



REPORT TO COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



AGENDA DATE: April 23, 2017

SUBJECT: Requirements of the Establishment of a Heritage Committee

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee provide direction on desired course of action regarding the establishment of a Heritage Committee.

BACKGROUND

Staff were asked to provide Committee of the Whole with a summary of the legislative requirements for the establishment of a Heritage Committee and the process through which such a committee could be created.

Council currently supports the heritage of the Township in a number of ways. The Portland District and Area Heritage Society was established as a Committee of Council in 2008 and tasked with the responsibility to manage the South Frontenac Museum located at 5595 Road 38, Hartington in 2012. The Bedford District Historical Society is a long established group who operate the Research Centre located at 1381 Westport Rd.

The former Township of Portland established a Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) in 1988 to advise and assist Council on matters under the Heritage Act, specifically the evaluation of properties of architectural and/or historical value or interest being considered for designation. (Note LACACs were the precursor to current Heritage Committees under the Heritage Act). It appears that there were five (5) properties designated "heritage properties" by the former Township of Portland.

ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990

The Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990 is the provincial statute giving directions to local municipalities on matters related to properties of cultural heritage value or interest.

Section 27(1) of the Act prescribes that "the Clerk of a municipality **shall** keep a register of properties situated in the municipality that are of cultural heritage value or interest." It states further in Section 27(1.1) that "the register...**shall** list all properties situated in the municipality that have been designated by the Municipality or the Minister." The information presented would include the legal description of the property, names and address of the owner and a statement explaining the cultural interest or value and description of the heritage attributes.

The Act goes further and provides that municipalities **may** include "other properties of interest or value that have not been designated" in the register.

Specific to the question of a Heritage Committee, Section 28(1) of the Act states that "a Council of a municipality **may**, by by-law establish a municipal heritage committee to advise and assist the Council on matters relating to Part IV (conservation of properties of cultural heritage value or interest) and Part V (identification of a potential Heritage Conservation District) and such other matters as Council may specify in the by-law." The Act goes further to prescribe the general governance of a Heritage Committee, including that it shall be composed of not fewer than five (5) members appointed by by-law.

Under Part IV of the Act, once a Heritage Committee is established, Council is **required** to consult with it:

- during the designation process for individual properties and for districts;
- on applications to alter designated properties;
- on applications to demolish or remove;
- on applications to repeal designation by-law;

Under Part V of the Act, once a municipal heritage committee is established, Council is **required** to consult with it before passing a by-law to define one or more areas as an area to be examined for future designation as a heritage conservation district.



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DISCUSSION

The Ontario Heritage Act does require a municipality to maintain a register of properties which have been designated as having cultural heritage value or interests. The Township of South Frontenac inherited the designated properties from the former Township of Portland and has maintained the records for those properties. The Act also suggests that such a register not be limited to designated properties but may also include other properties which have interest and value.

The legislation is very clear that it is at Council's discretion whether they wish to establish a Heritage Committee to advise and assist Council in executing its responsibilities under the Heritage Act, as well as other matters related to heritage that Council deems appropriate.

Beyond maintaining and expanding the municipal heritage property register, a Heritage Committee could assist Council in the research, education, promotion and celebration of the heritage of the community. Programs such as new interpretive plaques of heritage locations and features, additional historical walking tours, future Doors Open events, coordination of local and regional heritage interests etc... could be tasked to a Heritage Committee. In this regard a Heritage Committee could be helpful in telling the story of the heritage of the community. It is commonly held that promotion of a community's heritage contributes to a sense of place and distinctiveness, enhances the overall attraction of a community as a place to live and visit and is a positive influence on the local economy.

OPTIONS:

#1 Maintain Status Quo: There would be no budgetary impact or increase demands on staff/Council by maintaining the status quo. However this option does not provide any additional resources to assist Council in its promotion of the heritage of the community.

#2 Expand Mandate of Existing Committee(s): This option would take advantage of established relationships with Council. It would require specific negotiations with the existing committees to deem their interest in an expanded mandate. This option would provide Council with additional resources to help promote the heritage of the community. By utilizing an existing Committee(s) such as the Portland District and Area Heritage Society or the Bedford Historical Society, Council would be able to consolidate its heritage actions under existing committees. However, such an expanded role may be too much for an existing committee to take on and may result in mandate conflicts. It is also possible that existing committee members may not have the complete skill set and knowledge necessary to fulfill the expanded mandate.

#3 Create New Heritage Committee: This option would provide Council with a new Committee focused on responsibilities under the Heritage Act and promotion of community heritage. It would provide Council with additional resources to enhance its promotion of the heritage of the community. A new committee would provide Council with the opportunity to select members with the required skills and knowledge. Such a Committee could be tasked with coordinating with other groups currently promoting heritage in the Committee.

FINANCIAL and STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS

If Council decides to have a Heritage Committee there would be a need for a modest operating budget to cover costs associated with memberships to various umbrella organizations, education/conferences, materials and supplies and implementation of an annual approved work plan. There would also be a need for a modest amount of staff time associated with supporting the Committee's activities. An annual budget of \$2,000 should be an initial estimate for deliberation purposes.

Submitted/approved by: Wayne Orr, CAO

**Prepared by: Forbes Symon, Manager of
Development Services**