

MINUTES of the inaugural meeting of the OAK BAY HERITAGE COMMITTEE, held in the Council Chambers, Oak Bay Municipal Hall, 2167 Oak Bay Avenue, Oak Bay B.C., on Thursday January 8, 2009.

PRESENT: Jean Sparks, Interim Chair
Christopher Causton
Jane Nielsen
Bronwyn Taylor
Stephanie Sainas
Don Reksten
Brenda Jacques
W. John Harker
STAFF: Roy Thomassen, Sandi Piercy
REGRETS: Christopher Watts

GUESTS: Ronald Telfer

Christopher Causton called the meeting to order at 8:32 am.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Christopher Causton welcomed the committee back for a new year. Christopher introduced Councilor Tara Ney to the committee as the newly appointed Heritage Liaison to Council. Each committee member introduced himself or herself. Christopher expressed his continued interest in Oak Bay Heritage despite stepping down as Chair.

Due to the election of new officers and a guest speaker, the meeting would not follow the agenda.

MOVED by Jean Sparks

Seconded by Don Reksten, THAT THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA BE AMMENDED.

CARRIED.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

John Harker nominated Don Reksten as Chair of the Committee.

Don Reksten declined.

Jean Sparks nominated Christopher Watts as Chair of the Committee.

Christopher Watts accepted.

Don Reksten nominated John Harker as Chair of the Committee.

John Harker declined.

Christopher Causton declared Christopher Watts Heritage Committee Chair for 2009.

Bronwyn Taylor nominated John Harker as Vice Chair.

John Harker accepted.

Christopher Causton declared John Harker Heritage Committee Vice Chair for 2009.

Christopher Causton stepped down and Interim Chair, Jean Sparks, directed the meeting.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by Don Reksten,
Seconded by John Harker, THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OAK BAY HERITAGE STEERING COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY NOVEMBER 13, 2008, BE ADOPTED.

CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

Ronald Telfer: Request to Rename Elgin Road to Burns Street

Ronald Telfer attended the meeting with his proposal to change a street name. The purpose of this proposal is to address the historical merit of the original name of the road that is now Elgin Road.

In 1921 the Victoria Postmaster requested a group of street name changes due to duplication and subsequent confusion in mail delivery. For this reason Burns Street (or Burnes ancient spelling) was changed to Elgin. However, Postal Codes have been universally adopted and this confusion would not longer occur. The street name change occurred for administrative reasons rather than honouring a significant person or event.

Municipal records regarding the reasons for street name choices are limited, but it is believed that Elgin Road was named after the 8th Earl of Elgin, James Bruce, Governor General of Canada from 1847 – 1854. The Earl of Elgin has been credited with establishing Responsible Government in Canada as well as creating a reciprocal treaty with the United States for stimulating Canada's economic development.

Prior to 1921, the street was Burns (Burnes) Street, named after the poet Robert Burns. Burns Street was part of a subdivision still known as "Poet's Corner". This part of Oak Bay's development dates back to the 1890's, as the first subdivision in the municipality prior to incorporation. Most of the working class homes in this area are still extant. Burns or Burnes Street was part of this historical plan, which included naming the streets after notable poets including, Burns, but Byron, Chaucer, Milton and Goldsmith. Restoration to Burns Street maintains the integrity of the historic "Poet's Corner" plan. The committee agreed that "Poet's Corner" should be recognized as an area of historic value and for possible consideration as a heritage conservation area.

Not to offend and undermine the historical Canadian figure, Ronald Telfer took it upon himself to write to the current Earl of Elgin and Kincardine with his proposal. The Earl agrees that the name should be changed back to Burns Street, particularly with the significance of the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns in 2009.

The committee is aware that there will be additional costs and that the change will affect some members of the community. The committee agreed that the neighborhood should be canvassed for agreement and that the municipality should look into the logistics of making the name change.

There is one other Burns Avenue in Victoria, but it is a small rural street. There are no other Elgin street names in Victoria, however there are 16 streets, roads, avenues etc named Elgin in the province of British Columbia alone.

Upon request, Jean Sparks will provide more information on "Poet's Corner" for Council.

MOVED by Bronwyn Taylor

Seconded by Don Reksten, THAT THE COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL THAT THERE IS SUFFICIENT HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE TO SUGGEST A NAME CHANGE FROM ELGIN ROAD TO BURNS STREET.

CARRIED.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Tod House

The municipality of Oak Bay has taken 100% ownership of Tod House. Despite the Committee's constant enquiries over the ownership status of Tod, this information was not given to the Committee until six months after the devolution had taken place.

Two reports on Tod House are available to staff, council and committee members. The May 2003 "Tod House Subcommittee Report" prepared by Pam Copley and the then Community Heritage Commission, and the March 1992 report "Historic Site Investigation - Tod House" written by Stuart Stark, are available in the Archives and will be made available for future planning consideration.

MOVED by Don Reksten,

Seconded by Stephanie Sainas, THE HERITAGE COMMITTEE IS PREPARED TO TAKE ACTION IN THE PRESERVATION OF TOD HOUSE, A SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL SITE, AND WE WILL KEEP COUNCIL APROISED OF ITS PROGRESS IN THIS REGARD

CARRIED.

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF BUILDING AND PLANNING

Budget

The committee would like to see a clearer budget for 2009.

The current budget shows a donation from Oak Bay Kiwanis of \$5000.00 that was earmarked for the three photo wrapped BC Hydro boxes in the municipality. The cost was only \$4,456.55. The Committee would like to see the difference returned to the Oak Bay Kiwanis.

Further discussion regarding the budget was postponed. The need for a treasurer on the committee will be discussed and a potential election held at the next meeting.

Notification of Demolition

1009 St. David was the most recent application for demolition.

HERITAGE ADVISORY PANEL

A Heritage Advisory Panel (HAP) report was presented to the committee and is attached to the minutes. The HAP was consulted regarding 2 demolitions, 2 deconstructions and 1 removal in 2008. These numbers do not agree with the annual total of 12 demolition permit applications indicated by the Building and Planning Department. Future attention will be paid to inform the panel of any applications in 2009.

HERITAGE COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Home and Garden Tour for 2009 will be on August 15.

An additional Heritage Lecture may take place in May.

ARCHIVES

Archives Management Proposal

Jean Sparks has submitted a budget request and an Archives Management Proposal to this committee.

Jean's primary concern for the Archives is that a duly educated archivist is required to maintain the municipal archives. The current workload is beyond that to be expected of volunteers. Most of the municipalities in the CRD have at least one paid archivist. There is a \$10,000 Legacy Fund in the Archives that could be spent as a matching grant for an archivist for one year.

MOVED by Don Reksten,
Seconded by Bronwyn Taylor, THAT THE COMMITTEE SUPPORTS THE *OAK BAY
ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL* FROM JEAN SPARKS.

CARRIED.

Judith Andersen: Cataloguing Oak Bay's Residential House Plans

Judith Andersen has completed the database. There is not a great cost involved in the completion of the project. The major expense has been paid out of the Archives budget.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The Community Initiatives Committee (CIC) will be hosting an exciting event of Friday February 13 from 6:30 – 9:30pm to celebrate the one year pre-anniversary of the 2010 Olympics. The evening will consist of free swimming, skating and other events at the Oak Bay Recreation Centre.

The Oak Bay Salish Monument project will be unveiling its first monument on Monday January 26 at Turkey Head, by the Oak Bay Marina, at 10:00 am. All members are encouraged to come.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Heritage Committee will be on Thursday February 12 at 8:30 am.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:42 am.

Heritage Advisory Panel 2008 Report

Members: Richard Collier; Carl Peterson; Monica Walter; John Bodnar; Don Reksten

March

Oak Bay Guest House (designated) enquired about a grant for reroofing. A Heritage Alteration Permit is required to obtain OB Heritage Foundation money. Nothing further occurred.

3220 Weald Rd. - application for deconstruction. No objection

Request to move memorial bench from Estevan Ave. to Winter Rose Garden. No objection.

April

1218 Hewlett - application for deconstruction. No objection

May

1585-97 York Place (designated) – visit to discuss proposed alterations. Report sent to Council in June.

June

2744 Bowker Ave. - application for demolition. No objection

July

1464 St. Patrick St. - application for removal. No objection

September

3150 Rutland – visit to discuss proposed demolition

November

3150 Rutland – visit to discuss proposed demolition or removal. Recommend to Council that neither be approved.

December

230 King George Terrace (covenant) – visit to discuss proposed new garage and addition to rear of structure. No objection

964-966 Byng St. – application for demolition. Built 1915; included in Supplemental List, “More than just bricks and boards”. No objection.

Summary

2 demolitions

2 deconstructions

1 removal

prepared by Don Reksten