

## REPORT

### PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 26, 2020

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**FROM:** Planning Services Department

**DATE:** October 21, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Knox 16 Presbyterian Church - Cultural Heritage Landscape Research Report

**LOCATION:** 1150 Dundas Street West

**WARD:** 5

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report, attached as Appendix A to the report dated October 21, 2020, from Planning Services, be endorsed.
2. That Knox Presbyterian Church Sixteen and Cemetery 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:

- Knox Presbyterian Church Sixteen (Knox Sixteen) was designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* in 1978 by By-law 1978-085.
- Heritage Planning staff have been working with members of the congregation on updating By-law 1978-085, including additional research analysis to ensure the property meets the requirements of Ontario Regulation 9/06, which was introduced into legislation many years after Knox Sixteen was designated as a property of cultural heritage value or interest.
- The new research and analysis for Knox Sixteen has revealed that the property meets the criteria for a significant cultural heritage landscape.
- Heritage Planning staff recommend that Knox Sixteen move into Phase Three of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy: Implementation of Protection Measures in order to create a new designation by-law for the property and a conservation plan for the cultural heritage landscape.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Livable Oakville Plan states that the town will protect and preserve cultural heritage landscapes by utilizing applicable legislation. Cultural heritage landscape provisions are included in the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the *Planning Act* and the *Provincial Policy Statement*, 2020.

In January 2014, the Town of Oakville adopted the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy, which was created based on industry best practices. The purpose of the Strategy was to provide a framework for the identification and protection of cultural heritage landscapes in the Town of Oakville and direction for protecting and managing these resources for the future. Recognizing that any landscape that has been deliberately modified by humans is a cultural landscape, the Strategy expands on that definition, indicating that only those cultural landscapes that have a deep connection with the history of the community and are valued by the community can be identified as 'cultural heritage landscapes'.

In 2015, the Town of Oakville undertook an inventory of potential cultural heritage landscapes. At that time, Knox Sixteen was not included in the list of potential cultural heritage landscapes, but the inventory report noted that it was not a definite listing of all cultural heritage landscapes in Oakville. As was the standard at the time, when the property was designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA) in 1978, designation By-law 1978-085 only provided a legal description of the property. There was no requirement within the OHA to include a statement of cultural heritage value or interest, nor a list of heritage attributes.

In 2019 and 2020, at the invitation of the minister and wardens of Knox Presbyterian Church Sixteen and Cemetery, an assessment was undertaken to gain an understanding of the property's heritage attributes and its cultural heritage value. This was done in order to update the 1978 designation by-law and to determine if the property met the criteria for a significant cultural heritage landscape.

The draft Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report was reviewed and endorsed by the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee on October 13, 2020.

**COMMENT/OPTIONS:***Phase Two: Research and Assessment*

The draft Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report for Knox Sixteen has been prepared by Heritage Planning staff.

The property has been considered as a comprehensive layered unit, including all structures and other potential cultural heritage resources on site (including known or potential archaeological resources). Background research included consultation

with the Wardens and the Reverend of Knox Presbyterian Sixteen; the Land Registry Office; the Ontario Genealogical Society; Oakville Historical Society; Trafalgar Township Historical Society; the Presbyterian Church in Canada; Dr. John R. Triggs, Associate Professor Wilfrid Laurier University; Library and Archives Canada; and, Oakville Public Library (central branch). It also included the review of primary and secondary records held by these organizations including their archival collections; Town of Oakville files; and, a review of current and historical aerial imagery and mapping.

Site visits were undertaken by Heritage Planning staff in July, September and November 2019; and, February and March 2020 in order to document current conditions and features of the property and relevant surrounding properties.

The research report provides many details about Knox Sixteen, which was constructed as a wood frame, plaster clad building in 1846 and was expanded and reclad in red brick masonry with a stone foundation in 1899. At that time, the congregation largely consisted of the inhabitants of 'Sixteen Hollow', later 'Proudfoot's Hollow', which was the village once located in the valley below the church.

Upon completion of the evaluation of the property, and after giving consideration to the layered, nested, and overlapping aspects of the property, including the evolution of its land-use history and its current conditions, Knox Presbyterian Church Sixteen and Cemetery is considered to be an Organically Evolved (Continuing) cultural heritage landscape.

It is a picturesque example of a mid-19th century Ontario protestant church and cemetery, which is the result of an initial social and religious imperative which has developed in its present form in response to its natural environment. Knox Presbyterian Church Sixteen and Cemetery retains an active social role in contemporary society as a place where the local Presbyterian community continues to practice its faith and commemorate its dead in ways that are closely associated with [their] traditional way of life. Collectively, Knox Sixteen articulates the almost 175-year evolution of the church, its congregation, and their spiritual and burial needs and practices. As an active congregation, the cultural heritage landscape's evolutionary process is still in progress.

Further, the subject property meets the Province's definition of a cultural heritage landscape, which is described as "*a defined geographical area [which has] been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community.*" The subject property includes "*buildings, structures, spaces, views, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning and association*".

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

## **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 Phase Three of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy.

### **(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS**

The Legal Department has reviewed this report.

### **(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS**

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- continuously improve our programs and services
- enhance our cultural environment
- be the most livable town in Canada

### **(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY**

A Climate Emergency was declared by Council in June 2019 for the purposes of strengthening the Oakville community commitment in reducing carbon footprints. The recognition of Knox Sixteen as a cultural heritage landscape protects a valuable natural space that includes mature trees and vegetation and a habitat for wildlife. The protection of this significant area therefore supports the town's climate initiatives.

From: Planning Services Department

Date: October 21, 2020

Subject: **Knox 16 Presbyterian Church - Cultural Heritage Landscape Research Report**

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Knox Sixteen Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

Prepared by:

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