson entered virtually.

- The financial and resource considerations of designated heritage properties
- Insurance difficulties requiring outreach to 30+ companies with high premiums.
- Post-COVID-19 market hesitancy further exacerbating lending and cost barriers around designated heritage properties.
- The required niche renovation material and workforce challenges, particularly in securing skilled tradespersons like masons, and stucco for repairs.
- The limited grant funding for large-scale restoration projects.
- Local Heritage committee and policy considerations
- Challenges in balancing strict restoration mandates with affordability.
- The need for more efficient approval processes, and suggestion to reduce major renovation approval timelines from 6-8 months to 1-3 months.
- Support for a clear, predictable framework for heritage processes to encourage heritage designation while ensuring affordability.
- The potential for more staff-level heritage related decisions to streamline approvals.

The committee thanked E. Schuurmans and B. Barth for their insights and emphasized the importance of collaboration between property owners, heritage committees, and municipalities to develop practical, owner-friendly heritage policies.

January 15, 2025, Action Items Review

The committee reviewed and updated action items from the January 15, 2025, meeting.

Work Plan

This item was discussed alongside the January 15, 2025, Action Items Review.

St. Boniface Cemetery, Church & Manse Heritage Designation Update

The committee reviewed draft documentation for the heritage designation of St. Boniface Cemetery, Church and Manse, noting:

- A draft Statement of Significance has been prepared, acknowledging the background research contributions from committee members.
- The inclusion of design, physical, and contextual value descriptions.
- The addition of two windows and the Blessed Virgin Mary statue.
- Cultural heritage attributes
- Exclusion of interior fixtures and fittings to simplify the designation process and avoid renovation restrictions.
- Omission of individual iron cross attributes due to available and established community-led restoration efforts.
- Inclusion of the history and transportation of altars and statue attributes.
- Next steps
- Township staff review and property owner consent considerations.
- Considering the Diocesan stance on heritage designation and potential resistance.

ACTION: Stacey Bruce to research past heritage designation processes and letter of intent examples.

The committee further discussed challenges and implications of designating interior vs. exterior heritage features for these properties, noting:

- General considerations around the protection of interior heritage features vs. typical exterior-focused designations
- General property ownership challenges and heritage restrictions on renovations.
- Past interior modifications, including pulpit dismantling, roof lowering, and possible ceiling painting deterioration.
- The unaltered main and side altars remain key heritage features.
- Preservation and designation decisions with clarification that alterations to heritage-listed elements may be permitted if reversible.
- Concerns about the impact of renovation materials on heritage attributes.
- Selection of specific interior elements for designation, including stained glass windows, altars, life-size statues, and rear statue.
- Updating the Cultural Heritage Attributes description to specify the discussed interior elements that should not be altered.
- Emphasizing the importance of preserving the church's original blueprints.

ACTION: M. Drexler to obtain a copy of the original St. Boniface Church blueprints from the President of the Maryhill Historical Society.

New Business

An update was provided about the Waterloo Region High-Performance Development Standards Community Session scheduled for Thursday February 13, from 5:30-7:00 pm at the township's Council Chambers.

The committee's agenda item call process was reviewed.

The committee considered their Elmira Carnegie Library Designation and discussed its heritage designation process. A proposal was shared to create short videos highlighting the library's architectural and community impact in collaboration with a Niagara based partner.

The committee acknowledge its member's efforts and contributions.

The committee reviewed approval procedures and discussion from earlier in the meeting about heritage designation renovation processes, including:

- Costs, owner considerations, and the role of the committee in reviewing requests with sensitivity.
- Engaging with property owners to understanding local frameworks and guidelines.
- The acknowledgement of staff capacity challenges in processing heritage designation requests.
- Concerns about owner reluctance, objections, and the financial implications of heritage designations.
- Ways to identify barriers and streamline approvals.
- Developing clear guidelines for potential heritage designees, including renovation cost estimates and restoration commitments.
- Compiling reference materials on heritage designation frameworks and guidelines.

The committee scheduled a subgroup meeting for March 26th at 5:00 pm via Zoom to define frameworks, process guidelines and timelines for heritage designation requests.

ACTION: Jacob Drung to share Toronto heritage designation framework resources with the committee.

Items for the Next Agenda – March 12, 2025

The committee planned to review the Draft Township of Woolwich Mixed Use Urban Design Guidelines at the next meeting, pending its availability by the end of February.

Adjournment (6:01 P.M.)

Moved by Katy Boose
Seconded by J. Drung

That the meeting be adjourned to meet again on March 12, 2025.

...Carried.

Recorder: Stacey Bruce, Committee Support Specialist

Action Items from the Feb 12, 2025 Heritage Committee Meeting

ACTION: Natalia Smiarowski to provide Jacob Drung with a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report template

ACTION: Natalia Smiarowski to provide scanning contact resource information to Marg Drexler for the Maryhill Historical Society

ACTION: Stacey Bruce to research past heritage designation processes and letter of intent examples.

ACTION: Marg Drexler to obtain a copy of the original St. Boniface Church blueprints from the President of the Maryhill Historical Society.

ACTION: Jacob Drung to share Toronto heritage designation framework resources with the committee.

Heritage Committee Work Plan

Priority	ACTION	LEAD	STATUS	QTR	NOTES
Heritage Designations	Revise statement of significance for the St. Boniface Cemetary, Church and Manse and submit this to township staff for review.	Jacob	ongoing	Q1	Draft prepared to be updated with interior features
Heritage Designations	Write a draft Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report for the Elmira Carnegie Library and submit this to township staff for review.	Jacob			Information will be compiled at Feb 26th heritage designation subgroup work meeting
Heritage Designations	Elmira Carnegie architectural and community impact videos	Ellen			with Niagara partner
Heritage Designations	Develop framework guidelines for potential heritage designees	All			March 26 subwork group virtual meeting scheduled
Heritage Designations	Research the Elmira St. James Lutheran Church's interior features.	Ellen/Dianna			Initiating the heritage designation process due to the potential sale of the property within the year and its recognized heritage value.
Heritage Designations	Arrange a virtual meeting between 9-4 pm with the historical planner from Guelph for interested committee members	Colleen	ongoing		A historical Guelph member expressed interest in attending a virtual meeting as a resource between 9 am and 4 pm weekdays. The committee to propose questions for him and dates to meet, while Centre Wellington and Guelph Committees declined invitations.
Heritage Designations	Complete the architectural style details for the Elmira Carnegie Library's Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report.	Katy/Natalia	ongoing		Discussed resource materials and specific features related to the evaluation.
Heritage Designations	Locate an architectural reference book	Bonnie	ongoing		
Heritage Designations	Contact former committee member for research proposal support	Bonnie	ongoing		

Heritage Committee Work Plan

Heritage Designations	Revisit the draft letter preparation, including pros and cons of heritage designation for current listed property owners, to gauge their interest	All	ongoing		Revised letter presented to the committee on May 8th for circulation among members and Sherwin Meloney for feedback and approval before sending to current owners of heritage-listed properties.
Heritage Designations	Circulate pros, cons, and FAQs about heritage designations, along with a revised letter, to current listed property owners to gauge their interest	Stacey			Further revisions are required before approval.
Heritage Designations	Contact Sherwin Meloney for approval to send the revised letter to current listed property owners to gauge their interest in heritage designation	Natalia			
Heritage Designations	Compile a list and description of local properties of interest for a brochure	All			Discussed focusing the prototype brochure on 10 designated properties, with 2-3 per settlement. Notable sites include Elmira Townhall, Carnegie Library, Bandstand, St. Jacob's properties (Theatre, Library, Old School), Maryhill cluster (hotel, church, cemetery), and other properties in Winterburn, Conestogo, Breslau, Floradale, and Bloomingdale. Bridges like Glasgow or Peel Street and barns were also considered, with limited options in Hawkesvill. Properties from the "Walking and Wheeling", Ghost Communities, 2 Elmira tours, St. Jacob's (needs to be checked first), Conestogo are also suitable. F15
Heritage Designation/Education & Awareness (Historical Resource Materials)	Revisit obtaining a historical book from a community member and explore interest of an owner to designate a property with a unique stone porch	Dianna			Schedule get together with senior community member when appropriate

Heritage Committee Work Plan

Education & Awareness (WMC Digital Sign Board)	Connect with the Township to check if a summer student can assist with the Digital Sign Board project	Bonnie	ongoing		WMC can only accommodate 1 slide and not the entire slideshow; could have more than one slide as standalone slides.
Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Create a prototype brochure with input from the Maryhill Historical Society and share it with all committee members.	Katy/Natalia	ongoing		Katy shared a draft slideshow of properties of interest for feedback.
Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Reach out to printerries in Woolwich for brochure quotes.	Katy	ongoing		Received a quote from a St. Jacob's printer, awaiting a response from Simpson Printing in Bloomingdale, and will follow up
Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Return forms to Marg for scanning and sharing the Cultural Heritage Resource Evaluation Form with the committee	Katy	ongoing		
Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Obtain a map for the prototype brochure from Lisa Atkinson, GIS Analyst, Township of Woolwich	Katy	ongoing		
Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Call Bloomingdale United Church to get permission to use their website photos in the brochure.	Katy	ongoing		
Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Take 1-2 more photos of properties of interest and add them to the brochure and PowerPoint	Katy	ongoing		Received some photos and will take additional ones as needed. Lisa Atkinson identified as the key contact for property photos at the Township. Properties from 2 Elmira tours as well as Conestoga, St. Jacobs (need to check first), Walking and Wheeling and Ghost Community tours are suitable.
Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Research additional properties of interest to include in the brochure	Natalia			The two Elmira tour and Conestogo tour have been cross checked and their structures and salient points still exist although formatting issues need to be resolved. St. Jacob's tour materials need to be checked first.

Heritage Committee Work Plan

Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Assist Katy in collecting photos for the brochure	Dianna			
Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Explore updating the heritage display at the Carnegie library	Dianna	ongoing		LACAC reports were suggested as a resource, and a connection was made with a library resource person
Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Locate and photocopy the walking tour reference material from the Carnegie Library	Natalia	ongoing		
Education & Awareness (Brochure & Slideshow)	Reach out to EDSS teachers to explore student partnership options	Kim	ongoing		Connected with EDSS Art Department Head, to explore a collaboration with students on a digital visual arts project.
Education & Awareness (Heritage Road Show)	Contact retired geography teacher as a resource	Bonnie	ongoing		Previously organized bus tours
Education & Awareness (Historical Resource Materials)	Revisit discussion of having a member's collection of historical photos and books scanned and made into a public resource	All	ongoing		
Education & Awareness (Historical Resource Materials)	Revisit retaining the picture of the Queen displayed in Council Chambers	All/Stacey			Mass produced image widely available, creased condition
Education & Awareness (Newspaper Interest Column)	Revisit the idea of introducing a 'Do You Recognize' column in the Record, with prizes from local businesses	All	ongoing		