

THE THIRD MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ROOM #304
BY TELECONFERENCE

JUNE 10TH, 2020

5:00 p.m. The meeting convened.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Russell Schnurr, Chair
Councillor Steve Peters
Harrison Cole
Joe Docherty
Andru John
Steven McLarty-Payson

City Officials

J. Hindley, Corporate Admin & Accessibility Clerk
K. McClure, Planner

Others

S. Dyke, CEO, Economic Development Corporation
S. Noble, Tourism Coordinator, Economic
Development Corporation
A. Gunn, Andrew Gunn Consulting

Absent

Ryan Belanger
Jennifer Childs
Tino Clarke

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Nil.

MINUTES

Motion by Councillor Peters - Harrison Cole:

THAT: The minutes of the meeting held on February 12, 2020 be confirmed.

Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Mural Program

The CEO, Economic Development Corporation provided an overview of the mural program, being embarked upon by the St. Thomas Economic Development Corporation, in partnership with the Estate of Donna Vera Bushell and Andrew Gunn Consulting.

A. Gunn, Andrew Gunn Consulting advised that various projects have been announced or are in progress across St. Thomas and Elgin County using funds from the estate of Donna Vera Bushell, including work at Catfish Creek Conservation Authority, Kettle Creek Conservation Authority, the St. Thomas Elevated Park and the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre.

Mr. Gunn advised that approximately \$250,000 was being set aside for the mural project to create landmark murals across the downtown. He further advised that they would be looking for a lifespan of a minimum of ten years for the murals and would be working with muralists with highly technical skills and high quality paints.

The members discussed the fact that the design and colours of the murals is unknown at this time as the muralists would not be finalized until approval for the Heritage Alteration Permits are received.

The Planner reminded the members that the Planning reports contain analysis and comments about the applications in relation to relevant policies in the Heritage Conservation District Plan and that it was up to the Municipal Heritage Committee to recommend, or not, the issuance of a Heritage Alteration Permit to Council.

CONFIRMED _____ CHAIRMAN

3rd Meeting of the Municipal Heritage Committee - 2

Heritage Alteration Permit and Planning Report HAP-03-20 - 801-807 Talbot Street

The Tourism Coordinator advised that the mural at 801-807 Talbot Street was proposed to have a cultural theme and that they were working with the St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership on it.

Motion by Harrison Cole - Joe Docherty:

THAT: The Municipal Heritage Committee recommends the issuance of a Heritage Alteration Permit for the property at 801-807 Talbot Street, relating to Application HAP-03-20, provided that:

- (a) Any paint or colour scheme be complementary to the historic character of the district.

Carried.

Heritage Alteration Permit and Planning Report HAP-04-20 - 745 Talbot Street

The Tourism Coordinator advised that there was potential for a youth initiative with the mural at 745 Talbot Street and that they would be working with the Talbot Teen Centre.

The members asked whether any property owners with current murals were contacted and whether any review about repairing older murals had occurred.

The CEO, Economic Development Corporation advised that this project was working with muralists for new murals and that any interested property owners should contact him.

Motion by Harrison Cole - Councillor Peters:

THAT: The Municipal Heritage Committee recommends the issuance of a Heritage Alteration Permit for the property at 745 Talbot Street, relating to Application HAP-04-20, provided that:

- (a) Any paint or colour scheme be complementary to the historic character of the district.

Carried.

Heritage Alteration Permit and Planning Report HAP-05-20 - 633 Talbot Street

The Chair advised that this mural would be fronting on John Street and was proposed to have an apothecary or London Drugs Store theme to reflect the history of the building.

The members discussed the importance of the mural being installed as a sign at this location so as to not damage the original, unpainted brick.

Motion by Harrison Cole - Joe Docherty:

THAT: The Municipal Heritage Committee recommends the issuance of a Heritage Alteration Permit for the property at 633 Talbot Street, relating to Application HAP-05-20, provided that:

- (a) Any paint or colour scheme be complementary to the historic character of the district.
- (b) The mural be installed as a sign.

Carried.

Heritage Alteration Permit and Planning Report HAP-06-20 - 707 Talbot Street

The Chair advised that this mural was proposed to have a technology theme and that it would be covering unpainted concrete block.

Councillor Peters suggested that the inclusion of a Crown Victoria in the mural would be a good idea to pay tribute to the importance of the St. Thomas Ford Assembly Plant.

3rd Meeting of the Municipal Heritage Committee - 3

Mr. Gunn advised that they may review the potential for installing additional lighting to provide light for the mural and improve the safety and security of the alley at night.

Motion by Harrison Cole - Joe Docherty:

THAT: The Municipal Heritage Committee recommends the issuance of a Heritage Alteration Permit for the property at 707 Talbot Street, relating to Application HAP-06-20, provided that:

- (a) Any paint or colour scheme be complementary to the historic character of the district.

Carried.

Heritage Alteration Permit and Planning Report HAP-07-20 - 9 Princess Avenue

The Chair advised that this mural was proposed to have a salute to front-line workers theme.

Motion by Harrison Cole - Andru John:

THAT: The Municipal Heritage Committee recommends the issuance of a Heritage Alteration Permit for the property at 9 Princess Avenue, relating to Application HAP-07-20, provided that:

- (a) Any paint or colour scheme be complementary to the historic character of the district.

Carried.

Heritage Alteration Permit and Planning Report HAP-08-20 - 630 Talbot Street

The Tourism Coordinator advised that the proposed mural at this location would cover both sides of the walkway and that it would have themes of sustainability, the environment and urban jungle.

Mr. Gunn advised that tree planting is important to the Donna Vera Bushell Estate and that the vision for this mural was to be a futuristic forest as a landmark picture and Instagram location. He further advised that they are interested in the use of technology alongside the murals including the potential use of augmented reality.

Mr. Gunn advised that the supporting cross beams that run above the alley would be painted as part of the project.

Motion by Harrison Cole - Andru John:

THAT: The Municipal Heritage Committee recommends the issuance of a Heritage Alteration Permit for the property at 630 Talbot Street, relating to Application HAP-08-20, provided that:

- (a) Any paint or colour scheme be complementary to the historic character of the district.

Carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Committee Representative - CIP Evaluation Committee

The Chair provided an overview of the work of the CIP Evaluation Committee and advised that there is a vacant Municipal Heritage Committee representative position.

Motion by Harrison Cole - Joe Docherty:

THAT: Andru John be appointed as a Municipal Heritage Committee representative to the CIP Evaluation Committee.

Carried.

3rd Meeting of the Municipal Heritage Committee - 4

15-19 Flora Street - Appendix "A"

The Chair advised that heritage concerns were discussed at the last Site Plan Control Committee relating to 15-19 Flora Street and that the Committee had asked the Municipal Heritage Committee to submit their concerns in writing.

The members discussed the draft written concerns that were circulated.

The Chair advised that there are currently no City-wide urban design guidelines.

The members discussed the importance of supporting housing development, while also asking developers to meet certain standards.

Motion by Harrison Cole - Andru John:

THAT: The Municipal Heritage Committee supports the submission of the June 10, 2020 comments to the Site Plan Control Committee relating to 15-19 Flora Street.

Carried.

Heritage Home Inventory/Proposed Listed Properties

The Chair advised that no funding had been received by the Committee for a summer student and that there were no students from Fanshawe College available to assist with projects.

Harrison advised that this was a long-term project and could be left on Unfinished Business for the time being.

Designation By-laws - 423 Talbot Street and 47 Jonas Street

The members agreed to keep the topic on Unfinished Business.

Trinity Anglican Church - 55 Southwick Street - Potential Heritage Designation

The Chair advised that he had been contacted by the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, London Region Branch regarding Trinity Anglican Church. He further advised that it appears that the Elgin branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario is disbanding.

The Chair advised that a draft designation by-law for Trinity Anglican Church had been circulated to the members previously and that he would circulate it again to the new members.

The members discussed the urgency in recommending designation to Council to protect the building despite the fact that there is no letter of support from the property owner.

The members asked that Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, London Region Branch be requested to provide a letter of support for the designation.

The members discussed holding a special meeting so as to prepare a report for the July 13, 2020 Council meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on July 8, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

6:47 p.m. The meeting adjourned.

June 10, 2020

SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMENTS

MUNICIPAL ADDRESS: 15-19 FLORA STREET

Summary of concerns as provided by the Municipal Heritage Committee regarding the proposed site plan discussed at the Site Plan Control Committee meeting on February 26, 2020:

The Municipal Heritage Committee supports the provision of 24 residential units in the downtown. We are providing the following concerns and comments on the proposed site plan that should be addressed prior to final site plan approval.

Adjacency to the Talbot Street Heritage Conservation District (HCD)

As outlined in Section 4.13 of the Downtown St. Thomas Heritage Conservation District Plan, site alterations and development adjacent to the HCD must demonstrate that the heritage attributes of the adjacent HCD will be conserved. The proposed building design and site plan does not acknowledge the significance of the adjacent historical Talbot streetscape and public parkette with heritage mural located at Talbot Street. Although buildings within the HCD will remain, there is a negative visual impact on the surrounding heritage assets. In addition to Talbot Street heritage features, the site is east of historic St. John’s Anglican Church and south of Arthur Voaden Secondary School. Since there is a parkette and no building directly south of the site, there is a stronger visual connection to the downtown than a typical property fronting onto a side street, and greater potential to negatively affect our important heritage assets. A clear example of a poorly designed building can be found across the street from the subject site at 669 Talbot Street, which negatively affects the characteristic of the streetscape.



Figure 1: Proposed 3 Storey Apartment Building



Figure 2: Parkette Talbot Street at Flora Street



Figure 3: 1669 Talbot Street

Section 3.1 of the HCD Plan encourages “connectivity from within the HCD to other community assets and heritage areas”. Not only has the connection of the site to the historic downtown been poorly addressed, but the historic Arthur Voaden Secondary School façade has also been ignored in the proposed design. Specific reference is given to Section 4.6 of the HCD Plan, which describes how “new development can be modern, still sympathetic and compatible to the historic character of the district”. This is another requirement where the proposed design falls short.



Figure 4: Historic Arthur Voaden Secondary School Façade



Figure 5: 230 Talbot Street

There are two good examples of new infill development applications in the downtown that demonstrate appropriate consideration for the HCD heritage assets, and the surrounding built form. The new social services building located at 230 Talbot Street is adjacent to the HCD boundary. The new building does a great job complementing the design language of entrances, windows, colour and details seen in the historic downtown streetscape.



Figure 6: Proposed Apartments at 12 East Street

The second infill site is located at 12 East Street and is somewhat hidden from Talbot Street, when compared to the Flora Street site. Although similar in use and built form, the proposed design creates a strong transitional design between the taller buildings with unique architectural details found along Talbot Street, and the lower single detached home found adjacent to the site at 18 East Street. The inclusion of non-recessed balconies complements the front porches along East Street. The hipped roof with gabled ends creates a good transition to the single detached home located north of the property. To complement the HDC, this building included a

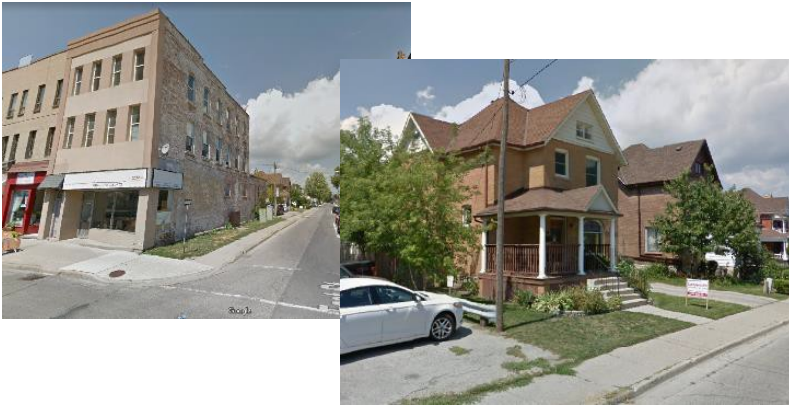


Figure 7: 12 East Street from Talbot and 18 East Street

traditionally defined entrance, double windows with traditional mullion patters, and heritage influenced brickwork such as a contrasting soldier course and window headers. Both buildings carefully consider their adjacency to the heritage district, as well as their relationship with adjacent built forms. 15-19 Flora Street should do the same when considering it's unique and highly visible location adjacent to the HCD.

The Planning Act – Matters of Provincial Interest

As set out in the Planning Act Part 1, Section 2, matters of provincial interest, the council of a municipality shall have regard for ***(r) the promotion of built form that, (i) is well designed, (ii) encourages a sense of place, and (iii) provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.*** With proper care and due diligence, new development can be designed that serves a housing need within our community, but also complements the HDC. The proposed development on Flora Street does not consider its unique location within the downtown, and its poor design will negatively affect the sense of place that our community has worked hard to create.

Building Design

The proposed three storey walk-up design is found in various residential areas throughout the city (see Figures 7, 8, and 9). These sites fulfill a much-needed housing demand, but none of them are as visually connected to our downtown heritage landscape. Certainly more effort should be made to ***create a less suburban apartment design,*** and instead create a much-needed apartment building that reflects the unique urban environment of Talbot Street. A revisited design, that is genuinely sensitive to its surroundings, will help reinforce the strong sense of place that exists in our downtown.

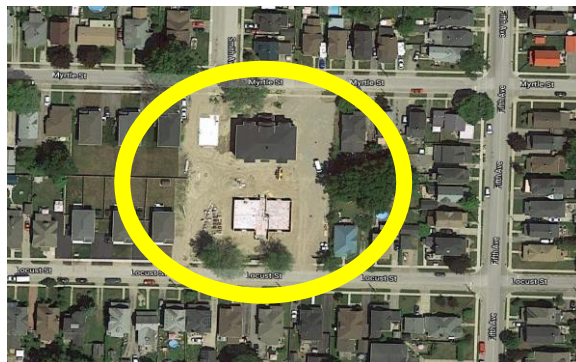


Figure 8: Myrtle Street and Locust Street Infill Apartments



Figure 9: Elysian Street and Scott Street Infill Apartments



Figure 10: Manor Road Apartments

Design Considerations

1. Window treatments should consider: increasing the size of each window opening to double window panes; add concrete arches and lintels. This would be complementary to the HDC, Church and Secondary School window treatments.
2. Create a clearly defined covered open entranceway similar to the abutting residential uses to the north.
3. Provide sufficient landscape along the site frontage to complement the parkette at Talbot and the wider boulevard planting area in front of Arthur Voden Secondary.
4. Outdoor balconies should not be recessed but extend into the yards to create more articulation of the façade; this will also create a stronger connection between public and semi-private space of the apartments.
5. Alternatively, a building design more sympathetic to the institutional facade of Arther Voden Secondary School, as well as the historical commercial core, might include a flat roof, recessed balconies, and a more articulated front facade.
6. Consider shared driveway access between the public and private driveways to the rear of Talbot Street.

7. The exterior façade should be clay bricks in a yellow or red colour similar to existing buildings; details along the building corners and horizontal floor indicators could be built into the building façade.

Public Parkette at Talbot Street

It is also important to protect and enhance the limited number of public squares and parks in the downtown core. The proposed building design could be revised to promote visual surveillance of the small public square located south of the proposed building. The committee encourages building design that includes Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (C.P.T.E.D.) principles, with more opportunities for residents to have “eyes on the park” through natural surveillance. The orientation and placement of recessed balconies alone limit the opportunity to improve safety in the core. Enhancement of the public realm should also be considered when reviewing infill developments adjacent to public spaces. An attractive and sensitive design will help improve the overall aesthetics of the proposed building, the adjacent public space with heritage mural, and Talbot Street as a whole. Unfortunately, the proposed building is not well designed, does not encourage or reinforce a sense of place, and does not create a safe and attractive public realm.

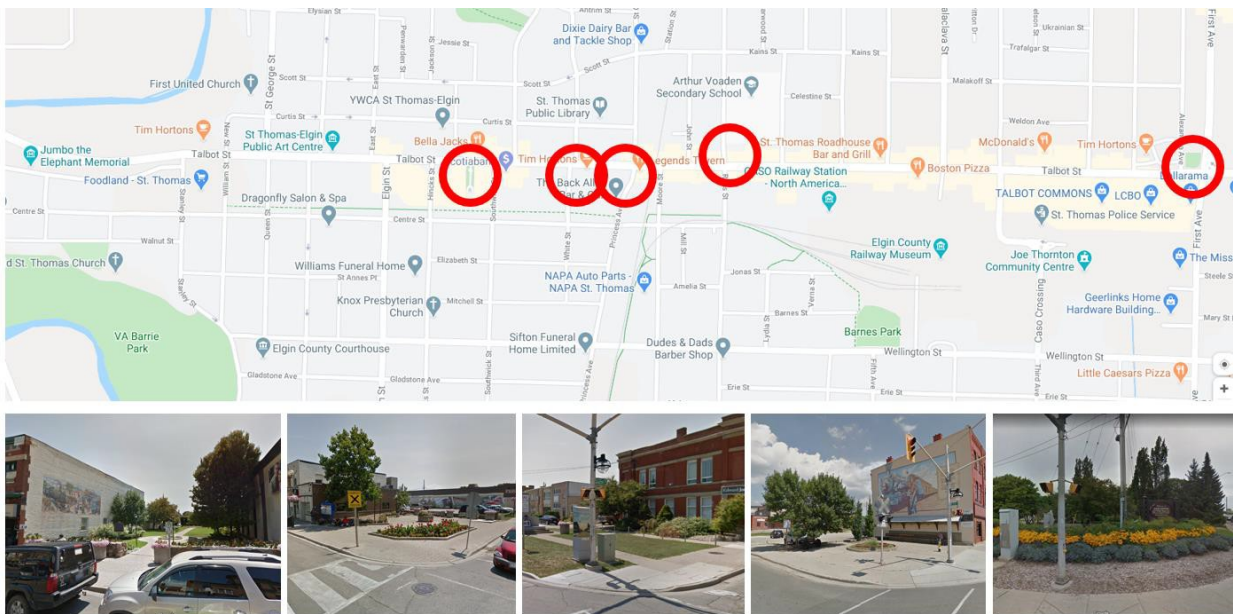


Figure 11: Existing Parks and Public Squares in the Downtown Core

Design Considerations:

1. Increase the number of windows facing the parkette and create non-recessed balconies
2. With a shared access to the commercial properties, additional landscaping can be provided along the southerly façade to complement the parkette.
3. Provide security lighting on the building to enhance nighttime visibility of the parkette.

Finally, the creation of urban design policy and guidelines for the entire city, and not just along Talbot Street, is strongly recommended since these new investments will shape our city for generations.