



OAKVILLE

REPORT

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING DATE: DECEMBER 02, 2019

FROM: Planning Services Department

DATE: November 27, 2019

SUBJECT: Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy Phase Two - Oakville Harbour

LOCATION: Oakville Harbour

WARD: Multiple Wards: 2, 3

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report, attached as Appendix A to the report dated November 27, 2019 from Planning Services, be endorsed; and,
2. That the Oakville Harbour 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, an Inventory Report, was completed in February 2016.
- The Oakville Harbour area consists of several properties that were identified individually in the Inventory Report, including: Lakeside Park, Erchless Estate and Shipyard Park, which were all identified as 'medium priority' and Tannery Park, which was identified as 'low priority'.
- Common Bond Collection Heritage Consultants, working in association with Timmins Martel Heritage Consulting, were retained by the Town of Oakville to undertake the Phase Two research and assessment (the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report), working with town staff.
- Oakville Harbour has been researched and evaluated and found to meet the criteria for a significant cultural heritage landscape.
- Heritage Planning staff recommend that Oakville Harbour move into Phase Three of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy: Implementation of Protection Measures.

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.

The Oakville Harbour area consists of several properties that were identified individually in the Inventory Report, including: Lakeside Park, Erchless Estate and Shipyard Park, which were all identified as 'medium priority' and Tannery Park, which was identified as 'low priority'.

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 are either currently being assessed by staff or will be addressed in future Heritage Planning work plans. The Oakville Harbour Phase Two Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report addresses four of the properties identified as medium or low priority.

This Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report was considered by the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee at their meeting on November 26, 2019. The Committee endorsed the staff recommendations.

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 Oakville Harbour has been prepared by the town's consultants, Common Bond Collective.

Phase Two Methodology

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

- Cultural Heritage Landscape Policy Analysis
The consultants 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;

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- 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
The consultants undertook consultation with a number of stakeholders in the Oakville Harbour area, including: the Oakville Club, the Lake Ontario Swimming Team (LOST), Oakville Lakeside Resident's Association (OLRA), Oakville Yacht Squadron, Sport Oakville, TOWHARF, Oakville Museum, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Association of Oakville Harbours, Oakville Historical Society, Oakville Power Boat Club, Oakville Lawn Bowling Club, Haudenosaunee Development Institute (HDI), Six Nations of the Grand River and Oakvillegreen.
- Consultation with impacted Town departments, including Parks and Open Space and Facilities and Construction, was also undertaken 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 the Oakville Harbour 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 description of features that will assist in the listing of heritage attributes.

The draft Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report identifies the Oakville Harbour as a significant evolved cultural heritage landscape, which displays the recognizable imprint of human settlement and activities on land over time. The Report has identified some preliminary areas of significance that would be further detailed in a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest, should Council direct that the property move into Phase Three: Implementation of Protection Measures:

Water & Natural Environment

The Study Area is associated with the unique geological and hydrological conditions of its situation at the confluence of Sixteen Mile Creek and Lake Ontario.

Indigenous Uses & Significance

The Study Area is associated with a long history of Indigenous use, with the river long serving as an important waterway for navigation. The recent history of use by the Mississauga dates to the mid-18th century. The harbour area supported rich fishing and hunting, and a seasonal encampments were established in the vicinity during temperate months. The harbour continues to hold special importance for the Mississauga of the Credit First Nation, who place spiritual importance on significant waterways and confluences.

Commercial Shipping

The Study Area is associated with the establishment of Oakville Harbour, and its growth into a thriving commercial port by the mid-19th century. The economic opportunity was clear from the outset, with the harbour established nearly half a decade before a townsite was formally laid out.

The rapid growth was characterized by heavy schooner traffic, hardwood and fuel storage yards, and the construction of numerous grain warehouses and other infrastructure along the east bank. Navy Street was the major artery related to the harbour and boomed with commercial, residential, hospitality and institutional development. Boatbuilding operations thrived, and a Custom House was established with Oakville designated an official Point of Entry. Following the railway's arrival the commercial shipping economy supported the mercantile, professional and industrial growth of Oakville.

Institutional Uses

The Study Area is associated with institutional uses formerly concentrated between the Erchless Estate and Market Square. As an official Port of Entry, customs operations were based on the Erchless Estate grounds from the mid-19th century into the 20th century. The block to the north was earmarked as a market grounds as late as 1833, and supported town council, market, and lock-up operations from the 1860s into the 20th century.

Boats & Shipbuilding

The Study Area is associated with shipbuilding, and a number of significant vessels built at or associated with the port. The harbour supported several shipyards during the mid-19th century, and Oakville's builders developed a reputation for the quality of their schooners. Following a decline in the 1860s, shipbuilding was revived in the 1880s when John Andrew established his yacht-building operation. Andrew's yard produced numerous prolific winners, continuing the tradition of excellence associated with Oakville shipbuilding. There are a number of notable craft associated with Oakville Harbour, notable among them the White Oak (b. 1867 by Duncan Chisholm), Aggie (b. 1887 by John Andrew) and Canada (b. 1896 by John Andrew).

Industrial Development

The Study Area is associated with the industrialization of Oakville after the 1850s. A number of notable operations were established established on the west side of the harbour area, including a tannery, foundry and sawmill, whereas the east side supported smaller operations for tanning and a carriage works.

Recreation & Public Amenity

The Study Area is associated with recreational uses that first emerged following the decline of commercial shipping in the 1860s. The purchase of a former hardwood fuel yard for Lakeside Park is exemplary of the transformation underway, with the harbour area supporting pleasure boating, racing, swimming, and picnicking for locals and tourists in the latter 19th century. In the 20th century tourism declined, but the harbour area remained an important to locals, with numerous recreational groups and clubs established in the area. These clubs' facilities have further contributed to the recreational landscape, and in the latter 19th the entire west bank of the river has been converted to parkland.

Commemoration & Heritage

As the original impetus for settlement, the Harbour is associated with the founding of Oakville and retains special meaning as part of the town's historic centre. The area accumulated additional built heritage components through

the progressive relocation of a number of historic structures in the 1950s and 1960s, each with its own set of associations. Initiated by Hazel Chisholm Mathews and the Oakville Historical Society, the series of relocations produced an eclectic collection of buildings within the Harbour's vicinity. The result reflects a particular era in the evolution of conservation practice that saw similar efforts elsewhere, both regionally and throughout North America.

The Harbour is also associated with a sustained connection to other heritage conservation and commemoration initiatives—for instance, as the location of several systems of interpretive signage, and of the Historical Society and Oakville Museum's holdings and programs. These activities in turn help to conserve the other significant associations and stories represented by the Harbour.

If Council directs that the Oakville Harbour proceed into Phase Three of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy and subsequent protection under the *Ontario Heritage Act* for the cultural heritage landscape of the Oakville Harbour, Heritage Planning staff note that a Cultural Heritage Landscape Conservation Plan would also be required in accordance with By-law 2018-019.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

There is no legislated public process for the creation of Cultural Heritage Evaluation reports; however, the consultants and 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. An Open House meeting was also held on November 14, 2019 to receive information from stakeholders and the general public.

(B) FINANCIAL

There is sufficient funding in the Capital Budget for implementation of the Phase Three of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy Implementation.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

Heritage Planning staff will be working with other impacted town departments including Parks and Open Space 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:

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- be accountable in everything we do
- enhance our cultural environment
- be the most livable town in Canada

(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

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

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Oakville Harbour Phase Two: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

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