



March 4, 2021

To: Mayor Jim Watson

Sent via email

**Re: Action on Federally Designated Heritage Properties**

Your Worship,

Heritage Ottawa would like to thank you and your colleagues on Council for supporting the Motion of February 24 that approves a letter from you to the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change to formally request that the federal government strengthen the legislative protection of National Historic Sites in Canada.

Ottawa is privileged to be the Nation's Capital. Such an honour comes with benefits but also burdens. Chief among those burdens is a duty of care for national historic sites, federally designated properties, and national significant landscapes. We realize that the City of Ottawa is fully cognizant of this responsibility and diligently embraces it.

It is patently unfair, however, that the City of Ottawa finds itself shouldering so much of the decision-making work in defense of our national heritage on behalf of all Canadians, because our national government refuses the role. The absence of the federal government on the Château Laurier file was unconscionable.

Canada is the only G7 country lacking legislative protection for its national historic sites.

Heritage Ottawa has tried many times to engage with the Government of Canada on the lack of protection for national historic sites and other federally designated properties. We have written to past and current Ministers responsible for national historic sites; to the Prime Minister concerning the abandoned 24 Sussex; and to the World Heritage Commission concerning the Rideau Canal World Heritage Site. We have met with senior Parks Canada Agency staff, and most recently we have written to Minister Wilkinson (responsible for national historic sites, World Heritage Sites, and the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office) and Minister Anand (responsible for the National Capital Commission). That letter, appended here, goes into more detail of the issues and measures proposed to correct decades of neglect.

No municipality should have to bear the burden of care that has fallen to Ottawa. No not-for-profit such as Heritage Ottawa should be expending fifty percent of its volunteer time in conflicts with the national government.

If you would like to discuss this further, we would be pleased to meet with you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background, appearing to read "R. Belliveau".

Richard Belliveau

President, Heritage Ottawa

cc. Councilors, Riley Brockington, Rick Chiarelli, Jean Cloutier, George Darouze, Diane Deanes, Laura Dudas, Keith Egli, Eli El-Chantiry, Mathieu Fleury, Glen Gower, Jan Harder, Allan Hubley, Theresa Kavanagh, Rawlson King, Catherine Kitts, Jeff Leiper, Matthew Luloff, Catherine McKenney, Carol Anne Meehan, Shawn Menard, Scott Moffatt, Jenna Sudds, Tim Tierney.