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TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS - PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING ON Tuesday, December 10, 2013 not before 5:15 p.m.
FROM:	JOHN FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER
SUBJECT:	BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BACKGROUND STUDY

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the following actions regarding the draft Blackfriars/Petersville Background Study **BE TAKEN**:

1. The proposed Heritage Conservation District boundary, as shown on Figure 2 (attached) **BE ENDORSED** and that a Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines be prepared for the area;
2. The attached draft Background Study **BE RECEIVED**, and circulated to the public, landowners, agencies, the Blackfriars/Petersville HCD Steering Committee and LACH for review and comment; and,
3. Prior to final approval of the Blackfriars/Petersville Heritage Conservation District Plan, a public information meeting **BE HELD** with the community to solicit input on the draft Plan and Conservation Guidelines;

It being noted that a review of the current Residential R2 zone variation applied to properties within the study area is underway to address issues related to intensification within areas that are susceptible to flood events.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Tuesday, April 23, 2013 | Presentation to PEC |
| 2. Tuesday, May 7, 2013 | Planning Report to PEC on Options |
| 3. Tuesday, May 14, 2013 | Report to Special PEC Meeting |
| 4. Tuesday, August 20, 2013 | Notice of Appeal Report to PEC |

BACKGROUND

The Heritage Conservation District Process

As with all heritage conservation districts in the City, this process was initiated by Municipal Council in response to a neighbourhood request outlined in a letter to Council in relation to recent development activity in the community. On April 23, 2013 PEC heard a presentation from the City Planner on the extent of development activity occurring in the neighbourhood. As a result on April 30, 2013 Council resolved;

15. *That, the following actions be taken with respect to the verbal presentation from the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner and the Manager, Development*

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Services & Planning Liaison and the communication, from K. and D. Bice, 2 Leslie Street, relating to Blackfriars community infill projects:

- a) *the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to report back at the May 7, 2013 meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee with respect to the implementation of an Interim Control By-law for the area;*
- b) *the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to report back at a future meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee with respect to the initiation of a City lead rezoning of the subject area from an R2 Zone to an R1 Zone;*
- c) *the request for a Heritage Conservation District **BE PRIORITIZED** on the list of Heritage Conservation Districts that will incorporate heritage character design guidelines;*
- d) *a public site plan meeting regarding the site plan application for 108 Wilson Avenue **BE HELD**;*
- e) *a by-law **BE INTRODUCED** at the May 14, 2013 Municipal Council meeting, to amend By-law No. C.P.-1455-541, a by-law to designated a site plan control area and to delegate Council's power under section 41 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13 with respect to an application for site plan approval submitted by Andrew Hines for the property located at 108 Wilson Avenue;*
- f) *the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to consult with representatives from the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority and the Ministry of Natural Resources;*
- g) *K. Bice, on behalf of area residents, **BE GRANTED** delegation status when the Civic Administration reports back to the Planning and Environment Committee on this matter;*
- h) *the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to report back to the Planning and Environment Committee with respect to establishing a requirement for a public site plan process for any application where the proposed infill development proposes a change in use and/or structure that is different from what currently exists on the site, regardless of whether or not the use is permitted under the current zoning; and*
- i) *the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to include in the report noted in a) above, information relating to the recent court decisions regarding "Lodging House" uses. (2013-D04) (AS AMENDED) (15/9/PEC)*

In response to the resolution Planning staff submitted a report to PEC on May 7, 2013 and a report to LACH on May 8, 2013. Following a special PEC meeting on May 14, 2013 Council resolved;

- 2. *That, the following actions be taken with respect to the 6th Report of the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH) from its meeting held on May 8, 2013:*
 - a) *on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, with the concurrence of the Heritage Planner, the Blackfriars/Petersville Neighbourhood **BE PRIORITIZED** as the next potential Heritage Conservation District on the list of potential Heritage Conservation Districts (Heritage Places: A Description of Potential Heritage Conservation Areas in the City of London, 1993);*
 - b) *a study of the Blackfriars/Petersville Neighbourhood **BE UNDERTAKEN** for the purpose of designating a heritage conservation district in accordance with the Terms of Reference appended as Schedule "B" of the staff report dated May 8, 2013; and,*

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c) *subject to the approval of parts a) and b), above, the attached, revised, by-law to designate the Blackfriars/Petersville Neighbourhood heritage conservation study area **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council meeting to be held on May 14, 2013, to designate a heritage conservation district study area for the Blackfriars/Petersville neighbourhood;*

it being noted that the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH) reviewed and received a Report, dated May 8, 2013, from the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, and heard a verbal delegation from G. Barrett, Manager, Policy Planning and Programs, with respect to this matter;

Following the resolution Planning Staff started the process of hiring a consultant (Clause (b)) to complete both the Heritage Conservation District Background Study (Phase 1) and Heritage Conservation District Plan (Phase 2). Five submissions of interest were received in response to the Request for Proposals. Interviews and assessments were held and Golder Associates were selected on August 1, 2013 to complete both the study and final plan. The project team includes;

David Waverman	Project Manager/LA	Golder Associates Ltd.
Nancy Tausky	Historian	Tausky Heritage Consultants
Hillary Neary	Researcher	Tausky Heritage Consultants
Don Loucks	Heritage Architect	IBI Group
Michael Gregoul	Cultural Heritage Specialist	Golder Associates Ltd
Christopher Andreae	Built Heritage Specialist	Golder Associates Ltd
Marcus Letourneau	Cultural Heritage Specialist	Golder Associates Ltd
Rebecca Robinson	Landscape Architect	Golder Associates Ltd
Kyle Gonyou	Cultural Heritage Specialist	Golder Associates Ltd
Glenn Scheels	Urban Planner	GSP Group Inc.
Andrew Morgan	Urban Planner	GSP Group Inc.

The City established the study area boundary for the consultant to review for possible Heritage Conservation District status. The boundary is consistent with the area identified as the candidate West London Special Policy Area, and is related to the regulatory floodline (1937 flood event) (Figure 1).

This study is being undertaken in a compressed timeframe, as the area is subject to a one year limitation on development as the heritage study is underway. This by-law has been appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board and has yet to be heard. Staff will review the potential of reviewing the area subject to the by-law based upon these Background Study findings.

An initial start-up meeting with the consultants was held on August 20, 2013. The first initiative was the formation of a Steering Committee to work with the Consultant in the preparation of the Blackfriars/Petersville Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan. Steering Committee members include:

John Manness	Member of LACH
Oliver Hobson	Member of LACH
Judy Bryant	Ward Councillor
Kevin Bice	Resident
Jan Delaney	Resident
Charlene Doak- Gebauer	Resident
Louise Tamblyn	Resident
Joe McCarthy	Resident
Julie Anne Baskette	Resident
Mike Bloxam	Resident

On September 16, 2013 the first public meeting was held to introduce the consultants to the neighbourhood, to outline the process for completing the background study, to request information from area residents and to answer any questions. Approximately 35 people attended.

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On October 30, 2013 a second public meeting, following notice to all property owners, was held with the community at St. George’s Anglican Church. This meeting provided a status report from the consultants to the community and provided the consultants’ preliminary opinions and recommendations for a proposed HCD boundary. Approximately 50-75 people attended.

Purpose of the Background Study

The purpose of the Background study is to examine and analyze the historical, physical, environmental and socio-economic fabric of the study area and to identify significant characteristics to determine if the area warrants Heritage Conservation District status as per the criteria in the City of London *Official Plan* and the *Ontario Heritage Act* (S.40-2-a). In addition, the study requests that a recommendation as to the geographic boundaries of the area to be designated be identified as required in S -40-2-b) of the Act.

Section 13.3.1 ii) of the *Official Plan* states that the following criteria will be considered by Council in the evaluation of an area for designation as a Heritage Conservation District:

- (a) *the association of the area with a particular historical event or era that is unique to the community;*
- (b) *the presence of properties which are considered significant to the community as a result of their location and setting;*
- (c) *the presence of properties representing a design or method of construction which is considered architecturally and/or historically significant to the community, region, province or nation;*
- (d) *the presence of properties which collectively represent a certain aspect of the development of the City which is worthy of maintaining; and*
- (e) *the presence of physical, environmental, or aesthetic elements which, individually, may not constitute grounds for the designation of a Heritage Conservation District, but which collectively are significant to the community.*

Preliminary Findings of the Background Study

- There are 1490 properties within the study area which include 8 properties (7 on the east side and one on the west) designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and another 67 properties (53 on the east and 14 on the west) listed on the 2006 City of London Inventory of Heritage Resources as Priority 1-3.
- A large percentage of the homes in the study area are one and one and one-half storey in height (88%), have been significantly altered and are modest in size. Approximately 78% of the homes east of Wharncliffe Rd were constructed between 1850 and 1930.
- There are three distinct character areas.
- The existing neighbourhood is the result of the historical joining of two communities; Petersville (formerly Bridgetown) and Kensington into what was then known as London West prior to its annexation by the city in 1897.
- The area has flooded on many occasions; 160 times between 1792 and 1951 with significant floods in 1850, 1873, 1883 and 1937 before Fanshawe Dam was built in 1953.
- The neighbourhood has a current population of 2,388 (2011), a decrease of 6% since the 2006 Census.
- Approximately 48% of the dwellings in the neighbourhood are single family detached structures with an average value of \$162,358 (2011).

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Figure 1 – Study Area



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Recommended Boundary of the Proposed Blackfriars/Petersville HCD

The consultants have recommended that the historic, architectural, visual, and planning contexts indicate that a refined portion of the original Study Area warrants designation as a Heritage Conservation District. The Draft Background Study concluded that the Heritage Conservation District boundary should encompass lands on the east side of Wharncliffe Road and properties fronting the west side of Wharncliffe Road between Mount Pleasant Avenue and Palmer Street as indicated in Figure 2.

Buildings, streets, and landscapes that would be difficult to support within the boundary of the proposed Heritage conservation District, as well as those that would merit inclusion in an adjacent character area have been removed from the proposed HCD boundary.

In order to provide a consistent and defensible HCD Boundary with respect to Official Plan policies, the following key elements were established as the criteria for evaluating potential boundaries:

- Architectural interest, consistency and integrity;
- Streetscape character;
- Historical relevance/association; and
- Land use context

The rationale for the proposed Heritage Conservation District boundary is based on the following:

- The lands within the proposed boundaries are defined by early settlement and subdivision patterns associated with its early surveyors and settlers.
- The proposed HCD is physically and historically linked to its surroundings, including Wharncliffe Road and the Thames River.
- The modest scale of buildings and small lots of the area within the proposed boundaries are representative of the area’s early working-class history and residents.
- The narrow streets and mature tree canopy coverage defines the streetscape characteristics of the area.
- A majority of the area’s architectural styles and features are consistent with the methods, materials, and forms of the era in which they were constructed.
- A number of heritage landmarks are present in the area including the Blackfriars Bridge, Labatt Park, St. Georges Anglican Church and Empress Avenue School.

A heritage character statement summarizes the key aspects of the defined area in terms of its long tradition as a “suburban landscape within the City of London which has continued to be an area shaped by its own history. The area’s historical importance and tangible heritage elements provide the distinctive quality required for a Heritage Conservation District.” (p.129). The architectural character is described as “a character that indicates a continuity of change based on a variation of worker-style housing that ranges predominantly from the 1880s to the 1930s... The homes within the proposed HCD are reflective of the modest, economical home building in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.” (p.130) Finally, with respect to streetscape character “the streetscape is defined by swaths of consistent massing and set-backs of residential dwellings, which gives the area a discernible rhythm and pattern as it is experienced along the streetscape.”(p. 130)

It is important to note that, in identifying the boundary as defined, the consultants also noted that while this area merits HCD recognition and designation, two other areas within the study area

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do not merit hcd designation under Part V of the *Act* but do have unique character in regards to their urban form, history, land use and socio-economic patterns. They recommend that planning tools to preserve the character of the areas outside the heritage conservation district be presented in a stand- alone document that might be developed as part of the second phase of this project.

Recommendations

Planning staff are in agreement with respect to the identification of the boundaries for the proposed district as shown in Figure 2 and support the rationale provided by the consultants. The proposed area would meet two main criteria required by the municipal Official Plan and by the provincial criteria. In particular, the identified portion of the study area contains properties which collectively represent a certain aspect of the development of the City and are worthy of preserving and the presence of physical, environmental, or aesthetic elements which, individually, may not constitute grounds for the designation of a Heritage Conservation District, but which collectively are significant to the community.

Secondly, staff recommend that the consultants continue their research into the area with respect to confirming the recommended boundary and with the development of both a Plan to serve as the basis for the Designation by-law and for the preparation of Conservation Guidelines which will assist staff and the community with the preservation of the heritage character of the proposed heritage conservation district.

Third, staff recommend that the consultants continue to identify potential planning tools that may assist in the preservation of the distinct character areas identified by the consultants that are not proposed to be included within the boundaries of the Heritage Conservation District. The concurrent rezoning study underway may contribute to this as may specific design guidelines or other measures.

Blackfriars/Petersville HCD Project Timeline

A public meeting will be held in the area when the draft plan and conservation guidelines have been prepared. It is expected that the Heritage Conservation District Plan and guidelines will be completed by February 2014. As well, further meetings with the Steering Committee and LACH are necessary as part of this stage of the process. A final statutory public meeting before PEC will occur.

It is expected that the Heritage Conservation District Plan and guidelines will be completed by February 2014.

PREPARED BY:	SUBMITTED BY:
W. J. CHARLES PARKER SENIOR PLANNER PLANNING POLICY & PROGRAMS	GREGG BARRETT, AICP MANAGER PLANNING POLICY AND PROGRAMS
RECOMMENDED BY:	
JOHN FLEMING, MCIP,RPP MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER	

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Figure 2 – Recommended Character Areas and HCD Boundary

