

REPORT

Council

Meeting Date: November 7, 2022

FROM: Planning Services Department

DATE: October 25, 2022

SUBJECT: Notice of Intention to Demolish – 1297 Dundas Street East

LOCATION: 1297 Dundas Street East

WARD: Ward 6

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the owner of 1297 Dundas Street East enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement(s) (HEA) with the town to salvage and store materials from the Turner Farm barn and house to be used in new commemorative features 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 designate;
2. That the Heritage Easement Agreement(s) be executed prior to the issuance of a building permit for demolition of the Turner Farm barn and house structures; and
3. That the new commemoratives feature be protected in perpetuity through either a Heritage Easement Agreement(s) 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 subject property is on the Oakville Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest as a listed property.
- A Notice of Intention to Demolish has been received to dismantle the barn and house structures and salvage materials from these structures.
- The Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee has reviewed this application and supports the staff recommendations in this report.
- Staff is recommending that the owner enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement to salvage remnants of the house and barn to be used in

commemorative features 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 is located on the north side of Dundas Street East and west of Ninth Line. A location map for the property is attached as Appendix A. The 0.48-hectare property is known as the Turner Farm and contains a 19th century 1 ½ storey frame house and an early 20th century concrete block barn with a contemporary balloon-frame extension.

In 2016, Oakville Town Council endorsed the recommendations of the Phase One inventory of the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy. This inventory included the subject property at 1297 Dundas Street East, identified in the ‘low priority’ category.

In July 2020, a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER), attached as Appendix B, was completed by heritage consultants at Golder Associates Ltd. This report was required by the town to determine if the property warranted designation as a cultural heritage landscape. The report concluded that the property did not meet the criteria required for designation as a cultural heritage landscape, and Council removed the property from the implementation of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy.

The CHER also provided an evaluation of the cultural heritage value of the property, including a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and a Description of Key Heritage Attributes. These are outlined in Appendix B and have been included below.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design or physical value for its storey-and-a-half, timber frame vernacular farmhouse known locally as “Turner House”, and its pre-1909 timber frame and concrete block barn. Constructed between 1873 and 1877, the main block of Turner House is unique in that it does not appear to any specific architectural style yet its prominent Lucarne windows may reflect a British architectural influence.

North of the house is a two-and-a-half storey Central Ontario Gambrel Barn that was built before 1909 in timber frame over a rockface concrete masonry unit foundation. The Central Ontario Barn type was widely built during the late 1860s and 1870s and continued to be built into the 20th century, and the use of rockface concrete block was common in Ontario from approximately 1905 into the 1930s. The barn can be considered rare in type and for present-day Trafalgar Township with only three similar style barns remaining in the immediate area.

Description of Key Heritage Attributes

Key attributes that reflect the design value or physical value of the property include its:

- *Three-bay, one-and-a-half storey main block farmhouse with:*
 - *Timber frame construction*
 - *Fieldstone foundation*
 - *Side gable roof*
 - *Pair of Lucarne windows on southeast elevation*
 - *Central entrance*
 - *Symmetrical fenestration on northeast and southwest façade*

- *Barn with:*
 - *Gambrel roof*
 - *Timber frame construction*
 - *Lower wall constructed of rockface course masonry units with tooled edge*
 - *Upper level clad in board and batten*
 - *Three bay, central passage floor plan*
 - *Double-leaf Dutch door on southeast and southwest elevation with one-over-one single hung windows and a concrete lintel*
 - *Large central double sliding door and ramp on northwest facade*

Both the house and the barn have been vacant for the past two years and have been the subject of extensive vandalism. The owners have therefore submitted the subject Notice of Intention to Demolish application to dismantle the structures and salvage remnants that are considered to be key heritage attributes.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Staff have reviewed the submitted documents and have conducted a site visit with the heritage consultant to assess the property and discuss the proposal.

Staff are recommending that the cultural heritage value identified in the CHER be protected through a Heritage Easement Agreement, or through two separate HEAs, one for each structure (to be determined in consultation with the applicants and the Legal Department). The HEA(s) will require the owner to dismantle, salvage and store key heritage attributes to be used in two new commemorative structures to be constructed nearby.

In discussions with the applicant, the heritage consultant, Parks and Open Space staff and Planning Services staff, Heritage Planning staff have determined that the best approach for the structures is their conservation and commemoration through the following means:

- 1) Salvage and reconstruction of the original timber frame structure of the earliest portion of the house
 - Salvaged materials to include posts, top plates, tie beams, door posts, girts, braces, sills, pegs and floor joists where tied directly to sills
 - Subsequent investigations have concluded that the Lucarne windows and dormers were not original to the timber frame house and they have therefore not been included in the list of materials recommended for salvage
 - The goal is to reconstruct the skeleton of the frame structure without roofing or cladding material so that the craftsmanship and historic materials of the structure are visible rather than hidden behind new materials
 - The subject lands are included in the Dundas Urban Core (DUC) area that will eventually include medium and high density mixed-use buildings. The goal is to reconstruct the timber frame structure within a new larger building within the DUC (i.e. the front foyer of a mixed-use building)

- 2) Salvage of barn materials and construction of a new shade structure
 - Salvaged materials to include hand-hewn beams, circular sawn beams, floorboards, exterior barn boards, metal roofing and metal fixtures (i.e. hay fork, pulleys, hinges, door tracks)
 - Subsequent investigations have concluded that both the large central double sliding doors and the Dutch doors were replaced in recent decades and are therefore not included in the list of materials recommended for salvage
 - The heritage consultant is also recommending that the rockface course cement blocks not be salvaged for the commemorative feature and that the focus be on the wood materials
 - The goal is to construct a new shade structure using the salvaged materials in the nearby Neighbourhood Park, located approximately 450m north of the existing barn. In the future, the structure will be owned by the town and managed by the Parks and Open Space Department.

The HEA will also include a number of other requirements, such as:

- Financial securities to ensure the work is done in accordance with the Heritage Easement Agreement(s)
- A Conservation Plan(s) to provide details on how the salvaged materials are to be used in the reconstruction and construction of the two commemorative features
- Interpretation devices such as a historical plaques

- The salvage of materials, historic or otherwise, not used for the commemoration features in order to divert them from the landfill where possible.

Staff are also recommending that the two commemorative features be protected in perpetuity either through the provisions of the Heritage Easement Agreement(s) (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.

In undertaking the proposed conservation methods outlined in this report, staff are of the opinion that the cultural heritage value of the heritage resources on the property will be conserved. The timber frame of the house is considered to be the most significant feature of this structure and will be displayed in a manner that allows the public to appreciate the materials and craftsmanship, all while learning about the settler history of the area and historic construction techniques.

The barn is a significantly large building and while there are examples of barns being rehabilitated for new uses, it is not feasible to conserve every barn in its entirety within new residential and mixed-use developments. Building a new structure out of salvaged materials from the barn allows for the conservation of significant materials while providing a practical structure that is already included as part of the town's park programming. Interpretation devices will allow the public to learn about the history of the farm and the construction techniques of barns, while seeing and touching the historic materials up close.

To allow for the dismantling of the house and barn, and to ensure that this conservation work is completed properly, staff have made the three 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 separate report regarding this matter was presented to the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee at its meeting on October 18, 2022. The Committee supported the staff recommendations in this report.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- (A) PUBLIC**
None

(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 property's barn and house contributes to the town's initiatives to reduce carbon footprints.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Location Map

Appendix B – Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report by Golder Associates Ltd.

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