

REPORT

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING DATE: APRIL 15, 2019

FROM: Planning Services Department

DATE: March 26, 2019

SUBJECT: Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy - Phase Two - Gairloch Gardens

LOCATION: 1288-1306 Lakeshore Road East

WARD: 3

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report, attached as Appendix A to the report dated March 26, 2019 from Planning Services, be received; and
2. That Gairloch Gardens be recognized as a significant cultural heritage landscape and move into Phase Three: Implementation of Protection Measures.

KEY FACTS:

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

- The Town of Oakville adopted the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy in January 2014 and Phase One of the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy implementation was completed in February 2016;
- The Phase Two assessment of the eight high priority properties is complete and staff are undertaking assessment of medium priority properties;
- Gairloch Gardens was identified as a medium priority property;
- Heritage Planning staff worked on the draft Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report for Gairloch Gardens with other Town Departments including Parks and Open Space; Recreation and Culture; and, Legal, and consulted with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation; Oakville Galleries; and, local historical societies;
- On March 26, 2019, Heritage Planning staff sought, received and incorporated input from the Heritage Committee on the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report.

BACKGROUND:*Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy*

In January 2014, the Town of Oakville adopted the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy, which set the foundation for the primary identification of candidate cultural heritage landscapes and the future inventory and evaluation of significant cultural heritage landscapes. It also developed a formal process for addressing the conservation of cultural heritage landscape resources in the Town of Oakville.

The Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy is based on best practices in municipal heritage planning and applicable legislation, including the *Planning Act* and the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA). Section One of the Strategy provided an introduction to cultural heritage landscapes and the applicable legislation. Section Two defined what cultural heritage landscapes are and how to identify and evaluate them. Section Three outlined the legislation and tools that are available to conserve cultural heritage landscapes, and Section Four provided conservation strategies for cultural heritage landscapes. The Strategy was not an exhaustive study on the history of Oakville, nor was it a fulsome inventory of all potential cultural heritage landscapes in the town.

Implementation of the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy

During the presentation of the "Heritage Planning Work Plan Update 2015-2017" on February 9, 2015, Town Council *"requested staff to undertake a review of the town's major open space areas in order to determine if they should be appropriately designated as a cultural heritage landscape, and further if the work cannot be completed in 2015, staff are requested to report to the budget committee on the required resources to complete this study in 2015."* A report was sent to the Budget Committee in March 2015 identifying the additional funding that would be required to begin implementation of the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy. The implementation was broken into three phases:

- Phase One: Inventory
- Phase Two: Research and Assessment
- Phase Three: Implementation of Protection

Phase One: Inventory

The Phase One Inventory included 63 properties identified by staff and stakeholders and each inventory report included site details, photos, maps and an assessment of the priority level for protection of the property. The inventory recognized eight high priority properties, 16 medium priority properties, 27 low priority properties and 12 properties for which no further action was recommended.

Properties that were assessed by the consultant to be in the high or medium priority categories were considered vulnerable to change (development pressures, natural forces, neglect), to have insufficient existing protection, and/or to have a high level of cultural heritage value or interest.

On February 16, 2016, Council directed that the eight high priority properties proceed to Phase Two of the implementation of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy, Research and Assessment. Six of the eight high priority properties were addressed by Heritage Oakville and Town Council in April and May of 2017, and the last two were addressed by Heritage Oakville and Town Council in September and October 2018. The remaining medium and low priority properties will be addressed in future Heritage Planning work plans.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Phase Two: Research and Assessment

The objective of Phase Two of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy is to build on the findings of Phase One, and to complete cultural heritage landscape assessments for those properties for which further investigation was recommended. The draft Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report for Gairloch Gardens has been prepared by Heritage Planning staff.

Phase Two Methodology

The draft Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report for Gairloch Gardens followed the same methodology used in the previous reports and is outlined below:

- Cultural Heritage Landscape Policy Analysis
Heritage Planning staff reviewed heritage conservation best practices as they relate to cultural heritage landscapes, and reviewed the existing work completed to date by, and for, the Town of Oakville. This review considered how cultural heritage landscapes are identified and evaluated.
- Site Specific Analysis
 - Property overview – Identification of existing conditions, topography, physical description, mapping and policy framework;
 - Property context – Description of the physical context, adjacent properties, surrounding landscape for each property;
 - Research – Undertook primary and secondary research at historical societies and library, Land Registry Office, archival collections and aerial maps and historic images;
 - Site Visit – Documentation of current conditions of site and environs;
 - Historical Themes, Cultural Landscape Layers and Views – Identification of the key thematic periods of each property, the key cultural landscape layers and associated views.
 - Draft Evaluations – Utilizing Ontario Regulation 9/06, Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, (OHA).

- **Engagement**
Consultation with impacted Town departments was ongoing throughout the project. The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation; Oakville Galleries; and, local historical societies were also consulted in order to gain additional information and to ensure the accuracy of research materials. Materials sought were specific to developing an understanding of the history of property owners, property changes, and the property's historical and geographical context.
- **Report**
Based upon the foregoing work, a draft Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report was prepared for Gairloch Gardens and is attached as Appendix A. This Report includes:
 - An executive summary, introduction and methodology;
 - A list of sources and stakeholder engagements;
 - Background information on the history, design and context of the property;
 - Current and historical photographs and maps documenting the property;
 - Analysis of the dominant historical themes, layered, overlapping and/or nested cultural heritage landscape, and significant views;
 - An evaluation of the property using a Regulation 9/06 Assessment, in order to gauge the level of cultural heritage significance; and,
 - A draft summary of cultural heritage value and a list of features which may warrant conservation.

The draft Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report identifies Gairloch Gardens as a significant designed cultural heritage landscape, which displays the recognizable imprint of human settlement and activities on land over time.

Gairloch Gardens has design and physical value as a rare and representative example of an early to mid-20th century lakefront estate. It has cultural heritage value for its direct associations with the theme of early 20th century, rural lakefront estate development activities in Oakville; and, to the late 19th/early 20th century concept known as the *Park Movement*.

Gairloch Gardens has historical and associative value because of its direct connection to Lt. Col. William Gordon MacKendrick and James Arthur Gairdner, wealthy Toronto businessmen, and the property owners who physically and fundamentally shaped the subject property into what it is today. Further, the property yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of early 20th century, rural lakefront estate development activities in

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Oakville; and, to the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) who, as the area's pre-contact indigenous inhabitants, have an interest in Lower Morrison Creek.

Gairloch Gardens has contextual value as the location of a public art gallery/art museum (*Oakville Galleries in Gairloch Gardens*), and a community park (*Gairloch Gardens*) which defines, maintains and supports the character of the area. The property remains physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings, including a number of nearby remnant, historic lakefront estates; Lake Ontario; and, Lower Morrison Creek. The property, including its gardens, waterfront access and public art gallery/art museum and art school, is a landmark within the Town of Oakville.

The draft Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report was reviewed and endorsed by the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee at its March 26, 2019 meeting.

If Council proceeds with protection under the *Ontario Heritage Act* for the cultural heritage landscape of Gairloch Gardens, a Cultural Heritage Landscape Conservation Plan would also be required as part of Phase Three.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

There is no legislated public process for the creation of Cultural Heritage Evaluation reports; however, Heritage Planning staff have liaised with relevant community stakeholders to receive information from the public in order to ensure complete and thorough research was undertaken.

(B) FINANCIAL

There is sufficient funding in the Capital Budget for implementation of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Study.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

Heritage Planning staff will be working with other impacted town departments including Parks and Open Space, and Recreation and Culture to share information that may potentially impact future town projects.

(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- provide outstanding service to our residents and businesses
- enhance our cultural environment
- be the most livable town in Canada

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(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

This report generally complies with the sustainability objectives of the Livable Oakville Plan.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Phase Two: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report, Gairloch Gardens

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