

Report to Civic Works Committee

To: Chair and Members
Civic Works Committee

From: Kelly Scherr, P. Eng., MBA, FEC
Deputy City Manager, Environment & Infrastructure

Subject: Wharncliffe Road South Improvements: 100 Stanley Street
Process

Date: November 2, 2021

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Environment & Infrastructure, with consideration of the March 23, 2021 Council resolution, the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to submit an application to Council to demolish the heritage designated property at 100 Stanley Street, it being noted that the application process requires further consultation with the LACH and a public participation meeting at the Planning and Environment Committee to consider the application.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

The following report supports the Strategic Plan through the strategic focus area of Building a Sustainable City by building new transportation infrastructure to meet the long-term needs of our community.

Previous Reports Pertinent to this Matter

- June 19, 2012 - Civic Works Committee – London 2030 Transportation Master Plan
- June 23, 2014 – Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee – Approval of 2014 Development Charges By-Law and DC Background Study
- October 6, 2014 – Civic Works Committee – Environmental Assessment Appointment of Consulting Engineer
- November 29, 2016 – Civic Works Committee – Environmental Assessment Update
- January 11, 2017 – LACH – Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study – Wharncliffe Road South from Becher Street to Commissioners Road West
- November 16, 2017 – LACH – Wharncliffe Road South Environmental Assessment – 100 Stanley Street
- February 6, 2018 – Civic Works Committee – Environmental Study Report
- June 19, 2018 – Civic Works Committee – Wharncliffe Road South Improvements, Wharncliffe Road Bridge Rehabilitation, Detailed Design & Tendering, Appointment of Consulting Engineer
- June 18, 2019 – Corporate Services Committee – Expropriation of Land, Wharncliffe Road Widening and Improvements Project
- January 28, 2020 – The Council of the Corporation of the City of London – Expropriation of Lands, Wharncliffe Road South Widening and Improvements Project (first report)
- January 28, 2020 – The Council of the Corporation of the City of London – Expropriation of Lands, Wharncliffe Road South Widening and Improvements Project (second report)
- February 9, 2021 – LACH – Wharncliffe Road South Improvements – 100 Stanley Street
- March 2, 2021 – Civic Works Committee – Wharncliffe Road South Improvements: 100 Stanley Street Update
- October 13, 2021 – Civic Works Committee – Request for Delegation Status, Architectural Conservancy Ontario - London Region

Background

1.0 Purpose

In March 2021, Council provided direction to “take the necessary actions to submit an amendment to the Environmental Assessment for the Wharncliffe Road South Improvements Project to permit the demolition of the residence at 100 Stanley Street and any other necessary administrative steps to advance the Project in as timely a manner as possible”. The purpose of this report is to describe the required process associated with this council direction as it relates to the Wharncliffe Road South Improvements project.

2.0 Project Background

The environmental assessment (EA) for the Wharncliffe Road South Improvements project was approved by Council on February 13, 2018. The EA recommended improvements to Wharncliffe Road South, from Becher Street to Commissioners Road, and suggested coordinating the improvements with rehabilitation work on the Wharncliffe Road Bridge across the Thames River. The near-term work includes improvements to Wharncliffe Road South, from north of the Thames River to Springbank Drive. The improvements will address the road bottleneck at the CN Rail Bridge that creates safety and operational concerns for all road users, and results in increased traffic in the surrounding neighbourhoods.

The EA recommendation with respect to conserving the cultural heritage value of 100 Stanley Street was to relocate the heritage dwelling. This recommendation was made on the basis that preserving 100 Stanley Street in place was determined not to be viable. This mitigation recommendation is documented in the EA’s Environmental Study Report (ESR).

100 Stanley Street, and other cultural heritage matters, were identified in two Part II Order requests during the filing of the EA Environmental Study Report. With the EA approval in 2018, the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks gave the City direction to further consult with the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (MHSTCI), the City’s Heritage Planner, and the London Advisory Committee on Heritage.

With the EA phase complete, the project has moved to the detailed design phase. The detailed design phase carries forward and refines the EA recommendations. The detailed design phase includes studies and the engineering design of all required infrastructure.

The upcoming construction phase will be the final phase of the project. Early works are ongoing along the corridor and are anticipated to be completed in 2022. Completing early works in advance of the project’s general contract allows the municipal works to be completed more efficiently. The advance work includes utility relocations and building demolitions. Construction of the overall project is anticipated to begin later in 2022, subject to coordination of utilities and dependant upon railway approval of construction approach and rail disruption timing.

At the March 23, 2021, Council meeting, Council provided direction to staff to proceed with the necessary actions to permit the demolition of the residence at 100 Stanley Street. Following this direction, staff have met with the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks and the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries to define the appropriate process for demolition.

At the October 13th, 2021 Civic Works Committee meeting, a delegation from the Architectural Conservancy Ontario - London Region (ACO London) presented information regarding their estimate of the costs associated with relocation of the heritage building at 100 Stanley Street. This presentation was received by the Committee, and it was recommended that the information be forwarded to Civic Administration for consideration.

Civic Administration have reviewed the information that was provided by ACO London with consideration of the best available information and associated risk factors. Administration is not recommending any revisions to the cost information that was provided to committee in March 2021. The City's cost estimate was developed based upon a comprehensive breakdown of all components necessary to relocate and establish the building at the Evergreen Avenue location. This includes allowances for excavation and demolition of the existing house foundation, creation of a new foundation and basement and installation of new site services and utility connections on Evergreen Avenue. The cost estimate was informed by a report prepared by an experienced contractor with relevant experience in relocating heritage buildings. Site inspections undertaken after the building had been vacated also provided valuable information regarding the building condition and the presence of designated substances.

Discussion and Next Steps

1.0 Demolition and Commemoration

Through discussions with the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP), the Ministry has provided the advice that an Environmental Assessment (EA) Addendum is not required to proceed with demolition of the heritage dwelling. This will largely mitigate EA risks associated with proceeding in this manner. MECP has indicated that while demolition of the heritage dwelling was not the recommended mitigation identified in the ESR, it was considered as a mitigation option as part of the EA process. MECP has also identified the need for the City to continue to comply with the Minister's EA decision including consultation with MHSTCI.

Additional information regarding the process that will be followed for the demolition of the heritage dwelling will be provided to the public through the project webpage and information will continue to be updated throughout the process.

City staff have also met with MHSTCI to ensure compliance with direction from MECP. As part of this compliance, the City has provided the completed cultural heritage studies for the project to the City's Heritage Planner and will also provide the studies to MHSTCI and the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH) for review. The City will continue to consult with MHSTCI to confirm the appropriate heritage processes are being followed.

A heritage impact study (HIS) will be completed by a heritage professional for 100 Stanley Street in order to address the proposed demolition of the heritage dwelling and make recommendations for commemoration. A salvage plan will be completed to identify salvageable building materials for reuse. A documentation report for the property will be prepared and include the historical record for the property, historic and existing pictures, and mapping. As-found drawings will also be prepared.

An application to demolish the buildings on the designated property will be prepared for demolition of the heritage structure. The application will be submitted by the project team of the Wharncliffe Road South Improvements project from the Environment and

Infrastructure service area. This process will include a review by the City's Heritage Planner, LACH, the Planning and Environment Committee (PEC), the public through a public participation meeting at PEC, and Council. Council's consideration of the application will occur within 90 days of a complete application being submitted. Council may approve, approve with conditions, or refuse the request. Depending on the conditions that may be required for the approval of the demolition, a future application to repeal or amend the designating by-law may be required.

Subject to the above council permission, a qualified contractor will be retained to complete the demolition. A detailed demolition plan, a traffic management plan, a demolition permit application, as well as the issuance of a building permit to demolish will be required in advance of demolition. Opportunities for future uses of the remnant vacant parcel of 100 Stanley Street will be explored after engineering and construction needs are completed.

Based on the process and requirements outlined above, opportunities to streamline the demolition are being reviewed in order to proceed expeditiously with the overall project noting that coordination with the railway company is still ongoing for other components of the project.

2.0 Transportation Capital Project Network Coordination

The Wharncliffe Road South Improvements project is part of a coordinated approach for improvements to London's transportation network. There are anticipated to be several improvements to north-south routes in the area of the Thames River South Branch completed over the next few years. These improvements include:

- Victoria Bridge Replacement (Ridout Street South over the South Branch of the Thames River): This bridge replacement project requires the closure of the road for the entire construction season. The completed project will provide an improved alternate detour route during construction of the other projects on parallel routes. The project is shovel-ready and is currently being initiated for an early 2022 start.
- Wharncliffe Road South Improvements and the Wharncliffe Road Bridge over the Thames River South Branch: This multi-year project will have variable traffic impacts on Wharncliffe Road South and Horton Street. It requires periods of road closures for construction of the railway diversion and bridge replacement. The railway approval process for construction staging and timing is currently underway. The project is tentatively scheduled to start construction in late 2022 and will stagger the road closure period from parallel route interruptions.
- Wellington Gateway and Clark's Bridge Improvements (Wellington Road over the South Branch of the Thames River): This road reconstruction and bridge widening for improved transit and active transportation within the Wellington Gateway project is anticipated to predominantly maintain two-lanes of traffic throughout construction. The detailed construction staging of the Wellington Gateway continues to develop and is considering the other projects.

In order to minimize impacts for residents and businesses and to ensure mobility needs for all users, transit, and emergency services, these projects are being scheduled with the intention of limiting the overlap of parallel north-south road closures during construction. The proactive early initiation of the Victoria Bridge replacement in the near-term will start progress on the program component that is shovel-ready. It is anticipated that there will still be an overlap of other, less impactful, construction activities that will not require full road closures. This coordinated approach will help to mitigate impacts on traffic and business impacts throughout London's transportation network.

Conclusion

This report describes the process associated with the council direction to take the necessary actions to permit the demolition of the residence at 100 Stanley Street as it relates to the Wharncliffe Road South Improvements project. The heritage dwelling is required to be removed from the property to support the Wharncliffe Road South Improvements project.

An EA addendum is not required. The process includes reporting and heritage approvals and will be transparent and consultative. The project team will further engage with the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (MHSTCI), the City's Heritage Planner, and the London Advisory Committee on Heritage.

The project team will continue to progress the project and engage with the community. The construction schedules of this and other nearby capital projects are being coordinated to implement the improvements while mitigating construction impacts as much as possible.

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