



Fugitive Slave Chapel Preservation Project (FSCPP)

<http://www.fscpp.ca/>

c/o Beth Emanuel British Methodist Episcopal Church
430 Grey Street, London, Ontario, N6B 1H3

6 March 2018

To the London Advisory Committee on Heritage

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to request delegation status at your April meeting on behalf of the Fugitive Slave Chapel Preservation Project's community-based steering committee, which on January 27, 2018, was dissolved and replaced by a committee of the same name to be led by Trustees of the Beth Emanuel Church.

Our community-based FSCPP committee would like to present an overview of our accomplishments since the historic chapel building was moved through the streets of London (on November 12, 2014) from Thames Street to Grey Street, then positioned onto a cement foundation next to the more substantial Beth Emanuel Church, its 'daughter' church. That dramatic change was brought about with financial support from a large number of individual donors and organizations as well as, significantly, from the City of London.

At the April meeting, our committee will articulate the goals of the project as established through community consultations, both formal and informal, and will outline the measures we have taken to move the project toward creation of a learning centre about slavery, London's black history, and the Underground Railroad--a goal that also includes the building's use as a community space for a range of programming.

We will detail what has been accomplished in six areas:

- 1) PLANNING. Planning with a heritage architect for the restoration of the chapel and the construction of a supportive addition at the north end.
- 2) RESTORATION. Consulting heritage professionals and organizations to assure that high restoration standards and guidelines are met.
- 3) TEAR-BACK. Removal of interior walls and layers that were added over the more than 140 years when the chapel was a private house; recording the process through photographs and analysis.
- 4) HISTORY. Researching the chapel's history, its historic context in Upper Canada in the mid 1800s; connecting with historians at Western University through participation in conferences; and learning from London's black community through an oral history project.

5) OUTREACH. Engaging with Londoners through talks, the production of a new play, and visual presentations at community fairs and events. Connecting with other black history sites in southwestern and central Ontario by visiting these sites and meeting key people.

6) CONTINUITY and GOVERNANCE. Laying the groundwork for the project's future by establishing a governance frame work, through efforts to achieve a management agreement between the FSCPP and Beth Emanuel Church, and by annual fund raising.

At this juncture in the project's history, with its shift in leadership to the Trustees of Beth Emanuel Church, it is important that our accomplishments be part of the public record. For this reason, I hope you will grant our request for delegation status at your next meeting.

Respectfully,

Genet Hodder, former chair of the FSCPP

And committee members: Nancy Tausky, Maggie Whalley, Hilary Neary, Ariel Webster, Janet Hunten, and Norm Steele