THE AVENUES HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY

PETERBOROUGH, ONTARIO
Issued: 5 November 2013 Revised: 8 November, 2013

BACKGROUND & ISSUES IDENTIFICATION REPORT

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Project: 13-065-01
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1. Advertisement for the sale of building lots in the Avenues, 1905
(Source: Bata Library Archives, Trent University)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In undertaking this Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study for the Avenues neighbourhood, we understand the City of Peterborough is supporting public interest in heritage and sustainable neighbourhoods as well as its Municipal Cultural Plan directive to protect Peterborough’s historic buildings and landscapes.

The HCD Study will identify significant cultural heritage resources in the Study Area and prioritize heritage issues to develop a compatible framework for future growth and change. Cultural heritage resources are a valuable asset that can be utilized to enhance and guide a neighbourhood as it evolves over time.

The boundary of the Avenues HCD Study Area is broadly defined by Charlotte Street to the north, Bolivar Street to the south, Monaghan Road to the west and Park Street North to the east. This area of Peterborough was developed around the turn of the 20th century. The Avenues displays a visually coherent concentration of historic homes fronting tree-lined streets and, in many areas, separated by laneways at the rear.

This HCD Study provides the opportunity to:

• Engage with the community, local heritage experts and other stakeholders to identify the cultural heritage value and attributes of the Avenues neighbourhood as a unique place;

• Develop HCD Study objectives that encourage growth and change that are consistent with existing community values and local cultural heritage; and

• Support the City of Peterborough as a leader in heritage preservation and arts, culture and heritage.

Strategic Direction 3: Strengthen Heritage - build on the City’s past heritage work through continued development of policy and regulatory frameworks and tools such as heritage conservation districts to protect Peterborough’s historic buildings and landscapes. - Municipal Cultural Plan, 2011
Lastly, an initial review of Peterborough’s planning policy and initiatives relevant to undertaking an HCD Study and Plan finds them compatible with the process and goals of this Study. To best support this Study, we recommend that the City pass an *Official Plan* amendment that specifically identifies heritage conservation districts as an approved heritage planning tool.
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of the Report
This Background and Issues Identification Report has been prepared by ERA Architects Inc. to introduce the Avenues Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study.

This report includes a description of the Study Area, outlines the study process and community consultation program, determines the appropriateness of an interim control by-law, and provides a high level review of relevant City of Peterborough policies to identify potential opportunities, challenges and links to the HCD Study.

1.2 Project Background
Peterborough has approximately 125 properties designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. This number is greater than any other city of a comparable size in Ontario, except for Kingston. However, it is noted within the *Municipal Cultural Plan* that Peterborough has not yet established a heritage conservation district and that this heritage planning tool could add an important layer of protection.

The HCD Study is being pursued in accordance with Strategic Direction 3 of the *Municipal Cultural Plan (2012)*; this directive identifies HCDs as a policy tool to protect Peterborough’s historic buildings and landscapes.

In the spring of 2013, the City of Peterborough hosted two public workshops to introduce heritage conservation districts and to seek community input on possible HCD study areas. Based on positive support received from the community, the City is proceeding with an HCD Study of the Avenues neighbourhood.
1.3 Client Contact

Erik Hanson
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City of Peterborough
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1.4 Study Area Location & Description

The Avenues HCD Study Area is generally bounded by Park Street to the east, Charlotte Street to the north, Monaghan Road to the west and Bolivar Street to the south. The neighbourhood is in a residential district west of the downtown. As part of the Study analysis, areas beyond this formal Study Area may also be considered for inclusion.

The Study Area lands originally formed part of North Monaghan Township under Concession 13, Lot 13. Lot 13 was subdivided into park lots with estates and houses fronting onto Park Street North; Park Lots 1 through 6 are included in the Study Area. This area joined the City of Peterborough as part of the 1872 annexation.

Between 1852 and 1914, the park lots were subdivided into smaller residential parcels under 10 registered plans of subdivision. Within the majority of the Study Area, the lots were built up in an ad hoc manner. Park Lots 4 and 5 (now encompassed by Charlotte Street, Park Street North, King Street and Monaghan Road) are the exception. In 1905, Park Lots 4 and 5 were developed as a designed neighbourhood by Elizabeth S. Boswell and Elizabeth S. Burnham.1 The

Did you know?
The Avenues were named after members of the Burnham and Boswell families: Frederick Burnham, Margaret Wilson, Elias Burnham, Maitland C. Boswell, Pearl Beatrice Burnham and the Boswell family.

1 Boswell and Burnham inherited the property from Margaret Wilson; Wilson inherited it from her brother Elias Burnham. Elias was a lawyer and prominent local citizen.
two park lots were divided into seven equally sized blocks bisected by laneways. The dwellings fronted onto the new streets and were subject to basic design guidelines, which stipulated lot setbacks, building height, exterior wall treatment, and other restrictions. This subdivision plan project was at the time one of the most ambitious housing developments carried out in Peterborough.

Much of the Avenues was developed and marketed as a ‘streetcar suburb’. Streetcar suburbs developed in North America in the late 19th century when the electric streetcar was introduced as a form of public transport.
The Streetcar Suburb

The introduction of the streetcar to North America in the late 1880s brought forward a new type of residential development that was shaped by the use of streetcar lines as a primary mode of transportation. Streetcar lines were established and extended to allow for new residential communities at the city’s edge. As the streetcars were affordable and greatly reduced transportation time, these suburbs were popular to all, especially the middle class. House designs were often purchased from a catalogue; Arts and Crafts movement styles were most popular. Inman Park in Atlanta is an example of a streetcar suburb that is protected as two historic districts on the National Register of Historic Places.

Other features complement the architecture of the Avenues including rows of mature street trees, narrow road platforms, grassy boulevards and open spaces, back lanes and a uniform pattern of lots. Single block streets, running north-south, with terminating views form an interesting block pattern in the Study Area. Collectively, the Study Area’s architecture, landscape, and street pattern, culminate in a distinctive neighbourhood.

2 Advertisement for the sale of building lots in the Avenues, 1905 (Source: Bata Library Archives, Trent University)
2 STUDY PROCESS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.1 Study Process

The HCD Study process involves meaningful community engagement accompanied by extensive and thorough research. Key documents that are developed through the Study process include this Background and Issues Identification Report and the HCD Study. The content of the HCD Study follows the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (see sidebar).

The intent of the HCD Study is to provide recommendations to best protect and conserve the Avenues’ cultural heritage value and heritage attributes, while allowing for compatible growth and change. Research, analysis and consultation may reveal that there are other more appropriate heritage conservation and/or planning tools for the Study Area or parts therein.

Following the HCD Study, a Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines may be prepared to designate the recommended Study Area as an HCD under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

40. (1) Scope of study

(2) A study under subsection (1) shall,

(a) examine the character and appearance of the area that is the subject of the study, including buildings, structures and other property features of the area, to determine if the area should be preserved as a heritage conservation district;

(b) examine and make recommendations as to the geographic boundaries of the area to be designated;

(c) consider and make recommendations as to the objectives of the designation and the content of the heritage conservation district plan required under section 41.1;

(d) make recommendations as to any changes that will be required to the municipality’s official plan and to any municipal by-laws, including any zoning by-laws.

2005, c. 6. s. 29.

- *Ontario Heritage Act, 2005*
2.2 Community Engagement

Community engagement is key to developing a thorough understanding of the cultural heritage value of a place and what makes it unique and special. In order to provide a comprehensive, informed and transparent consultation process, the following approach has been developed with Staff.¹

Based on past experience, we anticipate that some common concerns about HCDs will be voiced during the community engagement process. We will discuss these concerns with the Project Steering Committee as well as at the community consultation meetings. Additionally, an HCD “myth busters” summary may be posted to the HCD web page to provide information on:

» Impact on property values;
» Heritage permit review process; and
» Suitable approaches to building alterations and repairs.

Community Briefing & Questionnaire

Early in the Study process, a briefing and questionnaire will be distributed to all property owners and residents within the Study Area. The intent of the briefing is to introduce the HCD Study, invite the community to participate in the consultation process, and to announce the first community consultation meeting.

The briefing will be accompanied by a questionnaire which will seek to:

» Understand what residents/business owners value about the area;

¹ The minimum requirement for HCD Study consultation under the Ontario Heritage Act is one meeting with the local heritage advisory committee.
Gain background information on the area and individual properties;
Gauge the level of interest in an HCD designation;
Gauge the level of protection desired as part of the proposed HCD; and
Understand any related concerns or issues.

Project Steering Committee (PSC)
The role of the PSC will be to provide background knowledge of the Study Area, feedback on findings and to discuss common issues related to the HCD Study.

The Panel will represent a broad community base, including: a residential property owner, a multiple residential unit property owner, a member of the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (PACAC), a member of the Arts, Heritage and Culture Advisory Committee (AHCAC), a member of the Peterborough Historical Society and City Staff (Arts, Culture and Heritage Division).

The intent is that the group will contribute throughout the Study process.

Community Consultation Meetings

There are three community consultation meetings planned throughout the HCD Study process. Community consultation meetings provide a venue for the local community to receive information, ask questions and provide feedback. They are an invaluable component of the Study process.

The meetings will likely include the following topics.

Community Consultation Meeting #1 - Introduce the HCD Study:

What is a heritage conservation district study?
» What is a heritage conservation district?
» What are the objectives of an HCD?
» What does an HCD look like?
» What are the benefits of HCD?
» What are common myths?
» What are initial observations of the Study Area?

Community Consultation Meeting #2 - Present findings:
» What are the preliminary findings of the research and analysis?
» Is there consistent heritage character?
» What are the objectives for the District?

Community Consultation Meeting #3 - Present recommendations:
» What is the heritage character and attributes of the HCD Study area?
» What is the final study boundary?
» What are the recommendations?
» What does this mean for the property owner and/or residents?
» What are the next steps?

PACAC and ACHAC
There are two meetings planned jointly with PACAC (Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee) and ACHAC (Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee). One at the beginning of the process to present the HCD Study and another to present the findings and recommendations.
Individual Meetings:
Meetings with individual property owners and/or stakeholders may be carried out as needed to address unique concerns or interests in the HCD Study. These meetings will be conducted by the Project Team.

Volunteer Research
Community members and students enrolled in Fleming College’s Museum Management and Curatorship program will be engaged to contribute to the Individual Property Inventory research with the Project Team. This will enable residents, students and other stakeholders to contribute directly to the HCD Study.

Council
A Council Workshop will be held midway through the process to introduce the HCD concept as well as the Study purpose and process. The workshop is tentatively planned for January 2014, at which point we will be able to review the Project Team’s research to date, discuss the outcomes of the first community consultation meeting and provide next steps. This session with councillors will help the Project Team to gauge reactions, expectations, and concerns of the Council.

2.3 Appropriateness of an Interim Control By-law
Under Section 40.1 (1) of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Peterborough may by by-law designate the Study Area as a “heritage conservation study area” for a period of up to one year. A by-law under this section may prohibit or set limitations with respect to alteration of properties situated within the heritage conservation study area or the erection, demolition or removal of buildings or structures, or classes of buildings or structures within the study area.

Designation of study area
40.1(1) If the council of a municipality undertakes a study under section 40, the council may by by-law designate the area specified in the by-law as a heritage conservation study area for a period of up to one year. 2005, c. 6. s. 29.

- Ontario Heritage Act, 2005
Based on conversations with Staff, there does not appear to be any considerable development pressure within the Avenues neighbourhood. The *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006* identifies Peterborough as an urban growth centre. However, Staff estimate there to be approximately 14,000 green-field lots available for future development and as a result, the existing neighbourhoods are unlikely to experience growth pressure in the near future.

The Project Team do not perceive any benefits that would merit the administration of an interim control by-law or potential unintended consequences. For example, the implementation of an interim control by-law could cause unnecessary confusion and concern for property owners at the outset of the Study process. Consequently, the use of the interim by-law is not recommended for the Avenues HCD Study Area.
3 POLICY REVIEW

In Peterborough, heritage and its connections to sense of place, economic development, the vibrancy of community and the character of its neighbourhoods, environmental sustainability and overall quality of life are actively supported. In 1975, the municipality was the second city in Ontario to take advantage of the powers under the newly enacted *Ontario Heritage Act* to appoint a Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (now known as the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee).

The municipality has shown commitment to conserving its heritage resources by enacting by-laws and enabling legislation. In 2003, the municipality established a property tax relief program for designated heritage properties. This program has proven very successful over the last decade. In 2011, Peterborough’s dedication to and leadership in cultural heritage was recognized when they were awarded the Prince of Wales Prize for Municipal Leadership.

This initial high level policy review is intended to acknowledge key reports/policies that may inform the objectives and development of the HCD Study. The goal is to align the HCD Study with existing policies and initiatives and to build upon the strengths of Peterborough’s cultural heritage policy and programs.

There are no specific policies related to the Avenues in the *Official Plan* and there are no Secondary Plans that cover the area. However, cultural heritage is a key theme that is integrated in different forms throughout the *Official Plan* and the *Municipal Cultural Plan*. Other planning and policy reports, such as the *Urban Forest Strategic Plan* and the *Zoning By-law* address key aspects of the built and natural environment in the Avenues.

The following background reports were reviewed for this initial policy review, which will inform the objectives of the HCD Study:

- *Official Plan* (Consolidated December 31, 2009)
- *Zoning By-law 97-123* (October 1997)
- *Urban Forest Strategic Plan* (June 2011)
- *By-law 03-208* to provide for tax relief in respect of designated heritage property (2003)
- *A Review of the Effectiveness of the Heritage Property Tax Relief Program* (April 2011)
Official Plan - There are no specific references to heritage conservation districts or studies within the Official Plan. Cultural heritage and related themes are woven throughout the plan with one section on cultural heritage.

One of the key goals and objectives, which form the basis of the plan in Section 2 is to protect, preserve and enhance the natural and urbanized landscape. One identified measure to do this includes preservation and protection of historic properties. Some areas of integration include: Section 4.2.1.2 Objectives for residential development, Section 4.2.2.1.3 Infill Housing, Section 4.2.5.6 Submission Requirements, Section 4.3.2.2.2 Sub-Area 1: Commercial Core Area, 4.3.2.3 Bonusing, etc. Section 2.4.9 contains two policies on cultural heritage in relation to development and site alteration.

Municipal Cultural Plan - The Municipal Cultural Plan was adopted by Council in 2012. It provides a strategic and coherent framework for the role of culture in Peterborough. Heritage is a key theme throughout the plan, focusing on built heritage, natural heritage, landscape, and the downtown as a cultural hub. Ultimately, the plan puts culture that is defined broadly, at the heart of city building and quality of life in Peterborough.

Strategic Direction 3 (Strengthen Heritage) seeks to “build on the City’s past heritage work through continued development of policy and regulatory frameworks and tools such as heritage conservation districts to protect Peterborough’s historic buildings and landscapes”.

Strategic Direction 5 (Incorporate Culture into all Neighbourhoods) also supports the HCD Study process, as it speaks to the importance of recognizing
the “uniqueness” of Peterborough’s neighbourhoods as well as supporting cultural development at all neighbourhood levels. The HCD Study process will engage the local community in identifying cultural heritage values, by learning about the historic development of their neighbourhood and by identifying how they wish to see their neighbourhood evolve in the future.

**Urban Forest Strategic Plan** - The *Urban Forest Strategic Plan* was adopted in 2011. It addresses the environmental, social, cultural and economic contribution that the urban forest makes to Peterborough’s communities. The Plan references the Avenues as having around 28% canopy cover. This mature tree canopy contributes to the cultural heritage value of the area and as such Objective 6: To identify and recognize significant valuable trees based on historic, aesthetic, cultural, social and ecological criteria, aligns well with the potential HCD Study objective of protecting the tree canopy within the area. Recommendation 6 addresses the implementation of a heritage tree identification, designation and protection program. Again this recommendation aligns with the goal of protecting trees within the Study Area.

**Zoning By-law 97-123** - Generally, the *Zoning By-law* does not present any direct conflict with the HCD Study process and potential future designation of the area as a heritage conservation district. There are three types of residential designations within the Study Area - Residential District 1, 2 and 3. R.1 and R.2 apply to dwellings and R.3 applies to dwellings and boarding houses. The regulations associated with these designations appear to align with the existing built environment and land use patterns. There are no specific zoning designations related to heritage neighbourhoods within the By-law.
The Zoning By-law is currently being updated and the HCD Study process presents an opportunity to review the designations in the Study Area and carefully assess whether any changes would be beneficial.

**Recommendation:**

There is a strong policy framework in which to proceed with an HCD Study and ultimately a HCD designation of the Avenues. Based on this high level review, the HCD Study process appears to be supportive and consistent with current planning policy/initiatives and strategic goals.

To further enable an HCD designation, we recommend undertaking an *Official Plan* amendment to identify heritage conservation districts as an approved heritage planning tool.

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**Official Plan examples:**

Pursuant to the *Ontario Heritage Act*, and in consultation with the Municipal Heritage Committee, Council [may/will/shall], by by-law:

i) designate properties to be of cultural heritage value or interest

ii) define the municipality, or any area or areas within the municipality as an area to be examined for designation as a heritage conservation district; and

iii) designate the municipality, or any area or areas within the municipality, as a heritage conservation district.

OR

Council may designate, under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, one or more heritage conservation districts within the municipality. Significant cultural heritage landscape features and heritage attributes may be included within a heritage conservation district.

*M - Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport*
4 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Project Personnel

MICHAEL McCLELLAND, PRINCIPAL, OAA, FRAIC
Michael is a registered architect with over twenty years of experience. His work covers urban design and heritage planning in addition to building conservation. He is also actively involved in the public promotion of Canada’s architectural heritage. He is a founding member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP).

Prior to establishing ERA Architects Inc. with Edwin Rowse in 1990, Michael McClelland worked for the Toronto Historical Board, advising on planning, permit and development applications, and on the preservation of City-owned museums and monuments. In 1999 he was awarded a certificate of recognition from the Ontario Association of Architects and the Toronto Society of Architects for his outstanding contribution to the built environment and to the profession of architecture and in 2006 he was made a Fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.

LINDSAY REID, ASSOCIATE, OAA CAHP LEED AP
Lindsay is a licensed architect in the field of heritage conservation. She has a special interest in the conservation of cultural institutions as well as the preservation of culturally significant communities. In this area she has worked on many award-winning projects including Ruthven Park NHS, the Distillery District NHS and, as a volunteer, the 1953-2003 TSA Guide Map to post war architecture in Toronto.

She has extensive experience in all stages of building analysis, planning, municipal approvals, design, contract documents, field review and project administration.
for conservation and renovation projects. Lindsay’s experience also includes employment as a heritage planner for the City of Toronto. There she expanded her project management, negotiation and public consultation skills and gained a more comprehensive understanding of cultural heritage and planning policy.

**VICTORIA ANGEL, SENIOR HERITAGE PLANNER**
An experienced heritage conservation practitioner, Victoria is interested in policies and tools that address not just the physical fabric of historic places, but also the complex processes that link people and culture to place. Prior to joining ERA as a Senior Heritage Planner, Victoria was a manager and policy analyst at Parks Canada, where she led the creation of the Canadian Register of Historic Places. She is the Academic Advisor at the Willowbank School of Restoration Arts and has taught heritage conservation at Carleton University and the University of Victoria.

**ALEX ROWSE-THOMPSON, HERITAGE PLANNER**
Having received her Master’s Degree in Environmental Design (Planning) from the University of Calgary, Alex went on to work as a Conservation and Design Officer for municipal government in the UK. In this role, she provided design consultation for a range of projects, from small repairs and restorations to the adaptive reuse of entire sites, including a disposed WWI seaplane base and a 19th-century Royal Engineers Depot. She was also closely involved in writing a number of municipal heritage policy and design guidelines documents.

At ERA, Alex applies her broad base of conservation knowledge to community consultation, building condition assessments, and a wide range of studies, plans, guidelines, and other heritage planning processes. In all
her work, Alex advocates for an integrated approach to cultural heritage conservation and planning policy and practice, an approach she believes is essential to creating and sustaining quality places.

GEORGE MARTIN, HERITAGE PLANNER

George Martin is a heritage planner whose focus is the conservation and integration of heritage resources in site planning.

George was born and raised in Peterborough. He received his Masters of Science in Conservation from the University of Hong Kong after completing a Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning at Ryerson University. In addition, he recently completed professional training in cultural heritage landscapes at the Willowbank School of Restoration Arts. Prior to joining ERA, George was involved in heritage projects in Vancouver and China, and worked for the Committee of Adjustment at the City of Toronto.