



REPORT

Development Services Department

TO: Mayor and Members of Council
FROM: Cristal Laanstra, Planning Coordinator, Policy
DATE: April 29, 2021
REPORT: DS-69/2021

SUBJECT: Wellington Heritage Conservation District Study

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with considerations for the drafted Wellington Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study.

The Wellington HCD Study represents one component of a municipal Heritage Conservation Strategy that began in 2011. From this strategy came the Picton Heritage Conservation District Plan that was approved July 23, 2013. Subsequent budgets have included funds to support additional Part V (Conservation District) work under the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA) within the County of Prince Edward.

Following interest from the Wellington District Business Association related to heritage assets of the Village, the Heritage Advisory Committee for The County (PEHAC) focused attention on an Inventory Project to survey attributes of the original settled area of Wellington. This inventory identified and prioritized potential properties for OHA listing. Coupled with the priority of advancing Capital Works projects within the County of Prince Edward, staff received support from PEHAC to begin the Wellington HCD Study.

Heritage planning consultants, Bray Heritage, have led the study which has assessed the Village of Wellington and has determined that the Wellington downtown core study area, as defined in the study, meets the province's criteria for designation as a Heritage Conservation District.

Staff are looking for adoption of the Wellington HCD Study and would like direction to proceed with Bray Heritage to prepare a Heritage Conservation District Plan that would lay out the policies and guidelines for managing change in the district. The District Plan would result in additional public consultation, public meetings, and future Council decision on the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council receive report DS-69/2021 for information;
2. THAT Council adopt all four of the recommendations in the Wellington Heritage Conservation District Study;
3. THAT Council direct staff to work with Bray Heritage to prepare a Heritage Conservation District Plan that would lay out the policies and guidelines for the study area; and
4. THAT the Heritage Conservation District Plan follow the consultation and document format requirements of Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* prior to being presented to Council for decision.

ANALYSIS:

Background

Bray Heritage planning consultants, from Kingston, were selected in July 2019 to complete a Heritage Conservation District Study, building off the successes of the Picton Heritage Conservation District, and began their assessment of the study area, resident interviews, and property inventory and evaluation in August/September 2019.

A press release occurred in October 2019 and a public open house occurred on November 27, 2019. The public was invited to hear a presentation on the process of the Study and to provide their input into historic elements and cultural heritage attributes for the Village of Wellington. An article was subsequently published in a local newspaper for public interest. Subsequently, a draft of the Wellington HCD Study has been prepared (**Attachment 1**).

Policy Basis for Heritage Conservation District

The importance of heritage protection is solidified in **Section 2.6, Cultural Heritage and Archaeology of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020**. Significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes are to be preserved and development and site alteration shall not be permitted except where heritage attributes will be conserved. As is the challenge with application of most provincial policy, the intent is not often debated while the scope and expectation can vary greatly without municipal guidance.

Municipal guidance is fleshed out in the Council adopted Official Plan, 2020. **Section 3.3.4. (1), within the Livable Community general development policies**, begins by identifying the role of the Municipality in identifying cultural heritage resources for their conservation, restoration, maintenance, and enhancement. Further policy in Section 3.3.4. includes permissions for the Municipality to designate heritage

conservation districts and also require Heritage Impact Assessments where development or site alteration is proposed that may impact heritage attributes.

The Wellington Secondary Plan complements the adopted Official Plan with **Section 4.2, Cultural Heritage policies**, with the intent of encouraging the preservation of cultural heritage resources in Wellington. The Secondary Plan also references Heritage Impact Assessments for evaluating the impact of proposed development.

All developed policy frameworks for the Municipality have been set up to protect provincial and local interests in heritage conservation. Heritage Impact Assessments are the main tool available for determining impacts to known and potential cultural heritage impacts; however, this points to an overarching question of how to determine impacts for cultural heritage resources we are not aware of. Failing to identify cultural heritage resources does not absolve the Municipality from the responsibility to protect said resources; it just makes the job more difficult for residents, staff, and Council.

Heritage Conservation Districts are a tool used to identify the cultural heritage resources and identify the important heritage attributes within the District. The above policy, coupled with identified Heritage Conservation Districts approved under the OHA, provides staff with the appropriate elements required for a consistent and efficient implementation of cultural heritage policies for the Municipality.

With cultural heritage resources identified, staff are able to review all municipal policy holistically, gaining a better understanding of how all policies interact with each other to ensure the highest and best land uses are established within The County. The consultants have identified some areas where gained knowledge from this process can translate into updated policies for more protection and effectiveness.

Recommended Boundary of the District

The drafted Study recognizes the Wellington Downtown Area, as defined within the Study (and shown in **Attachment 2**) is of heritage significance. The Study recognizes the Study area as a whole and outlines key heritage attributes; additionally, the consultants identified sub-areas and lists the heritage attributes for each.

The Study Area as a Whole is recognized as a coherent collection of individually important properties and its combination of resources within a compact village form. The area has value because of properties representing each stage of the village's development, the area is relatively homogenous, and offers examples of buildings and streetscapes that are significant within the village and the County. Some identified heritage attributes include:

- views along streets;
- mature tree canopies lining streets;
- linear development pattern along an historic access route; and
- historical associations with important people and events.

Statements of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest have been identified for 6 sub-areas;

- Lower Village - first phase of the village's settlement. Extends westward approximately from 147-177 Main Street (south side) and 146-176 (north side) and northwards approximately to 41 Belleville Street (east side) and 46 Belleville Street (west side).
- Transition Zone - contains properties subdivided from lands originally owned by two prominent local families, the Reynolds and the Dorlands - this is the most eclectic zone of the study area. Extends westward approximately from 178 to 236 Main Street (northside) and 179-239 Main Street (south side).
- Institutional Hub - concentration of public land uses within the centre of the village that creates a hub of daily community activity. Extends westward approximately from 240-250 Main Street (north side) and 245-261 Main Street (south side) and including the properties on both sides of East Street.
- Commercial/Industrial Core - includes both the main commercial district and street right-of-way that leads to the former site of the main commercial wharf. Heritage value lies in its association with the creation of the Upper Village centred on Lane Creek and focusing on the Lake Ontario shoreline west of West Lake. Extends westward approximately 252-312 Main Street (north side) and 265-305 Main Street (south side) and including the properties on both sides of Wharf Street and Lakeview Avenue.
- Consecon Street - only entirely residential sub-area. Importance associated with early transportation routes (Danforth Road, railway) and its largely intact residential streetscape. Extends north from Main Street approximately from 37-75 Consecon Street (east side) and 36-71 Consecon Street (west side).
- Western Suburbs - extension of Upper Village beyond West Street with a variety of late 19th and early 20th century housing represented along Main Street and side Streets. Extends westward approximately from 314-414 Main Street (north side) and 307-409 Main Street (south side) and properties on both sides of lower West Street, Water Street, Narrow Street, Shourds Street and Macdonald Street.

Recommendations of the Study

Recommendation 1: That the defined study area be recognized for its heritage significance. The recommendation lists the heritage attributes for the Study Area as a Whole and the six (6) sub-areas.

Recommendation 2: The recognized character of the study area conforms to the characteristics of heritage conservation districts, as defined by the Ministry of Heritage Sport, Tourism, Culture Industries in the Ontario Heritage Tool Kit. The Study expands on how within the recommendations.

Recommendations #1 and 2 provide necessary justification and rationale to meet the legislative requirements of the *OHA* to proceed with designation of the District and completion of the Plan, containing development guidelines and policies.

Recommendation 3: That the Wellington Downtown Area, as defined and shown on **Attachment 2**, should be designated as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the *OHA*.

Recommendation 4: That Council should authorize staff to proceed with the preparation of a District Plan and Guidelines document, in accordance with the requirements of the *OHA*.

Staff concur with the study recommendations and are seeking Council to permit staff and Bray Heritage planning consultants to prepare the Plan and take the documents out for public consultation.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

The consultants have followed the necessary legislated steps of the Ontario Heritage Act to present before Council whether the Village of Wellington should proceed with designation of the District and completion of the Plan, containing development guidelines and policies.

The question to designate or not designate does not remove the Municipality's legislated requirement to protect cultural heritage attributes. Council could choose to not create the District Plan; however, staff will still be required to follow protection policies within the Provincial Policy Statement and the Wellington Secondary Plan. The District Plan would assist in focusing efforts and creating a consistent approach. No District Plan makes the job more difficult for both staff and members of the public to know what is expected of them.

As protection of heritage cultural resources is still of provincial and local interest, Part IV property designations may come forward individually and require Council attention over a varied timeframe. Designating the District at one time allows Council to be strategic with how they spend meeting hours.

CONSULTATION TO DATE:

As outlined above, They County has released multiple PSAs and newspaper advertisements related to the public open houses and the ability for the public to send comments to staff.

The project also has a dedicated Have Your Say consultation page that has accumulated 427 total visits, resulting in the draft Report being downloaded 227 times. Further, the initial open house presentation has been viewed by many residents. No comments have been submitted via the Have Your Say platform; however, email and telephone submissions have been received.

Consultation feedback has resulted in five (5) formal comments received; of the comments submitted, two (2) have shown positive support for the Study and Plan, two (2) have posed questions related specific to their property and that were

answered satisfactorily by staff, and one (1) has posed questions that staff feel can be resolved positively through communication and consultation during the Plan phase of the project.

The submission referenced above speaks to concerns with short-term accommodations and tourism in Wellington and states a lack of 'sense of place' that the Study can't help. It also referenced some landowners having property regulations when other developers do not and stated that heritage upgrades for individuals should not be financed by the Municipality. Comments related to County management of municipal trees was included. Staff feel all of these comments can be addressed through landowner education and future public engagement activities.

Staff will outline how the HCD Plan will highlight the 'sense of place' that many residents feel is being lost to competing interests within the Village. Policies will be created that apply to individual homeowners as well as developers where the District Plan will apply. Incentive programs can be discussed along with the benefits for both individual landowners and the Municipality and residents as a whole. Policies related to heritage trees will be further developed and balanced with municipal maintenance and protocol to protect but also be reasonable; municipal policy RD600 - Tree Management and Preservation Policy was recently updated to ensure consistent and current management of trees. The policy also includes a definition of 'heritage tree' and has mechanisms in place for review of trees that are included within our cultural heritage resources.

Staff Consulted

Planning Division Staff

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

With a Council approved budget of \$75,000.00 for a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan work staff received project support from PEHAC in April 2019 and began to move the project forward.

As per the OHA, an HCD Study is required to determine the merits and support the designation of an HCD Plan. Staff allocated \$40,000.00 to the completion of the Study. The remaining available funds were retained for the completion of the Wellington HCD Plan, should Council support the staff recommendation.

The Wellington Heritage Conservation District project had an initial budget of approximately \$75,000.00. Phase 1, the Wellington HCD Study, has cost \$44,413.00 with \$30,587.00 available for Phase 2, the Wellington HCD Plan preparation and adoption.

As the money is already approved within the 2020 budget, no additional financial considerations are required.

RISKS:

RISK	RISK TYPE	PROPOSED MITIGATION
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DESCRIPTION		
Consideration of additional property regulation may not be popular.	Public/Stakeholder	Public consultation is a legislated requirement for drafting an HCD Plan. The public will be given opportunity to provide input for the policies of the Plan.

RELEVANT POLICY/BY-LAW:

This recommendation complies with the *Ontario Heritage Act* and *Planning Act*, along with policy within the Official Plan and Wellington Urban Centre Secondary Plan.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PRIORITY ALIGNMENT:

4. *Maintain Rural and Historic Character* – Maintain the rural and historical character of the County through responsible planning, principals and decision-making;

The identification of a recommended HCD boundary, along with outlining heritage attributes within the Study enhances the municipality's position to maintain both the rural and historical character of the County. The Study sets the groundwork for the implementation of heritage protection through good planning processes.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The adoption of the Wellington HCD Study will be communicated through the Have Your Say consultation page along with a PSA released through the municipal Communications department.

Additionally, Phase 2 of the project, if approved, will be communicated through a PSA and public consultation, similar to that which has been described for the first phase, will begin (i.e. public open house, newspaper advertisements, newspaper articles, public meeting, etc.).

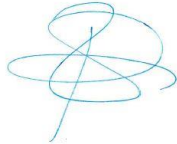
ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Wellington HCD Study
2. Recommended HCD Boundary

Authorizing Signatures:

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Director Approval: Peter Moyer, P.Eng.
Direction of Development Services April 19, 2021



CAO Approval: Marcia Wallace
Chief Administrative Officer April 20, 2021