



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (PACAC)

From: Erik Hanson, Heritage Resources Coordinator

Meeting Date: December 10, 2020

Subject: Report PACAC20-030
Designation of 470 Water Street - The Courthouse Precinct

Purpose

A report to recommend that PACAC recommend to Council that 470 Water Street - The Courthouse Precinct be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the **Ontario Heritage Act** (the Act) as a Cultural Heritage Landscape in the City of Peterborough.

Recommendation

That the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee approves the recommendation outlined in Report PACAC20-030, dated December 10, 2020 of the Heritage Resources Coordinator, as follows:

That 470 Water Street – The Courthouse Precinct – be recommended to Council for designation pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the **Ontario Heritage Act**.

Budget and Financial Implications

There are no budgetary or financial implications as the result of the recommendation of this report.

Background

Under Part IV of the Act, municipalities may designate individual properties deemed to be of “cultural heritage value or interest” to the community, through the passage of municipal By-Laws. The designation process strikes a balance between the interests of the individual property owners and the recognized need of the community to preserve its heritage resources. Heritage designation prohibits unwarranted demolition and controls major alterations that might otherwise harm specific heritage features.

Under the Act, Council is required to consult with its municipal heritage committee prior to issuing a notice of intention to designate a property. The designation brief for the Precinct outlining its significance is attached as Appendix A for PACAC to review.

Staff reviewed The Courthouse Precinct against the criteria for significance outlined in Regulation 9/06 of the Act and determined that the area is suitable for designation.

In August of this year Peterborough County announced plans to pursue the sale of the Courthouse and associated lands and buildings including Victoria Park. At its meeting of September 17, 2020, the PACAC passed a recommendation requesting that staff prepare a draft designation brief for 470 Water Street (County Courthouse and south wing addition) and the adjacent lands known as the County Jail, and Victoria Square. Subsequently staff held discussions and met with a heritage consultant hired by the County to provide its own opinion of the heritage value of the site.

The Courthouse Precinct

The Courthouse Precinct has cultural heritage value or interest as a prominent judicial complex within the City of Peterborough. It is a precinct which includes the original courthouse designed by Joseph Scobell, 1876 renovations by John Belcher, 1917 renovations by William Blackwell, Registry and County Offices addition by Craig & Zeidler in 1960, the Jail, Victoria Park (originally Courthouse Square), and the residence of the caretaker. The courthouse has been in continuous operation since its completion in 1840, first as the District then County Courthouse and it continues to serve the community in this capacity as the Ontario Court of Justice and Ontario Family Court. It has specific physical and design value as a fine and very early example of a Regency style courthouse from the earliest days of the Province of Upper Canada.

Historically, it has direct associations with and yields significant information regarding the evolution of the judicial system in Ontario from its inception. It also yields information about the importance of its location, grouping of buildings and greenspace, which was typical of early courthouse design in Ontario. From a contextual perspective, it defines the area as a landmark – in its siting, design and as an important early judicial building and as one of the earliest public buildings constructed in the town, overlooking one of the town’s first public parks. The setting is in the historic centre of Peterborough, giving

the building a dignified and prominent place in the community. In many ways, the precinct has influenced community values over the course of its 180-year history.

Summary

This report recommends the designation of The Courthouse Precinct under Part IV of the **Ontario Heritage Act**.

Submitted by,

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Attachment:

Appendix A – Designation Brief 470 Water Street – The Courthouse Precinct