

# Township of Woolwich Heritage Committee Minutes

June 12, 2024

5:00 p.m. – 6:11 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Hosted in Council Chambers and on Zoom  
24 Church Street West, Elmira

Meeting Chair: Councillor Bonnie Bryant, Chair

Attended: Colleen Willard-Holt, Co-Chair  
Katy Boose  
Natalia Smiarowski  
Terry Bowman  
Dianna Weltz  
*Kim Hodgson*

Staff Present: Stacey Bruce, Committee Support Specialist  
*Sherwin Meloney, Planner*  
*Shawn Buckley, Supervisor, Transportation Infrastructure, Regional Municipality of Waterloo*

Regrets: Karen Cummings  
Marg Drexler

Italics indicates a virtual participant.

## **Call to Order at 5:00 P.M.**

## **Land Acknowledgement**

Chair Councillor Bonnie Bryant read a land acknowledgment.

## **Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

None.

## **Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by Katy Boose

Seconded by Co-Chair Colleen Willard-Holt

That the minutes of April 10, 2024, be adopted as amended and the minutes of May 8, 2024, be adopted as presented.

...Carried.

## Action Item Review

The committee reviewed their May 8, 2024 meeting action items.

Of special note, By-Law has inspected the old St. Boniface School and found no roof damage. It was observed to be in good repair, although some patches of different-colored shingles were noted.

**ACTION:** Natalia Smiarowski to further revise the “Pros and Cons and FAQs About Heritage Designations” and “Revised letter to the owners of currently listed properties being considered by the township for heritage designation to gauge their interest”

**ACTION:** Diana Weltz to respond to Emily Shuurmans to invite her to either the September 11<sup>th</sup> or October 9<sup>th</sup> Heritage Committee meetings.

There was no further discussion regarding this.

## ACO June Update

Planner Sherwin Meloney explained that Bill 200, *The Homeowners Protection Act* has been proposed with provisions to extend full protection to non-designated properties of cultural heritage value or interest by two years to January 1, 2027.

The committee questioned the expected timeline for the province’s passage of this bill.

**ACTION:** S. Meloney will update the committee on the expected date for the determination of Bill 200's passage.

There was no further discussion regarding this.

## West Montrose Bridge – Heritage Designation By-Law 60-2007 Amendment

The committee reviewed the heritage impact assessment for the West Montrose Bridge.

Moved by Katy Boose  
Seconded by Dianna Weltz

“Be it resolved that the Woolwich Township Heritage Committee accepts the proposal from the Region of Waterloo to remove the white cladding from the West Montrose Bridge so that visitors can see the inner workings of the bridge like the bailey truss.”

Questions were raised about the email proposal, included in the June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Heritage Committee Meeting Agenda from Michelle Pinto, Senior Engineer, Transportation Rehabilitation (Design & Construction), Region of Waterloo to the Woolwich, Heritage Committee on the removal of interior white cladding from the West Montrose Bridge prior to its rehabilitation.

In response, Shawn Buckley, Supervisor of Transportation Infrastructure for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, clarified that only the middle portion of the cladding is proposed for early removal, due to its poor condition, while it will remain at all four corners to conceal the bridge’s bearings and fire system, like in the bridge’s rehabilitation plan.

The intent of this proposal was described to save costs by removing the deteriorated cladding this year, which residents have raised concerns about due to its poor condition around their

observations of collapsing boards instead of conducting additional costly repairs in advance of its scheduled proposed removal during rehabilitation next year.

It was noted that the exposed historic interior of the bridge could be of public interest before the bridge is rehabilitated and that educational signboards are also proposed to be posted around the bridge to showcase and highlight the bridges exposed internal features like the steel bailey truss.

The committee discussed safety concerns regarding access to the bridge's interior by exploratory people and wildlife while management plans for this were emphasized.

Believing it would attract public interest, the committee approved this proposal.

...Carried.

The West Montrose Bridge Heritage Designation By-Law 60-2007 Amendment was discussed upon questioning from the committee.

At this point in the meeting S. Buckley left.

Moved by Terry Bauman

Seconded by Co-Chair: Colleen Willard-Holt

“Be it resolved that the Woolwich Township Heritage Committee recommends proceeding with preferred alternative C2 amendments to By-Law 60-2007 as described in the West Montrose Covered Bridge Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Revision prepared by Unterman McPhail Associates for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo in April 2024.”

Sherwin Meloney, Planner, clarified the designation By-Law amendment process and By-Law 60-2007 amendment list for the Woolwich Heritage Committee, based on the West Montrose Covered Bridge Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Revision prepared by Unterman McPhail Associates for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo in April 2024. He noted that alternative C2 amendments were the committee's prior suggestion.

The timeline for providing a response and recommendation to Council for future approval to proceed with rehabilitation under the *Ontario Heritage Act* was discussed. The potential impacts on the heritage attributes of the bridge were reviewed, including:

- The 100-year time capsule within the bridge from 1910 and plans for its removal and celebration.
- The in-kind replacement of materials removed from the bridge.
- Concerns about potential obstruction of the bridge's view due to vehicle height bars and the bridge's weight constraint signs, ultimately accepting their installation for safety reasons.

The future use of the bridge's steel for art and as cross markers at local trail crossings was considered based on its quality and potential modification but then was finally disregarded.

...Carried.

**ACTION:** S. Meloney to discuss with M. Pinto the committee's wishes to repurpose removed materials from the West Montrose Bridge and to be notified when construction starts.

**ACTION:** The committee to contact M. Pinto regarding locating the 100-year time capsule located within the cement of the West Montrose Bridge.

There was no further discussion regarding this.

## **Reclaimed Materials**

### Old Winterbourne School House Timbers

Kim Hodgson commented that she has not received a response via email from the region regarding this and will follow up with a phone call tomorrow.

### West Montrose Bridge

In response to M. Pinto, Engineer of Transportation Rehabilitation (Design & Construction) at the Region of Waterloo, regarding the repurposing of materials from the West Montrose Bridge, the committee confirmed their suggestion to create benches from the materials. S. Buckley had noted that an overall quality assessment of the white cladding is needed, and these panels would require gluing together to be suitable for repurposing. The committee emphasized a preference for larger timbers if suitable.

There was no further discussion regarding this.

## **Work Plan**

K. Boose announced that she does not have capacity to meet with the historical planner from Guelph as previously discussed.

**ACTION:** Co-Chair: C. Willard-Holt to connect with the interested historical planner from Guelph to set up a virtual meeting between 9-4 pm for interested committee members to attend.

There was no further discussion regarding this.

## **Heritage Day (Sept 24, 2024) Plans**

The committee discussed launching their ghost community tour for Heritage Day. Other ideas for Heritage Day were considered by the committee including resharing the Elmira walking tour materials, library displays, and electronic sign board displays. The committee also discussed social media posts for Heritage Day, including general heritage information, designated properties, WWII-related content, and the township's forbearers, to be posted leading up to and a few days after Heritage Day.

**ACTION:** Co-Chair: C. Willard-Holt to recirculate the Elmira walking tour information.

**ACTION:** Co-Chair C. Willard-Holt to connect with Township staff and coordinate the committee's Heritage Day Plans.

**ACTION:** K. Boose to connect with Rae Ann Bauman, Executive Officer, Woolwich Township to see what kind of timeline she needs regarding Heritage Day social media posts.

There was no further discussion regarding this.

## **New Business**

Stacey Bruce described the update underway to the Township's website highlighting that the committee's agendas and minutes will now be posted to the calendar, but that all of the past agendas and minutes will be available to the public by request. The committee questioned what the new website would look like and expressed concerns about being able to find information and navigate the new webpage.

**ACTION:** S. Bruce to invite Steph Hergott, IT project to the September 11<sup>th</sup> Heritage Meeting to provide a tutorial of the new heritage section of the Township's website.

**ACTION:** All committee members to review the new heritage website before the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting to provide feedback.

There was no further discussion regarding this.

## **Items for the Next Agenda – Sept 11, 2024**

Following up on the interest of an owner to designation a property with a unique old stone porch, including gathering necessary designation materials for this as well as obtaining a copy of a collection of photographs of very old houses in the area from a senior community member were discussed.

**ACTION:** N. Smiarowski volunteered to take heritage pictures within the community as needed.

An update was provided that the committee is awaiting scanned pictures for the Elmira Carnegie Library Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report. Further details were also noted as needed for this report regarding determining any changes made to the exterior of the building overtime.

There was no further discussion regarding this.

## **Adjournment (6:11 P.M.)**

Moved by K. Boose

Seconded by Co-Chair C. Willard-Holt

That the meeting be adjourned to meet again on Sept 11, 2024.

...Carried.

Recorder: Stacey Bruce, Committee Support Specialist