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To: Karen Rennie

Manager, Arts, Culture and Heritage Division

From: Dennis Carter-Edwards

Chair, Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee

14 February 2019

Re: End of Term Report by the Chair Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee

The end of the current term of the City of Peterborough's Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee provides an opportunity to reflect back on the activities of the Committee and to look forward to some of the challenges for the new, incoming Committee. It has been a pleasure to chair ACHAC this term and I want to thank all members for their work these past four years. I especially want to thank the vice chair, Bruce Stonehouse who has provided leadership in supporting the city's Public Art program. While ACHAC serves in an advisory capacity it is the intent of members to offer their collective experience and expertise to help shape public policy in matters relating to the broad field of Arts, Culture and Heritage.

I believe the Committee has admirably fulfilled this responsibility. City staff from various departments have made presentations to the members on a variety of topics ranging from the Downtown Parking Management Study, Peterborough's Gateway initiative, the Age Friendly Plan to the numerous updates on draft Plan of Subdivision for new developments, in particular the Lily Lake development. The Land Use/Urban Design Study for the Crescent Street neighbourhood was indicative of the opportunities ACHAC members had to offer comments on future development initiatives from a cultural perspective. One presentation of special note was the presentation by Alan Seabrook in March of 2017 on the city's new Strategic Framework which was designed to integrate the various planning initiatives underway into one holistic approach. In the case of each presentation by staff, the Committee sought to assess and comment on the topic under discussion through the perspective of the Municipal Cultural Plan which provides an important lens with which to view these various municipal initiatives.

ACHAC has also had a more direct input into shaping civic developments. Through active participation in planning initiatives such as the Bethune Street week long charette and the recent Official Plan study group, committee members have provided helpful commentary. Perhaps the most significant activity for ACHAC in this regard is the work of committee members in providing input to the draft Official Plan. Through a thoughtfully crafted discussion paper, the Committee has offered detailed comments to the team preparing the city's new Official Plan.

Apart from internal, staff generated presentations, the Committee has also heard presentations from numerous community groups who were bringing information to ACHAC and seeking constructive support. The plan by the County of Peterborough to turn the former Gaol site into a highly creative heritage site using ruins and interpretive panels stands out as a success story that garnered a heritage award from the Peterborough Historical Society. ACHAC also received presentations from staff at Trent University on the Trent Lands development proposals and the

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creation of a new heritage policy to provide a level of protection for built heritage assets. The Committee also actively participated in the Vision 2025 exercise providing input to the work of the consultant. The presentation by the Canada 150 Committee that was planning Peterborough's program to commemorate the sesquicentennial of Canada brought forward a suggestion of adding a time capsule to mark this important milestone. The city's vibrant artisan community has sought the support of ACHAC as it develops a strategic plan to bring the various groups together under one roof and to enhance its program offer to the community. As with city staff presentations, the members of ACHAC warmly received information from these groups and offered their comments. In some cases the comments were provided in the course of discussion at the specific meeting, in others, the chair was directed to provide follow up correspondence. These letters now form part of the record of the committee's activities.

While forming only a small part of the Committee's work over the past term, members have also contributed to a broader discussion on the key role of arts, culture and heritage across Ontario. The Committee provided input to a provincial initiative to develop a Cultural Strategy. The Committee, through the chair, also provided expertise to the local planning for the Travel Media Association of Canada annual meeting held here in Peterborough in 2015. In each case, the goal was to highlight the values and benefits of bringing a "cultural" perspective to such initiatives.

While there were many successes, the term had its disappointments and setbacks. Most significant, was the passing of Becky Rogers, who played such an important role in the functioning of the Advisory Committee. The chair and vice chair were invited to participate in the staffing of the new Manager and greatly appreciated this opportunity. The Public Art program registered several accomplishments with the addition of several new murals, a plan for long term maintenance of existing works and plans for new pieces of public art. As with many similar initiatives, there were challenges in reinvigorating a public art program. The work of the Public Art Committee will be provided by the report of the chair.

The incoming members of ACHAC will have many new challenges to face. While the city's Strategic Framework provides a basis for an integrated approach to municipal planning, there still remains work to do to insure city departments are communicating effectively. A proposal by Public Works may have a potential for a public art component but without effective communication among key players, such opportunities can be missed. Designing Gateway signage without adequate lead time for consultation and input by ACHASC may lead to missed opportunities for improvements. Effective, transparent and timely communication are key to maximizing opportunities to enhance the art, culture and heritage potential of our community. The city, through the Arts, Culture and Heritage Division, has made some early steps to achieving a better, more scientific understanding of the contribution that arts, culture and heritage make both in terms of quality of life for residents and visitors as well as the financial benefits that accrue to the city. These early efforts should be continued, refined and presented to a broad audience. The Municipal Cultural Plan is now close to seven years old and is in need of a refresh and refocus. Preparing a revision to the plan will represent an important and challenging undertaking for the new Committee. Despite the hard work of dedicated volunteers, the city has made little headway in developing a thoughtful and strategic planning framework for the management of its numerous municipal parks. This is especially the case with Harper Park, perhaps the most significant of the city's parks due to its status as a provincially significant property. An offer by the Harper Park Stewardship volunteer group to work with the city in

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developing a sound co-management regime remains in limbo. The Committee has an opportunity to encourage new ways of thinking by the city in developing effective models to manage the natural and cultural assets of the community.

In closing, I want to offer my sincere thanks to the many city staff I have had the pleasure and the privilege to work with over the years. Their dedication and professionalism has made the tasks enjoyable. I extend best wishes to the incoming Committee and continued success as they respond to the challenges ahead.

Dennis Carter-Edwards