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TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS LONDON ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HERITAGE MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2015
FROM:	JOHN M. FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, LAND USE PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER
SUBJECT:	REPEAL OF BY-LAW L.S.P.3432-10 275 THAMES STREET

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Land Use Planning and City Planner, with the advice of the Heritage Planner, notice of Municipal Council's intention to pass a by-law to repeal By-law No. L.S.P. 3432-10, passed on 2013-12-03, the by-law that designates the property located at 275 Thames Street to be of cultural heritage value or interest, **BE GIVEN** in accordance with the requirements of subsections 31(3) and 31(4) of the *Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18*; it being noted that the approved removal of the building, with its heritage attributes, to another site has removed the need to retain the heritage designation of the property at 275 Thames Street; it being further noted that the request for the repeal of a designating by-law requires consultation with the London Advisory Committee on Heritage and public notification.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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- 2014-05-14: Report to PEC -Heritage Alteration Application - 275 Thames Street
- 2013-12-10: Report to PEC -Fugitive Slave Chapel Update
- 2013-09-24: Report to PEC -Notice of Intent to Designate 275 Thames Street
- 2013-06-23: Report to PEC -Demolition Requests for 275, 277 and 281 Thames Street

PURPOSE AND EFFECT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

The recommended action seeks the repeal of the designation pursuant to *Sections 31 (3) and 31 (4)* of the *Ontario Heritage Act* to recognize the situation resulting from the heritage alteration permit that allowed for the removal of the building from 275 Thames Street and its relocation to 432 Grey Street.

BACKGROUND

The property at 275 Thames Street was the site of the former Fugitive Slave Chapel building, a structure associated with the early development of London and, specifically, with the development of the black community in the City. In recognition of this association, the property was proposed for designation under *Section 29* of the *Ontario Heritage Act* in the spring of 2013. The proposed designation clearly established Council's concern for the long term preservation of the building notwithstanding a demolition application filed by the owner earlier in 2013. While the notice of its intent to designate the property in April was initially deferred, in September, 2013, Council proceeded with its notice of intent to designate and approved *By-Law L.S.P.3432-10* as a means of emphasizing its cultural heritage interest and value to the community. (Appendix 2)

At the April 23 meeting, municipal Council also requested that interpretive signage be placed to mark the historic significance of the neighbourhood which included the site of the former Chapel.

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Prior to the formal designation of the property at 275 Thames Street, staff, in consultation with the LACH, had indicated that there were plans to remove the building from its site at 275 Thames Street to a location at 432 Grey Street, next to the Beth Emanuel Church. Beth Emanuel housed the descendent congregation of the former Slave Chapel and is, itself, located on a heritage designated property. Council was informed of this likelihood at the meeting on September 24, 2013 and, again, at the PEC meeting on December 10, 2013. To assist in the planned relocation of the former chapel, in December, 2013, municipal Council authorized funding to the value of \$60,000.

In May, 2014, following consultation with the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH), Council permitted, through the heritage alteration approval process, the removal of the building from its site at 275 Thames Street and its relocation to a site at 432 Grey Street, a property adjacent to, and owned by, Beth Emanuel British Methodist Church. At the time of the request for the alteration permit, staff noted that no change was requested for any heritage attributes identified on Schedule B (Appendix 2), but that, at a future date, a request to de-designate the property at 275 Thames Street would be brought forward for consideration by the LACH and Council as the planned relocation of the building would see the relocation of much that is significant about the property. At a future time, a new designating by-law recognizing the new location will be brought before Council.

Prior to the removal of the building, the Fugitive Slave Chapel Co-ordinating Committee prepared for the move by continuing its fundraising campaign and by site preparation. Site preparation included the installation of a new foundation to receive the building and the services required for the site. Funding provided by the municipality was used for these purposes and to provide the necessary licences related to the move and the relocation of the building.

Information Update: Activities of the Fugitive Slave Chapel Preservation Project

While not directly related to the recommended action in this report, for the information of Municipal Council, the following is a summary, prepared by Genet Hodder, Committee Chair, of both recent and planned actions related to the Fugitive Slave Chapel Preservation Project:

The relocation of the building took place on November, 2014. With the building now on its new site, a second phase of work has been underway. Initially, this involved securing the building onto its foundation.

On March 9, a new executive was elected by the Fugitive Slave Chapel Steering Committee and a governance structure put in place to define its operations, to clarify lines of authority and define the FSCPP as a distinct and separate entity from Beth Emanuel Church, although working in cooperation with and operating under its legal authority.

In March 2015, the Steering Committee engaged James Knight, a structural engineer with particular expertise in wood buildings, to conduct a ‘Preliminary Condition Assessment-Structural.’ In his March, 2015 report, he called the building ‘a well built structure using good quality materials that were manufactured and employed in a workmanlike manner. In every way the original structure is reflective of good quality mid-1800s Ontario construction.’

An Open House was held on March 27-28, 2015, to solicit opinions and ideas from the wider community. The committee reports it found ‘overwhelming support for a museum purpose for the chapel, in other words, that it become a learning place for London’s Black History and the story of the Underground Railroad, geared to school groups, tourists and Londoners.’

In April, heritage consultant, Nancy Tausky, was engaged to conduct and provide a full ‘built heritage assessment of the building, placing it within its cultural milieu and assessing its cultural, spiritual, architectural and historic importance.’ During this past summer, Nancy monitored the peeling back of layers from the building’s interior and mentored Tara Jenkins, a Master’s student in heritage conservation at the University of Victoria, who reported on layers uncovered

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from a wall section in the building. This work of peeling back and documenting the layers of material continues with the help of volunteers and people from Pathways Skills Development.

A hazardous materials inspection has been completed and asbestos concerns are being addressed.

Heritage architect John Routledge has been hired. He will oversee the next and most challenging stage of the project, the restoration of the building.

While work on the actual building goes forward, local historians continue to research the historic period and context of the building, conducting oral interviews with members of the black community, documenting structural details and trying to ascertain the particular story that London will tell in the history of the fugitive slaves and the Underground Railroad.

Next Steps for the FSCPP are:

Immediate Phase 1 Tasks are:

- *A submission to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for a grant in addition to seeking other grant opportunities;*
- *Securing the chapel doors and patching a hole in the roof before the onset of winter;*
- *Plans to build an attached addition to the rear to contain washrooms, cloak room, kitchenette and janitor's closet.*

The aim is restoration of the building's exterior and comprehensive renewal of the interior to conform as closely as possible to the original structure. However, the chapel will require new heating and ventilation systems, security system, and full accessibility on the main floor. Funds permitting, this second phase of the project will begin in the spring of 2016.

For the success of the FSCPP over the long term, the committee will develop a business plan to sustain the building in its contemporary purpose. It is looking to establish a foundation called Friends of the Slave Chapel and has connected with other fugitive slave chapel sites (North Buxton, Dresden, Oro Medonte) as well as other black history sites to learn best operating practices.

Recommendation

When a property is designated, its heritage attributes are identified in the designating by-law. Many of the heritage attributes associated with the former Slave Chapel have now been relocated to 432 Grey Street and a future new designating by-law will be brought forward to recognize this. Recently, interest in the re-use of the property at 275 Thames Street has been expressed by private parties seeking clarification of the property's heritage status. The owner has confirmed this in requesting the repeal of By-Law L.S.P. 3432-10. As this was the intention from the time Council approved the alteration request to relocate the heritage structure to Grey Street, staff recommend that Council issue its notice of its intent to repeal the by-law.

In 2014, prior to the relocation of the building, an archaeological assessment of the property at 275 Thames Street was conducted. Stages 1 and 2 were carried out by licenced archaeologists who donated their services. The Stage 3 and a portion of the Stage 4 assessment were paid for by the City. Completion of the Stage 4 is still required for the property at 275 Thames Street. Any future redevelopment of the lands at 275 Thames and adjacent properties would also require completion of archaeological assessments at the property owner's expense. As is normal municipal practice, such assessments would become conditions attached to any future request for rezoning for these properties.

It is also noted that Council's direction from the April 23 meeting with respect to signage remains to be completed. At present, through the Culture Office, with assistance from

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Communications, Parks Planning and the Heritage Planners, a corporate strategy with respect to municipal heritage signage is under development. The interpretation of this site and neighbourhood will be tied to this strategy although a firm deadline has not been identified.

It is further noted that a new designation by-law will be developed with respect to the building at its new location. This will be done when the alterations have been carried out as part of the rehabilitation of the building. Many elements of the by-law requested to be repealed will be carried over into a new designation by-law.

Both the archaeological and signage matters remain but can be addressed through normal municipal practices. It is recommended that notice be given to repeal the existing by-law designating the property given that its principle heritage attribute has been relocated.

LACH comments with respect to the request for notice of repeal will be received at its meeting on October 14, 2015 and brought forward as part of its report to the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee on November 2, 2015.

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PREPARED BY:	SUBMITTED BY:
D. MENARD HERITAGE PLANNER URBAN REGENERATION	J. YANCHULA, MCIP, RPP MANAGER - URBAN REGENERATION
RECOMMENDED BY:	
JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP MANAGING DIRECTOR, LAND USE PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER	

October 6, 2015

dm/

Attach: Appendix: Location Map-275 Thames Street; Appendix 2- By-Law L.S.P. 3432-10;
Appendix 3- Photo

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Appendix 1- Location Map - 275 Thames



Appendix 2- By-Law L.S.P. 3432-10

SCHEDULE "A"

To By-law No. L.S.P.-3432-10

Part of Lot 26, 51W Bathurst Street, in the City of London and County of Middlesex as in Instrument W36699.

SCHEDULE "B"

To By-law No. L.S.P.-3432-10

Description of Property

The principal structure at 275 Thames Street is a one storey wood frame residential dwelling built c. 1848 in the vernacular style. It is located on the west side of Thames Street, Plan Nil, Part Lot 26 S/S Bathurst Street, in the City of London, County of Middlesex.

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Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest.

The cultural heritage interest of the property and building at 275 Thames Street is based on its association with the formative history of London. More specifically, the building is associated with the early development of the Black community in London, its later connections to the Underground Railway and to the emergence in London of a branch of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, later renamed the British Methodist Episcopal Church.

From the information available, the building represents the former “Fugitive Slave Chapel”, probably constructed around 1848. The building and the adjacent area became a terminus of the Underground Railway with probable links to the activities of John Brown, the American anti-slavery advocate of the pre-Civil war period. There are specific references in early sources that suggest John Brown visited London on more than one occasion and it is possible the chapel was associated with these visits. In 1869, the building at 275 Thames was sold to James Seale, a cooper. The British Methodist Episcopal Church branch relocated to its current location at 430 Grey Street. Subsequently, the building at 275 Thames Street was used for residential purposes. From 1944 to 2000 it was owned and occupied by members of the Mancari Family.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Key heritage attributes that embody the heritage value of the building at 275 Thames Street include:

- its age, dating to c. 1848
- its plain expression of a vernacular cottage style in a wood framed structure
- its central entrance balanced by two window openings on its front facade
- its use as a chapel as a branch of the African Methodist Episcopal Church which, in 1856, became the British Methodist Episcopal Church.
- its association with the later construction of Beth Emanuel British Methodist Church at 430 Grey Street (designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.)
- its association with the Black community which took shape in the formative years of the town and city’s early growth in this area of the City adjacent to the south branch of the Thames River.

Appendix 3 - Photo-Former Fugitive Slave Chapel at 432 Grey Street

