

Report to Planning and Environment Committee

To: Chair and Members
Planning and Environment Committee
From: Gregg Barrett, Director, Planning and Development
Subject: Demolition Request for the Anne Eadie Park Stage on the
Heritage Listed Property at 900 King Street
Public Participation Meeting
Date: September 20, 2021

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Director, Planning and Development, with the advice of the Heritage Planner, with respect to the demolition request for the Anne Eadie Park Stage on the heritage listed property at 900 King Street, that:

- a) The Chief Building Official **BE ADVISED** that Municipal Council consents to the demolition of the Anne Eadie Park Stage on the property.

IT BEING NOTED that the property located at 900 King Street should remain on the Register of Cultural Heritage Resources as it is believed to be of cultural heritage value or interest.

Executive Summary

A demolition request was received for the heritage listed property at 900 King Street. The subject property, otherwise known as Queen's Park, is listed on the City of London's Register of Cultural Heritage Resources. When received, a demolition request for a building or structure on a heritage listed triggers a formal review process pursuant to the requirement of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and the Council Policy Manual. The property was previously evaluated through a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report/Heritage Impact Assessment according to the criteria outlined in Ontario Regulation 9/06, Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The property was identified as having cultural heritage value or interest, however, the Anne Eadie Park Stage was not identified as a heritage attribute of the property.

The demolition of the Anne Eadie Park Stage on the subject property would not result in adverse impacts to the cultural heritage value or interest of the property.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

This recommendation supports the following 2019-2023 Strategic Plan areas of focus:

- Strengthening Our Community:
 - Continuing to conserve London's heritage properties and archaeological resources.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Property Location

The property at 900 King Street (925 Dundas Street) is an irregularly shaped lot bound by King Street and Dundas Street to the north, Egerton Street to the east, Florence Street to the south, and Rectory Street and Ontario Street to the west. The property is known as the main location of the Western Fair District and also includes Queen's Park, a City-owned park.

1.2 Cultural Heritage Status

The property at 900 King Street is a heritage listed property. The property is considered to be of potential cultural heritage value or interest. The listing of the property on the Register of Cultural Heritage Resources came into force and effect on March 26, 2007.

1.3 Description

The property at 900 King Street is an approximately 19-hectare property (approximately 47 acres) bound by Dundas Street and King Street to the north, Egerton Street to the east, Florence Street to the south, and Rectory and Ontario Street to the west. The property is known primarily as the main location of the Western Fair District. The property includes a collection of buildings related to the Western Fair including the Arts Building, the Confederation Building, the West Annex, the Progress Building, the Raceway and the Grandstand. The western portion of the property consists primarily of surface parking lots.

A portion of the north half the property consists of Queen's Park. The City-owned park is primarily used as a passive open space with large expanses of lawn and mature trees, including accesses roads and pathways accessed from Dundas Street and the parking lots that service the Western Fair District.

The Anne Eadie Park Stage is located in the southeast corner of Queen's Park, north of the Progress Building and west of the raceway. The structure is an open-air stage constructed of a steel frame, painted concrete block, and cast-in-place concrete with a shingled roof. The stage structure also contains storage facilities at the rear, and the stage proper has been added and expanded upon with pressure-treated lumber and decking.

1.4 Property History

The portion of the property that includes Queen's Park was originally a portion of the historic Salter's Grove. John Salter, a London-based surgeon, pharmacist and philanthropist, owned a large tract of forest east of London's city limits known as Salter's Grove. He reportedly permitted the usage of the grounds for members of the public for picnics and strolls. The grove was described as "part of the virgin forest and contained huge oak and pine trees, some six to eight feet in diameter, interspersed here and there by a majestic elm."¹

In the 1870s, the park was acquired by the City, following London East's annexation by the City of London. Through community and municipal efforts, the area was made into a public park and in 1879 it was officially opened as Queen's Park, to commemorate the 60th birthday of Queen Victoria. In March 1887, City Council voted in favour of selecting Queen's Park as the new location for the Western Fair and the construction of a new exhibition building.² September 1887 marked the first fair held in its current location. Since then, the property and Queen's Park has served as the main location of the Western Fair.

The Anne Eadie Park Stage was constructed in 1971, one of the later additions to the property. The open-air stage replaced an earlier "Silver Dome" stage that was built in the mid-1960s as a temporary stage for entertainment purposes. The new open-air stage was first opened to visitors to the Western Fair in September 1971. Since then, it has been used during events at various times throughout the year. Originally known as the park stage, the stage was renamed to the "Anne Eadie Park Stage" in 2006 to celebrate the career of Anne Eadie, the Community Development and Entertainment Manager for the Western Fair Association for 35 years. Known locally as the "Fair Godmother", Anne was, and continues to be known for her devotion to the fair industry and for her commitment to the annual Youth Talent Search Competition, resulting in the re-naming of the stage after years of dedication to youth talent development.³

¹ Edwin Seaborn, *The March of Medicine in Western Ontario*, p. 154.

² Nancy Tausky and Lynn DiStefano, *Victorian Architecture in London and Southwest Ontario: Symbols of Aspiration*, p. 331.

³ "Open-air stage replaces Silver Dome at Western Fair," *London Free Press*, September 3, 1971.

For further research and historical information related to the history of the Western Fair and the property at 900 King Street, please see the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report/Heritage Impact Assessment linked in Appendix C.

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Legislative and Policy Framework

Cultural heritage resources are to be conserved and impacts assessed as per the fundamental policies in the *Provincial Policy Statement (2020)*, the *Ontario Heritage Act*, *The London Plan* and the *Official Plan (1989 as amended)*.

2.1.1 Provincial Policy Statement

Heritage Conservation is a matter of provincial interest (Section 2.d, *Planning Act*). The *Provincial Policy Statement (2020)* promotes the wise use and management of cultural heritage resources and directs that “significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved” (Policy 2.6.1, *Provincial Policy Statement 2020*).

“Significant” is defined in the *Provincial Policy Statement (2020)* as, “resources that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest.” Further, “processes and criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest are established by the Province under the authority of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.”

Additionally, “conserved” means, “the identification, protection, management and use of built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained.”

2.1.2 Ontario Heritage Act

Section 27 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* requires that a register kept by the clerk shall list all properties that have been designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Section 27(1.2) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* also enables Municipal Council to add properties that have not been designated, but that Municipal Council “believes to be of cultural heritage value or interest” on the Register.

The only cultural heritage protection afforded to heritage listed properties is a 60-day delay in the issuance of a demolition permit. During this time, Council Policy directs that the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH) is consulted, and a public participation meeting is held at the Planning & Environment Committee.

Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* enables municipalities to designate properties to be of cultural heritage value or interest. Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* also establishes consultation, notification, and process requirements, as well as a process to appeal the designation of a property. Objections to a Notice of Intention to Designate are referred back to Municipal Council. Appeals to the passing of a by-law to designate a property pursuant to the *Ontario Heritage Act* are referred to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT).

2.1.3 The London Plan/Official Plan

The Cultural Heritage chapter of *The London Plan* recognizes that our cultural heritage resources define our City’s unique identity and contribute to its continuing prosperity. It notes, “The quality and diversity of these resources are important in distinguishing London from other cities and make London a place that is more attractive for people to visit, live or invest in.” Policies 572_ and 573_ of *The London Plan* enable the designation of individual properties under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, as well as the criteria by which individual properties will be evaluated.

Policies 575_ and 576_ of *The London Plan* also enable City Council to designate areas of the City under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as Heritage Conservation Districts. These policies include a set of criteria in the evaluation of an area. *Heritage Places 2.0* is a guideline document as a part of the Cultural Heritage Guidelines. The document describes potential heritage conservation districts and assigns a priority to these

districts for consideration as heritage conservation districts.

2.1.4 Register of Cultural Heritage Resources

Municipal Council may include properties on the Register of Cultural Heritage Resources that it “believes to be of cultural heritage value or interest.” These properties are not designated, but are considered to have potential cultural heritage value or interest.

The Register of Cultural Heritage Resources states that further research is required to determine the cultural heritage value or interest of heritage listed properties. The subject property is included on the Register of Cultural Heritage Resources.

3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

None

4.0 Key Issues and Considerations

4.1. Demolition Request

Written notice of intention to demolish the Anne Eadie Park Stage at 900 King Street was submitted by the Western Fair Association on August 17, 2021.

Municipal Council must respond to a notice of intention to demolish a building or structure on a heritage listed property within 60 days, or the request is deemed consented. During this 60-day period, the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH) is consulted, and pursuant to Council Policy, a public participation meeting is held at the Planning and Environment Committee (PEC).

The 60-day period for the demolition request for the Anne Eadie Park Stage expires on October 16, 2021.

4.3 Cultural Heritage Evaluation

4.3.1 Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The criteria of *Ontario Heritage Act* Regulation 9/06 establishes criteria for determining the cultural heritage value or interest of individual properties. These criteria are:

1. Physical or design value:
 - i. Is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method;
 - ii. Displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit; or,
 - iii. Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
2. Historical or associative value:
 - i. Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community;
 - ii. Yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture; or,
 - iii. Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
3. Contextual value:
 - i. Is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area;
 - ii. Is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings; or,
 - iii. Is a landmark.

A property is required to meet one or more of the abovementioned criteria to merit protection under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Should the property not meet the criteria for designation, the demolition request should be granted.

4.4 Evaluation

An evaluation of the property at 900 King Street was undertaken using the criteria outlined in O.Reg. 9/06 in a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report/Heritage Impact Assessment (CHER/HIA) completed as a part of a proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment in 2018. The evaluation found that the property met the

criteria of O.Reg. 9/06 for its design/physical value, historical/associative value, and contextual value. The CHER/HIA determined:

900 King Street has a rich history as a place of public enjoyment, both related to and preceding the relocation of the Western Fair to the site in 1887. The site has important associations with the Western Fair, several prominent London architecture firms, harness racing, and the local history of London East. The site contains a number of significant heritage buildings, including the Arts Building (built in 1912), and the Confederation Building (built in 1927). The evaluation determined that 900 King Street meets the criteria for Historical, Design, and Contextual values under the Ontario Heritage Act. The specific heritage values and related heritage attributes are outlined fully 7.0 Proposed Statement of Significance.

Although the property is identified as having met the criteria of O.Reg 9/06, and being of cultural heritage value, the Anne Eadie Park Stage was not identified as a heritage attribute of the property.

Staff have reviewed the CHER/HIA and the evaluation of the property using the criteria of O.Reg. 9/06. Staff concur with the findings of the evaluation that the property meets the criteria of O.Reg 9/06, but that the Anne Eadie Park Stage is not identified as a heritage attribute of the property.

4.5 Consultation

Pursuant to Council Policy for the demolition of buildings or structures on heritage listed properties, notification of the demolition request was sent to property owners within 120m of the subject property on September 1, 2021, as well as community groups including the Old East Village Community Association, the Architectural Conservancy Ontario – London Region Branch, London & Middlesex Historical Society, and the Urban League of London. Notice was also published in *The Londoner*.

Conclusion

The evaluation of the property at 900 King Street found that the property met the criteria of O.Reg. 9/06, however, the Anne Eadie Park Stage was not identified as a heritage attribute. The proposed demolition of the stage structure is not anticipated to result in impacts to the cultural heritage value of the property. Municipal Council should consent to the demolition of the Anne Eadie Park Stage. The property at 900 King Street should remain on the Register of Cultural Heritage Resources as it is believed to be of cultural heritage value or interest.

Prepared by: Michael Greguol, CAHP Heritage Planner,
Submitted by: Britt O’Hagan, MCIP, RPP, Manager, Community
Planning, Urban Design, and Heritage
Recommended by: Gregg Barrett, AICP, Director, Planning and
Development

Appendices

Appendix A Property Location

Appendix B Images

Appendix C Common Bond Collective. 900 King Street CHER & HIA. Final August 2018.

Sources

Common Bond Collective. 900 King Street CHER & HIA. Final August 2018.

Corporation of the City of London. *Queen’s Park at Western Fair Master Plan*. 2009.

Corporation of the City of London. *Register of Cultural Heritage Resources*. 2019.

Corporation of the City of London. *2019-2023 Strategic Plan*.

Corporation of the City of London. *The London Plan*. 2019 (consolidated).

Grainger, Jennifer. *Vanished Villages of Middlesex*. 2002.

London Free Press Clippings (London Room, London Public Library).
Ministry of Culture. *Ontario Heritage Toolkit: Heritage Property Evaluation*. 2006.
Seaborn, Edwin. *The March of Medicine in Western Ontario*. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1944.
Tausky, Nancy Z. and Lynne DiStefano. *Victorian Architecture in London and Southwestern Ontario: Symbols of Aspiration*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986.

Appendix A – Property Location

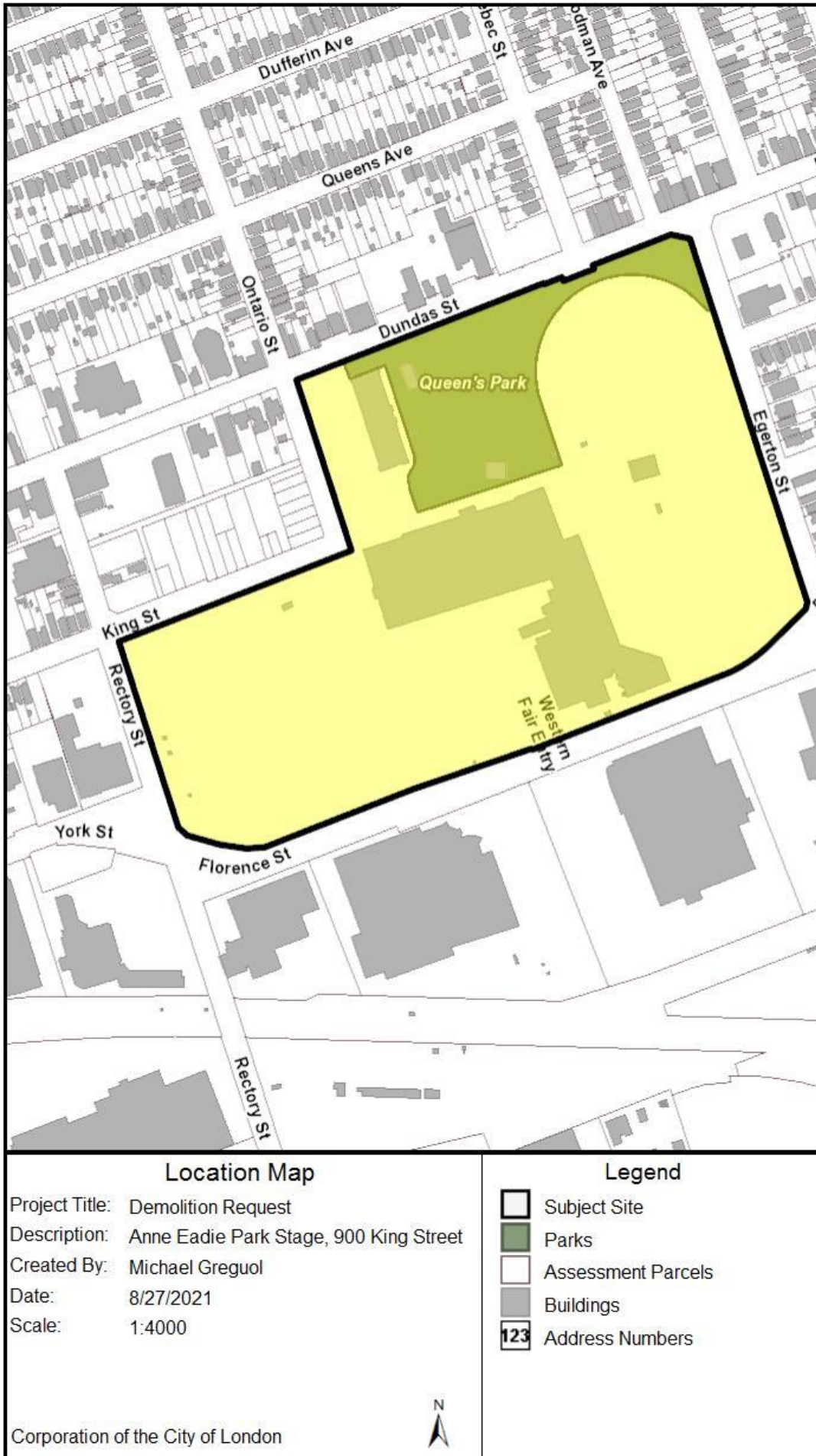


Figure 1: Property Location Map for the property at 900 King Street. The Anne Eadie Park Stage is identified by the square in the south end of Queen's Park.

Appendix B – Images

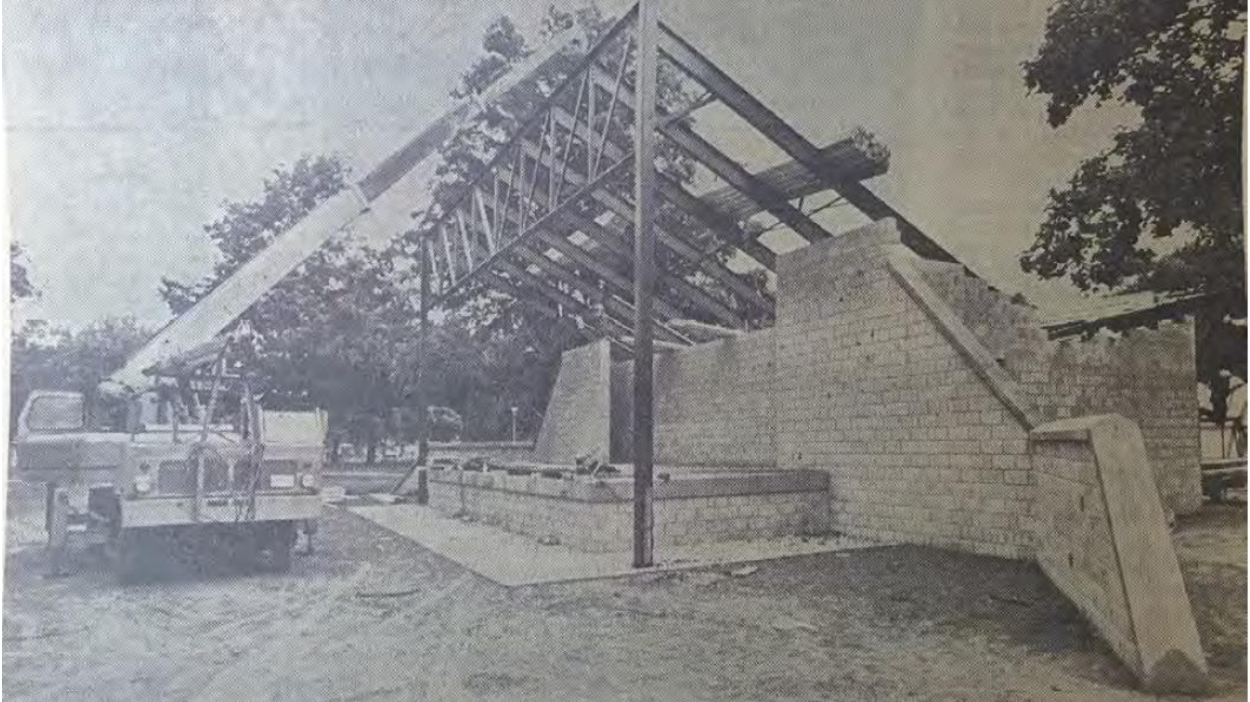


Image 1: Photograph showing the construction of the park stage at Queen's Park, as shown in the London Free Press, September 3, 1971.



Image 2: Photograph showing the Anne Eadie Park Stage, 2021.



Image 3: Photograph showing the Anne Eadie Park Stage, 2021.



Image 4: Photograph showing the access to the south side of the Anne Eadie Park Stage, 2021.



Image 5: Photograph showing the north side of the Anne Eadie Park Stage, 2021. Note, the Progress Building south of the stage is visible at right.



Image 6: Photograph showing the rear (east) side of the Anne Eadie Park Stage.

Appendix C – Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report/Heritage Impact Assessment

900 King Street (see Item 3.9 on the LACH Agenda for its meeting on September 12, 2018: <https://pub-london.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=a4e25b23-55e7-41cc-bb33-da1748cadf07&Agenda=Merged&lang=English>)