



**Subject: Municipal Heritage Registry - First Round Revisions**

**To: Council**

**From: Planning and Development Department**

Report Number: 2021-309

Meeting Date: December 13, 2021

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### **Recommendation:**

That Planning and Development Department Report 2021-309 be received;

That Council approve removing the properties listed in Appendix A of Planning and Development Department Report 2021-309 from the Municipal Heritage Registry; and

That Planning and Museum staff be directed to review the properties remaining on the registry and provide Council with further recommendations.

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### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update regarding the work that has been put into the review of the Municipal Heritage Registry, as well as recommend the removal of over 50 properties currently listed on the registry.

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### **Background:**

At its meeting on November 9, 2009, Port Colborne City Council adopted the City's current Municipal Heritage Registry. The registry was prepared a number of years ago by university students. Essentially, any property with a dwelling/building that was 100 years or older was added to the list. The Heritage Port Colborne Committee of the day noted that the list would still warrant further review, but it was necessary to adopt the registry, albeit a large one, to act as an early warning system. To date, it has become apparent that this review was never conducted.

Throughout the years since the registry's adoption, Planning staff have processed over 20 separate requests to have a property removed from the list. These requests typically come in through the form of a demolition permit application. Each request takes up a

considerable amount of staff time, as well as requires Heritage Committee and Council meetings to process the application.

While considering a request for the removal of a property from the registry on April 26, 2021, Council encouraged Planning staff to begin refining the listed properties on the registry in an effort to reduce the number of requests coming forward. Planning staff noted that it would be the goal of the summer student to review each property on the registry.

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## **Discussion:**

Section 27 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* requires that municipalities keep a register of properties that are of cultural heritage value or interest. The registry contains both “listed” properties and “designated” properties under Part IV of the Act.

Under staff’s supervision, the summer student was able to complete an extensive review of the registry. Each of the 552 properties were reviewed, documented, photographed and placed into a rating system. The rating system was primarily designed to review for architectural significance, contextual significance, and condition.

At its meeting on September 21, 2021, the Port Colborne Heritage Committee reviewed properties with a 0/10 rating. Properties included in the “zero” threshold were addresses that did not exist, vacant lots, and newly constructed buildings. The Committee was cautious in their approach; however, they recommended removing over 50 properties from the registry. For addresses that had buildings or dwellings on them, the Committee recommended that a second opinion be obtained from the City’s Museum and Archives staff. The list of “zero” rated properties and the Committee’s recommendation regarding each can be found in Appendix A.

Planning staff agree with the Committee’s recommendations. It is important to note that there could be other reasons for why properties may have originally been included in the registry, which is why the second opinion from the Museum staff is recommended. Further, staff would like to emphasize that if a property is removed from the list during this review, it could be added to the list again in the future. The Heritage Committee and staff will continue work on refining the list in the coming months in an effort to ensure the list only contains the City’s most significant properties. Staff note that the entire rating list has been provided as Appendix B; however, not all properties have been subject to a review from the Heritage Committee at this time.

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## **Internal Consultations:**

The Port Colborne Heritage Committee has reviewed each property with a 0/10 rating. Museum and Archives staff will be assisting with the next portion of the review for

properties with higher ratings. The goal of the Museum review is to ensure there are no glaring issues with removing an existing property from the registry.

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### **Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications at this time. The review was completed with existing staff resources and the sequential review being conducted by Museum staff will also be completed with current staff resources. Any further review of the properties would need expertise of a consultant who specializes in heritage properties.

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### **Public Engagement:**

Public Engagement is not required for Heritage Registry refinements, however Planning staff have been notifying residents with heritage inquiries that the registry is currently undergoing a review. Further, staff note that recent changes to the *Ontario Heritage Act* require that municipalities notify property owners when their property is added to the registry. This notification is not required for a property's removal from the registry; however, Planning staff recommend that the City notify each property owner remaining on the registry once the review is complete.

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### **Strategic Plan Alignment:**

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar(s) of the strategic plan:

- Service and Simplicity - Quality and Innovative Delivery of Customer Services
  - People: Supporting and Investing in Human Capital
  - Governance: Communications, Engagement, and Decision-Making
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### **Conclusion:**

Planning staff would like to personally recognize and thank the Summer Planning Student, Ella Morkem, for all her hard work on bringing this list forward for Heritage Committee and Council consideration. Under the supervision of Planning staff, Ella was able to attend, document and photograph every property on the list in her short few months in the summer. Staff wish Ella well in her current year of studies.

Staff recommend that Council approve the recommendations set forth by the Heritage Committee and remove the properties as outlined in Appendix A from the Municipal Heritage Registry. Planning and Museum staff will continue working with the Heritage

Committee to bring forward further recommendations pertaining to properties where further investigation is recommended, and the remaining properties on the registry as provided in Appendix B.

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### **Appendices:**

- a. Zero-rated properties and Heritage Committee recommendation
- b. Comprehensive Municipal Heritage Registry rating list

Respectfully submitted,

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### **Report Approval:**

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.