



Heritage Ottawa NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to Preserving Our Built Heritage Winter 2007 Volume 34, No. 1

West-end Resident Appeals for the Preservation of *La Maison Jeanne D'Arc*

By Andrea Tomkins

It is often said that the most effective defenders of a city's architectural heritage are the people in the community. This was well demonstrated in a recent presentation to Ottawa's Planning and Environment Committee by Andrea Tomkins who lives near *La Maison Jeanne d'Arc*, a building under threat in the west-end of the city. The following excerpts from Ms. Tomkins's presentation against a rezoning application and notice of demolition reveal the depth of community support for retaining the building and include a strong appeal for a sensitive adaptive use of the building and infill design for the property. In future projects which affect neighbourhood character, Ms. Tomkins also wants an improved consultation process between the City, the developer and the community. Ed.

People choose to live in Westboro because of mature trees, unique history, and local landmarks like *La Maison Jeanne D'Arc*. This building is key to our collective history and shouldn't be dismissed as trivial or bartered away ... once it's gone, it's gone.

At a meeting of the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) in January, city planners said they wanted to "...extend the fabric of the community" of Westboro by tearing down *La Maison Jeanne D'Arc* and replacing it with 20 large homes. Yet, heritage buildings like this one provide the connecting fabric that links us together. Bulldozing *La Maison Jeanne D'Arc*, a building that is so rare and distinct, would do nothing but permanently erase part of our neighborhood character for short-term financial gain. And it's not worth it.



Photo: City of Ottawa Archives

The original structure of La Maison Jeanne D'Arc is designated but not later additions.

When we petitioned for heritage status for *La Maison Jeanne D'Arc* we believed that this was the only avenue available to us. We have spoken to hundreds of people about this issue and have received great support in finding an alternate use for this building.

There has been a lot of concern about the process. Only a select handful of people have seen the applicant's plans. Such a large-scale development has had the bare minimum of public consultation. Only those who live right next to the proposed development were invited to view the plans and those I spoke to said they were led to believe it was a done deal. It is my understanding the meetings were not attended by City staff.

West-end Resident Appeals ...

I'd like to quote Stuart Lazear, the City of Ottawa's co-ordinator of heritage planning, from a recent article in *The Ottawa Citizen*:

"... The community has a critical role in terms of being vigilant, to ensure that there is a good quality of infill design, and that development respects the character that the community wants to have. You can't expect a planning department to be the police for the esthetic values of a community."

We need to pause for a moment, especially now that the original plans have changed significantly and the applicant is asking for special exceptions – such as an increase in height variance.

We need a truly public consultation – where residents could share their concerns and those concerns would actually mean something. We continue to wonder why we, the residents, have such little input in what is built in our neighborhoods. Why is it that the developers dictate the terms?

The designs that we viewed from afar at the LACAC meeting look like tract housing, and they were consistent only to the homes the applicant designed as part of the infill of the Ogilvy Estate on Kenwood. And who sets this "development pattern"? The developer? A project of this size must be sensitive to the homes around it in terms of size and design. The current plan pushes the boundaries

of both. Infill should reflect the style and character of the surrounding community as well as *La Maison Jeanne D'Arc*.

A lot of people in this neighborhood want *La Maison Jeanne D'Arc* to be saved from demolition and re-used in a way that would most benefit the community. There is a serious deficit of retirement residences, daycare spaces, and other non-profit spaces. Ironically, we have a critical need for all three. This is a rare opportunity for the City of Ottawa to show they support the people who live here and create something the community really needs.

"... We need a truly public consultation – where residents could share their concerns and those concerns would actually mean something. We continue to wonder why we, the residents, have such little input in what is built in our neighborhoods. Why is it that the developers dictate the terms?"

We don't believe all the options have been explored or exhausted. Development should not only be about maximizing residential opportunities. We shouldn't lurch ahead blindly without a larger design plan in mind. We need to decide what kind of neighborhood we want Westboro to be, and develop a long term plan based on that vision.

I respectfully ask the committee to defer rezoning decisions until a proper public consultation has taken place and all options for adaptive use have been investigated. This is a huge decision and it shouldn't be taken lightly. Once the land is used up, it's used up forever. ♦

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Heritage Ottawa is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of Ottawa's built heritage.

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Graphic Designer: Jan Soetermans

Printing: Tina & Company

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Heritage Ottawa acknowledges the financial support of the City of Ottawa and the Ontario Ministry of Culture.

La Maison Jeanne D'Arc

La Maison Jeanne D'Arc located at 360 Kenwood Avenue in Westboro, is a gable-roofed two-storey building completed in 1934. It was designed by Mère Marie Thomas d'Aquin, founder of the *Institut Jeanne D'Arc*, to serve as a home for handicapped children. It later became a boarding house and school and finally, in 1954, the Mother House of the Sisters of the *Institut Jeanne D'Arc*.

The work of the Institut took place in a number of buildings in the city. Among its many services, the institution played an important role in assisting young women entering the work force in Ottawa in the early 20th century. It provided them with safe, inexpensive housing, offered secretarial courses and was a leader in French language training. Marie Thomas d'Aquin was the Mother Superior for most of the period from 1919-43.

An artist and poet, Mère Marie Thomas D'Aquin, also created the design for *La Maison Jeanne d'Arc* in a style reminiscent of domestic

buildings in Brittany where she had lived. Notable features include rusticated stone and brick cladding, a recessed semi-circular entrance, decorative voussoirs over windows and doors and leaded and stained glass windows.

In November, 2006, Heritage Ottawa applied to have *La Maison Jeanne D'Arc* considered for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act citing its architectural and historical importance and the ever-growing support from the local community. David Flemming, President of Heritage Ottawa, made another appeal for designation to LACAC at their January meeting.

Although the City's Heritage department found that *La Maison Jeanne D'Arc* met the requirements for heritage designation, the City's planners argued against it stating that the cultural value of the building had not been raised by the City or the community prior to the submission of their rezoning application, which included a notice for the demolition of *La Maison* in September. Furthermore, the staff report noted that the construction and layout of the building did not easily lend itself to adaptive use. The Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee, however, stated that the building was worthy of designation because of its historic connection to the Sisters, its landmark status in the neighbourhood and its architecture. The committee voted unanimously to recommend designation. ♦



The recessed entrance is set within a semi-circular arch.

Photo: City of Ottawa Archives

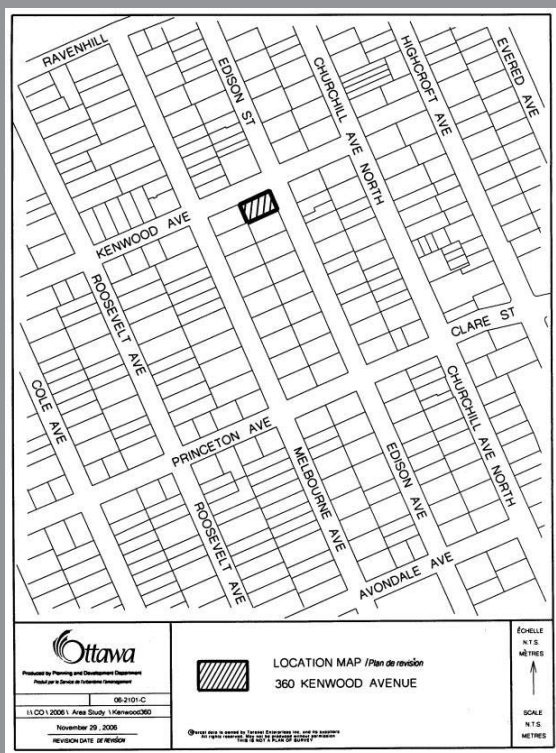


Photo: City of Ottawa Archives

From the President....



The first two months of 2007 witnessed significant events in the preservation of our City's built heritage.

The parishioners of St. Brigid's Church were successful in having the roof of the church repaired. Nevertheless, their struggle to prevent the Archdiocese of Ottawa from selling the building met a setback with an Ontario Superior Court decision not to support their application to have the Court force the Archdiocese to reconsider its decision to close the church.

Despite this setback, the Save St. Brigid's campaign continues. Heritage Ottawa members who wish to support their cause can consult their website at <http://www.stbrigidottawa.com/>.

On February 19th, Heritage Day, we celebrated the achievements of this year's winners of the Ottawa Architectural Conservation Awards. Among the winners was Mary Soper,

our January lecturer, who, with her colleagues, received the Award of Excellence -Restoration/Adaptive Use for the restoration of the Library of Parliament.

A few days later we welcomed the designation of *La Maison Jeanne d'Arc*, 360 Kenwood Avenue, under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. This was especially satisfying since the application for designation submitted by Heritage Ottawa was not

supported by the City Planning and Development Department who endorsed the developer's request to demolish the building. Heritage Ottawa's position was strongly supported by members of the Westboro community who not only collected a petition of over 170 names for retention of the building but turned out to speak forcefully at both the LACAC and Planning and Environment Committee meetings. The designation will permit an adaptive use of the building as part of a larger residential development by Barry J. Hobin & Associates and Uniform Urban Developments.

Heritage Ottawa was again involved in supporting the heritage programs and services in the 2007 City of Ottawa Budget. Many thanks to those of you who wrote to the Mayor and your Councillor in support for arts and heritage in Ottawa. Despite the Mayor's determination to prevent any tax increase in 2007, Council voted to draw upon the City's financial reserves to avoid any cuts to program delivery. The real battle will take place in the spring when Council will undertake a detailed analysis of each municipal program in preparation for another 0% budget increase in 2008, this time without drawing on the City's reserves.

As we go to press with this issue of the newsletter, the Board is putting the finishing touches on this year's schedule of 11 walking tours between June 10th and October 21st. The brochure will be mailed out to members and the schedule posted on the website in early May.

This year's annual general meeting will take place at Rockcliffe Park Community Centre Hall on May 23rd at which time the membership will be called upon to elect a new executive. Our Nominating Committee, headed by Past-President, Carolyn Quinn will be hard at work producing a report for the AGM. Anyone wishing to become more involved in Heritage Ottawa activities should call the office at 613-230-8841 and leave a message to have Carolyn call them.

David B. Flemming,
President



St. Brigid's Church in Lowertown at St. Patrick and Dalhousie

Heritage Ottawa Speaks Out on 2007 Budget

Heritage Ottawa board member Gordon Cullingham addressed Ottawa City Council's Committee of the Whole considering the 2007 Budget on February 20

It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to speak to you in support of the City of Ottawa's arts and heritage programs and services. I am here in the absence from the city of our President, David Flemming.

Heritage Ottawa is a volunteer organization whose members have, for over 30 years, worked hard to preserve our city's built heritage and to inform Ottawans of this important part of our rich history. Besides advocating on behalf of our built heritage, Heritage Ottawa seeks to educate the public through our regular series of lectures and walking tours, and in our involvement in Doors Open Ottawa

In building a budget that will benefit all Ottawans, it is important that Council provide for the City's core services. In an effort to hold the line on taxes, don't forget that support for heritage preservation is a core function of municipal government and a critical investment in the well-being of our City.

The Ottawa 20/20 Plan notes that funding for the City's heritage programs is an important part of its responsibility for preserving all aspects of our civic history. Council has already adopted both an Arts and Heritage Plan that outlines the City's commitment and responsibility for arts, heritage and culture, as well as a Museum Sustainability Plan, for which "The Community of Ottawa" won a 2006 Ontario Museum Association Award of Merit. (That Citation was presented to the Mayor on Heritage Day.) Approving the 2007 components of the 4-year Museum Sustainability Plan will permit our museums, whose collections represent the diversity of the new Ottawa, to interpret the history of our City in an exciting and comprehensive manner for the benefit of all of our citizens. It is also a sound investment that provides leverage for other sources of funding from both the public and private sectors. The draft budget contains funding for the operational component, but the capital portion has been eliminated. I urge you to reinstate that essential capital money, and to approve both as part of the final 2007 budget.

The city's own Real Property Asset Management's (RPAM) Lifecycle Renewal budget for the preservation of over 80 City-owned heritage buildings, provides for the maintenance and restoration of these properties. The \$1.5 million capital program for Lifecycle Renewal is essential in safeguarding and preserving these important heritage resources. Work undertaken as part of this program prolongs the life of these buildings and provides for their timely maintenance, thus reducing the need for more costly repairs and replacement in the future. By preserving these important examples of our built heritage, the municipality provides its citizens with both an appreciation of these important links with the past and sets a positive example to owners of other heritage buildings.

Other important municipal programs are the Heritage Grant Program for Building Restoration that provides modest support and encouragement for homeowners to preserve their heritage buildings and the Heritage Funding Program for heritage organizations and projects that provides support for the hundreds of volunteers who spend thousands of hours working for the preservation of all aspects of Ottawa's heritage through organizations such as Heritage Ottawa.

We appreciate Council's support for our civic heritage. It is a cause that is important to us as well as to you, and I want to assure you that our members will continue to work with City staff for the preservation of these valuable heritage resources and programs. These are worthy objectives and we urge you to approve a budget which will reflect a balanced approach to the needs of Ottawa and its citizens – even if it means an increase in the tax rate. This is a rich city that could easily afford to reduce some of the shameful slippage in our ranking among thriving and caring Canadian cities. It is hard to be as proud as we should be if all we have to display is financial success.

Thank you for your attention and good luck in your deliberations. ♦

Test Driving the Ontario Heritage Act.

A conversation with Stuart Lazear, Coordinator of Heritage Planning, City of Ottawa.

HO: *How does someone find out detailed information about the changes to the Ontario Heritage Act?*

SL: The Ontario Ministry of Culture's general website provides links to the Act, to more recent amendments and to the Ontario Heritage Tool Kit which is a guide to the Act and its regulations at <http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/culdiv/heritage/index.html>

The Ontario Heritage Amendment Act, 2005 came into force on April 28, 2005. The full text of the amended Act can be found at www.e-laws.gov.on.ca or more directly at http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/90o18_e.html

The Ontario Heritage Tool Kit was unveiled in Ottawa by the former Ontario Minister of Culture Madeleine Meilleur on February 23, 2006 to coincide with Heritage Week. The Tool Kit is important because it provides a clear guide to what can now be done under the Act together with regulations provided under the Act. The documents were placed on the Ministry's website shortly thereafter.

<http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/culdiv/heritage/Toolkit/toolkit.html>

On June 12, 2006 amendments to the City of Toronto Act further amended the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA). The provisions are described on the Ministry of Culture website at : http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_27375_1.html

HO: *Is there a concise description of what the amended Act does?*

SL: The April 2005 press release from the Ministry of Culture provides an overview of the changes at: http://ogov.newswire.ca/ontario/GPOE/2005/04/19/c7591.html?lmatch=&lang=_e.html

HO: *In your opinion what are the most significant changes under the amended Act?*

SL: The most significant change in my opinion is the ability of the Province to now designate heritage property in addition to municipalities. This is a fundamental change since the OHA came into being in 1975. While the Province has not actually used this power as yet, the fact that the Minister of Culture intervened with a mediator in Hamilton when the Lister Block was threatened with demolition demonstrates that the Province is taking its new role and responsibility seriously. It is a new power so we will have to see how this unfolds.

HO: *How is the City of Ottawa implementing changes under the amended Act?*

SL: The City of Ottawa through heritage planning staff and LACAC (the city's heritage advisory committee), was actively involved in the development of the amended legislation and its regulations through ongoing consultation with the Ontario Ministry of Culture. Ottawa's practice of registering heritage designation by-laws on title, for example, is now a requirement under the Act.

Most of the properties in the City of Ottawa protected under the Ontario Heritage Act are part of fifteen heritage conservation districts. Maps showing these districts form part of the City of Ottawa Official Plan Annex 4 which is available for viewing on the City of Ottawa website at: http://ottawa.ca/city_hall/ottawa2020/official_plan/vol_1/annexes/pdf/annex_4_en.pdf

As we designate heritage conservation districts we have to be extremely careful to follow the new protocols and procedures outlined in the new Act. The Lorne Avenue Heritage Conservation District which was approved by LACAC in August and Planning and Environment Committee on September 12 does just that.

http://ottawa.ca/city_services/planning/built_heritage/lorne/description_en.html

<http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/a-lacac/2006/08-24/ACS2006-PGM-APR-0178.htm>

The Sandy Hill West Heritage Conservation District Study which will be carried out by consultants starting in October 2006 will also follow the guidelines of the new Act. The Terms of Reference for that Study can be seen on-line at :<http://www.ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/a-lacac/2006/01-12/ACS2006-PGM-APR-0005.htm>

That Study will also examine ways to better enforce the maintenance of heritage properties, something that the new Act enables.

The individual designation of heritage properties under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act will be done in accordance with the amended Act and the designation criteria developed more recently through its regulations. When reports go forward to LACAC and Council recommending heritage designation and when newspaper ads appear in the paper, Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and Heritage Attributes will replace the earlier Statement of Reason for Designation. These reports are all accessible to the public through the City's website as part of the agendas of LACAC, Planning and Environment Committee and Council. Ads also appear in the paper when a property is proposed for designation and following the passage of the designation by-law.

The maintenance of an official list of designated heritage properties by the municipality has always been a requirement of the Ontario Heritage Act. The amended Act is more prescriptive about what should be described on that list as it relates to designated properties and it also enables the inclusion of non-designated properties subject to certain requirements. Inclusion of non-designated properties on the list will provide for sixty days of temporary protection against demolition. New district studies in Ottawa will provide for this formal listing of non-designated properties of heritage interest in the context of the requirements of the amended Act.

While a list is important, the publication, *Ottawa, A Guide To Heritage Structures*, goes beyond the requirements of the Act. This illustrated book, produced by LACAC in 2000, is currently being up-dated to describe all individually-designated heritage properties in the amalgamated City of Ottawa.

HO: *But I thought the most significant aspect of the amended Act was the ability of the municipality to prohibit demolition indefinitely?*

SL: In the beginning, the demolition control period under the 1975 Ontario Heritage Act was only thirty days. As the Act was amended over time, the delay became longer and longer. Now it is a permanent delay subject to appeal by an owner to the Ontario Municipal Board.

So while there is more protection than the pre-existing legislation there is also a new right of appeal by the property owner. Whether this will be a significant deterrent to the demolition of heritage properties is something we will have to see. The prohibition of demolitions under this Act has been used already in Ottawa with respect to five properties in Lowertown.

This change in the Ontario Heritage Act reflects the balanced approach taken in the amended legislation. Increased protection for designated heritage properties is balanced with a new right of appeal by the property owner to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). A faster track for the designation of heritage conservation districts where there are no objections is balanced with mandatory notification of all property owners following passage of the designation by-law and mandatory public notification as part of the heritage district designation process overall. More involvement of the Ontario Municipal Board in appeals is balanced with potential involvement at the OMB hearing by the Conservation Review Board.

In conclusion, the amended Ontario Heritage Act is like a new car or new computer and it will require a bit of time to work out details and processes as demonstrated by the recent amendments to the new legislation through the City of Toronto Act. In time we will learn, teach, and discover the nuances of the amended Act recognizing that the Act alone will not save Ottawa's heritage. It is only one tool. ♦

News & Notes

Around the City

City Council passed the designation of *La Maison Jeanne d'Arc*, 360 Kenwood without dissent. Alterations to the building will not require formal LACAC review.

Council also approved the conversion of the school on Melrose Avenue and the demolition of the wood frame house on Bolton Street, both for condominium developments.

Court Upholds Order to Close St. Brigid's

A request by parishioners for a judicial review on the closing of St. Brigid's Roman Catholic Church was dismissed by the court. Three Superior Court justices ruled that the Archdiocese of Ottawa was within its rights in ordering the parish closed. The decision came as a stunning blow to parishioners who have poured time, money and considerable effort into saving the designated church. Although they won enormous public support and raised money for immediate repairs, but without the estimated millions to complete renovations to the historic building, the Archbishop refused to rescind his order.

Message from CHOO/COPO

CHOO/COPO would like to thank Heritage Ottawa for their support at this year's Heritage Day celebrations at City Hall.



David Jeanes (above) and his wife, Helga, set up and manned Heritage Ottawa's exhibit as well as a display for Doors Open at the City's Heritage Day festivities.

Heritage Day is part of a nationwide celebration and your efforts helped our community celebrate Ottawa's rich heritage. There were over 700 visitors over the course of the day! Heritage Ottawa was one of 43 heritage groups that made this day a success. An extended thanks for also manning Doors Open's material. Thank you!

OMB Announces New Conservation Districts



Walking tour participants stop before Postal Station B at the eastern entry to historic Sparks Street.

The Sparks Street & Bank Street Heritage Conservation Districts were approved by the Ontario Municipal Board after several years of mediation. The designations were approved with the caveat that the City would not modify the current zoning by placing a heritage overlay on the districts under

the zoning by-law prior to 2021. The City had already been reviewing heritage applications for new construction in these areas for projects such as the CBC building on Sparks, Portrait Gallery on Wellington, Canlands B/132 Sparks, Telus Building on Bank, etc., since the passage of the designation by-laws in 2000. This was based on an interim ruling from the Ontario Municipal Board during pre-consultation.

It is hoped that the finalization of the municipal designation process will prompt a reactivation of interest and support to have the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada designate Sparks Street as a National Historic District.

The OMB approval of these two districts brings the total number in Ottawa to 16. There are 84 districts in Ontario.