

REPORT

Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: September 27, 2022

FROM: Planning Services Department

DATE: September 20, 2022

SUBJECT: Notice of intention to demolish – 3017 Old Bronte Road

LOCATION: 3017 Old Bronte Road

WARD: Ward 7

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council issue a notice of intention to repeal By-law 2022-095, a by-law to designate the Former Palermo Methodist Church Parsonage at 3017 Old Bronte Road as a property of cultural heritage value or interest, subject to Clauses 2 and 3 below.
2. That the owner of 3017 Old Bronte Road enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement (HEA) with the town to salvage and store materials from the Former Palermo Methodist Church Parsonage building to be used in a new commemorative feature within the site, in conformity with this report and with the Agreement to be in form and content satisfactory to the Town Solicitor and the Director of Planning Services or their designates.
3. That the Heritage Easement Agreement be executed prior to the issuance of a notice of intention to repeal By-law 2022-095 by Council and prior to the issuance of a building permit for demolition of the Former Palermo Methodist Church Parsonage building.
4. That the new commemorative feature at 3017 Old Bronte Road be protected in perpetuity through either a Heritage Easement Agreement or through a designation by-law under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- The property is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for the Former Palermo Methodist Church Parsonage, an early 19th century settlers' cabin with later 19th century Gothic Revival style addition.

- The property owner recently initiated restoration work on the structure which resulted in the discovery of significant structural issues.
- A structural assessment report was completed for the house and recommends that it be demolished and that historic materials be salvaged.
- Staff is recommending that Council repeal the designation by-law after the owner enters into a Heritage Easement Agreement to salvage remnants of the house to be used in a commemorative feature on the site, to be protected in perpetuity through either a Heritage Easement Agreement or through a designation by-law under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

BACKGROUND:

The property at 3017 Old Bronte Road is located on the east side of Old Bronte Road just north of Dundas Street in the historic village of Palermo. A Location Map is attached as Appendix A.

In August 2022, with the support of the property owner, Council passed By-law 2022-095, a by-law to designate the Former Palermo Methodist Church Parsonage as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. This By-law is attached as Appendix B.

In summer 2022, the property owner hired a heritage contractor to complete restoration work on the building, with plans to repair the building where needed and apply for a heritage grant to restore the exterior wood cladding (currently covered by Insulbrick asphalt shingles), the wood trim and windows. A new roof was completed and the non-historic concrete porch and sidewalks around the house were removed to expose the historic foundation to begin repairs.

During this work, serious structural issues and deterioration were discovered by the heritage contractor. Instead of an intact stone foundation, the contractor found a collection of loose fieldstones with no mortar. Further, the sill plates around the house and heavy timber plate beam holding up the framing of the house had been in direct contact with the soil and had suffered significant deterioration and in some areas were missing sections entirely. Due to this deterioration, the framing of the house in some areas is hanging with no support from below and is leaning with a 25cm slant. There is also significant rot in the wall and roof framing from water infiltration.

The property owner then hired structural engineers to complete an assessment of the building's structural integrity. A Structural Assessment Report was completed by Revive Structural Engineering, a local engineering firm with experience in heritage structures. This document is attached as Appendix C and also includes a letter from the heritage contractor supporting the recommendations in the Structural Assessment Report.

In the report, the structural engineers make the following recommendations:

- That the building be deconstructed
- That a perimeter safety hoarding fence be installed to prevent entrance
- That the building be photographed, surveyed and documented for its historical significance

The restoration contractor further recommends that materials from the building be salvaged and repurposed. More details on the assessment and recommendations are included in Appendix C.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Staff have reviewed the submitted documents and have had discussions with the heritage contractor on site while inspecting the building's areas of concern. It is staff's professional opinion that in order to conserve the building in its current form, a significant amount of material would need to be replaced. This includes the foundation, plate beams, wall framing, roof framing and cladding. This would mean the construction of a new building to match the existing house, possibly using some salvaged materials, but mostly new materials. The end result would be a replica with very few heritage elements remaining.

The cultural heritage value of the property is outlined in the current designation by-law, attached as Appendix B. The property is considered to have design and physical value for its c.1819 timber frame cabin and its late 19th century front Gothic Revival front wing. It also has historical and associative value for its associations with the village of Palermo and the Palermo Methodist Church. And finally, the property is contextually significant as low-scale residential remnant of the historic village of Palermo.

It is recommended that this cultural heritage value be protected through a number of conservation methods, to be outlined in the Heritage Easement Agreement:

- Photo documentation of the building prior to and during the dismantling of the building
- Salvage of intact historic materials, including but not limited to: wood beams, timber framing, wood windows, wood window trim, wood vergeboard, wood cladding and foundation stone
- Proper and safe storage of salvaged materials
- Construction of a new commemorative feature on the subject property, complete with signage and/or other interpretive devices used to tell the history and cultural heritage value of the property
- Release of any salvaged materials not used in the commemorative feature to an appropriate person or company who will re-use the materials

Staff are also recommending that the commemorative feature be protected in perpetuity either through the provisions of the Heritage Easement Agreement (or an additional HEA) or through designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. There are benefits to both methods and staff will recommend the method that is best suited for these circumstances. In both scenarios, the town can require the protection of the heritage attributes and require heritage approval for alterations that impact these heritage attributes.

It is expected that the commemorative feature will be designed and constructed in conjunction with the future redevelopment of the site to ensure that the commemorative feature is in an appropriate and visible location. Given that the commemorative feature is to be a protected heritage feature, the new development will need to consider the cultural heritage value of the commemorative feature and the village of Palermo.

The new development will also need to consider the following cultural heritage policies in Official Plan Amendment 37, adopted by Council in July 2021:

22.4.2 Cultural Heritage

- a) New *development* shall *conserve* Palermo Village's *cultural heritage resources* by:
 - i. maintaining and integrating *cultural heritage resources*;
 - ii. ensuring the prominence of *cultural heritage resources*, particularly in the area northeast of Dundas Street West and Old Bronte Road;
 - iii. employing a combination of measures including but not limited to building setbacks, stepbacks in the built form, and the use of building materials
- b) Where all options to *conserve* a *cultural heritage resource* on its existing site have been exhausted, it shall be relocated to a suitable location within Palermo Village.
- c) The heritage *character* of Palermo Village should be documented and commemorated through the *development* process.

In undertaking the proposed conservation methods outlined in this report, staff are of the opinion that the cultural heritage value of the subject property will be conserved and respected as much as possible given the circumstances. The interpretive display on the commemorative feature can explain and conserve the property's design and physical value, historical and associative value as well as its contextual value. To help conserve the heritage value of the building, many of the designated heritage attributes outlined in the attached Designation By-law 2022-095 will be salvaged and/or re-used in the commemorative feature, including:

- The footprint and one-storey walls of the original one-storey cabin (the timber framing);
- Historic wood cladding;
- The footprint and form of the two-storey westerly portion (the wood framing);
- Historic horizontal wood siding;
- Historic wood soffit, vergeboard and finials;
- Four sets of historic multipaned wood casement windows on the first floor, including wood window trim;
- Two 2/2 wood windows on the second storey of the south elevation, including wood window trim;
- The covered arched vent above the window in the front gable; and
- Historic wood door surround of front door, including any covered historic sidelights and panelling.

To allow for the dismantling of the house and to ensure that this conservation work is completed, staff have made the four recommendations included at the beginning of this report. Staff are seeking input from the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee on the recommendations in this report.

A report on this matter, including the recommendations made by the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee, is anticipated to be presented to Oakville Council at its meeting on October 11, 2022 for a decision on the matter.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

If notice is to be issued for the repeal of the designation By-law 2022-095, notice will be given in accordance with section 31 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

(B) FINANCIAL

None

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

The Legal Department will continue to be engaged as required.

(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal(s) to:

- enhance our cultural environment
- be the most livable town in Canada

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

A Climate Emergency was declared by Council in June 2019 for the purposes of strengthening the Oakville community commitment in reducing carbon

footprints. The salvage and conservation of materials from the Former Palermo Methodist Parsonage building contributes to the town's initiatives to reduce carbon footprints.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Location Map
Appendix B – Designation By-law 2022-095
Appendix C – Structural Assessment Report

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